INDIA'S OUTCASTES:

A NEW ERA

W. S. HUNT

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BY THE REV.

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PREFACE

THIS book is concerned with one aspect of the coming of the Kingdom of God in India—namely, that presented by the mass movements among the outcastes. The poor have had the Gospel preached to them, and are now "besieging" the Kingdom. While Christ is known and admired, reverenced and loved by many among India's intelligentsia, it is still the "babes" who are flocking into His Church. This book is an attempt to sketch the beginning of the reign of God in these Indian souls.

The only excuse for such a book, when we have in "The Outcastes' Hope" one that has become a classic on the subject, is that thirteen years have passed since that book was written, and new developments have arisen in connexion with mass movements. These are noted in the following pages. But it has seemed good to go over part of the ground covered in the earlier book, as probably this book will come into the hands of some who have not studied the other.

This book has been written (by request) by a missionary of the Church Missionary Society in Travancore, and for that reason the mass movement in that part of India will seem to many to loom unduly large in it; most of the illustrations have, indeed, been taken from that region and from personal observation. But it will be found that reference (not indeed adequate) is made from time to time to the other areas in which mass

movements are taking place. The book does not pretend to be more than a sketch—many points are untouched or merely glanced at. Such as it is, it is sent forth in the hope, and with the prayer, that it may be used to stimulate interest in these movements wherever they occur throughout India, and that it may deepen the conviction that they are in truth works of the Holy Spirit.

As we have said, one aspect only of the coming of the Kingdom in India is dealt with in the following pages. There are, of course, other aspects—probably not less significant than the mass movements of the outcastes to which in this book attention is purposely confined. There is, for example, a leavening of Indian thought with Christian ideas and a new and widespread reverence for Jesus Christ. These seem to indicate that a mental mass movement is in progress among the classes most remote from the outcastes. The correlation of the several movements is one of the tasks before the Christian Church to-day.

The writer wishes to acknowledge the help received from various friends, as well as from other writers.

W. S. H.

July, 1924.

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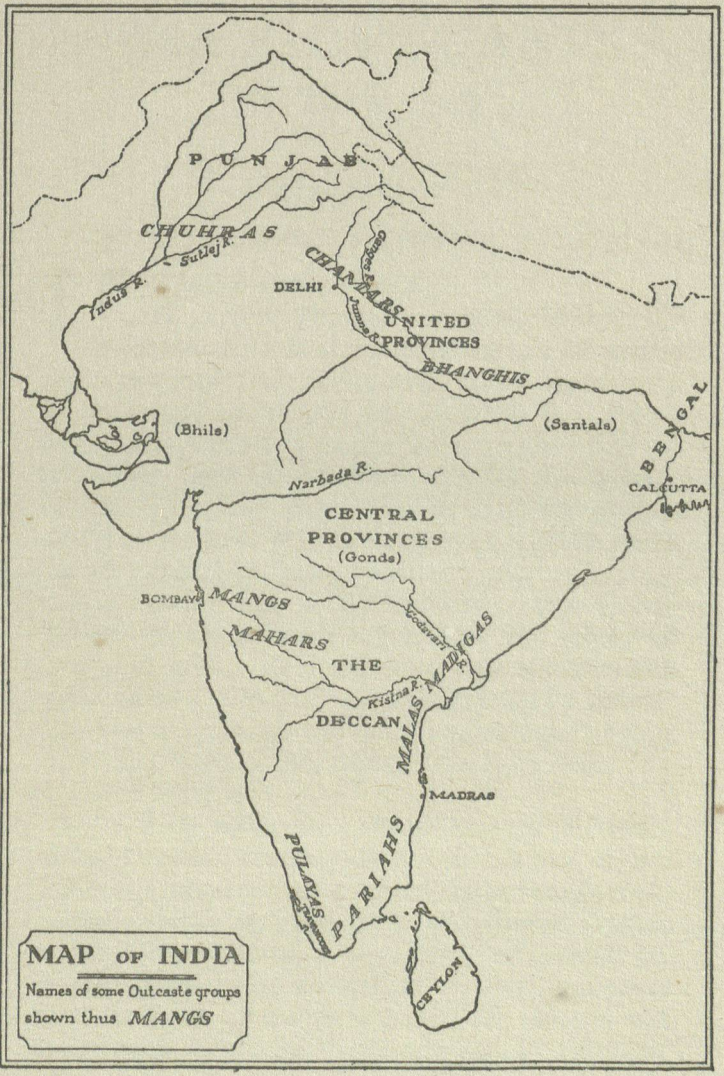

MAP OF INDIA

Names of some Outcaste groups shown thus *MANGS*

INDIA'S OUTCASTES:
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CHAPTER I
Mass Movements

LET us begin with a picture.

We are in Travancore. That lovely and lovable land is at its loveliest. The south-west monsoon has blown and rained itself out. It has cooled the air and left the whole land robed in green—vivid green of rice-fields, gentler green of hill-slopes, dark green of groves. On the eastern horizon the blue mountains outline themselves against the bluer sky, save where the thick white cumuli cling about their tops.

It is Sunday, and we are in church. Our church is built partly of rough red laterite and partly of dried red mud. It is thatched with sun-browned palm-leaves and has yellow bamboo poles for rafters. The tropic noonday sun is right overhead, but a refreshing breeze comes through the open doors and unglazed windows.

Outside the note is that of joy—the joy of Nature at her freshest. Inside, too, the note is one of joy. There is an awed joy in the eyes of the bunch of people—small, sturdy, and very dark—standing in a rather huddled line as close to each other as possible (in obedience to the group instinct as well as because room is scant) at the west end of the church, and facing west. And joy is the prevailing expression on the not very expressive faces of the rest of the

congregation. They sit on the mud floor, men on the north side and women on the south, also facing west. By the west door a basin has been placed on a three-legged stool, and beside this improvised font is an English missionary reading the baptismal service in the vernacular, Malayalam. By him stands the teacher, who for some months, and indeed years, has been preparing these catechumens for this moment. And by the teacher is a group of elderly folk, gnarled of feature and limb, who are to be witnesses and sponsors. Despite the strong breeze which flutters his white cassock and surplice, perspiration drips from the missionary's forehead and wrists.

The catechumens, thirty-three in all, consist of five families and three or four "oddments"—those who were away, or not accounted ready for baptism—when their relatives were baptized. Each family is baptized in turn, grandparents, parents, and children; then the others. The missionary takes the right hand of each adult, hardened by toil to the consistency of a boot-sole, as he receives him or her into the congregation of Christ's flock. The babies he holds in his arms, some sleepily placid, others very much awake and protesting lustily. After all have been baptized an appropriate lyric is sung, while the new Christians and the rest of the congregation turn and settle into their accustomed places. Then, with the Jubilate and Apostles' Creed, the service proceeds. It was preceded by examination of the catechumens and instruction, all the congregation being taught a verse of Scripture, and by prayer; and a special extempore prayer for the new brothers and sisters

in Christ follows the sermon—a not-too-brief catechetical address. (Our congregation does not approve of sermonettes, but likes something hot and strong and long.) After an interval for the entering-up of registers, and a further interval for refreshment —curry and rice in the teacher's house for the missionary and teacher, betel and tobacco for the rest—comes a church committee meeting, followed by conversation with one and another. There are joys and sorrows to be told, grievances great and small, petty persecutions, dire need, etc., and catechumens to be encouraged, perhaps a sick person or two to be visited, and various matters to be gone into with the teacher and elders, such as the lapses of this one and that, or the ravages of white ants in the roof of the church. And then the tired missionary gets into his bullock-coach and lumbers and bumps back to his bungalow, which he left at dawn and reaches again at sundown.

. . . . . .

That is the mass movement—a tiny fragment of it. Multiply the picture a hundred, or perhaps a thousand times and you will have some conception of that movement. This picture was, in fact, reproduced some months later, when three more families were baptized. It was repeated during the year from time to time by Indian clergymen in other places in Travancore. It was repeated on a magnified scale in the Deccan and Punjab. It was repeated in the United Provinces and in other parts of India. (And in Africa, too, of course ; but here we confine ourselves to India.) In churches, in schools, in mud-and-palm-leaf sheds, under trees in the open air, in rivers and tanks, with slightly

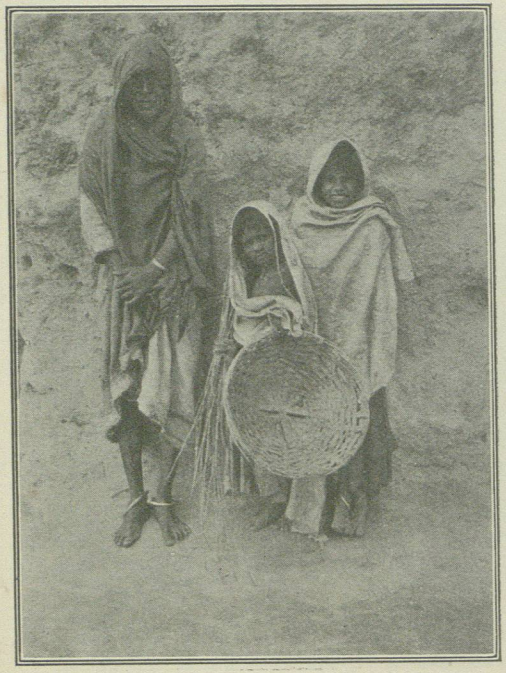
differing detail, the scene was repeated, groups of catechumens being baptized by Anglican, Wesleyan, Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist-Episcopal, or other ministers—European, American, and Indian—and by priests of the Syrian, and perhaps of the Roman Churches. That is the mass movement.

I

A MASS movement is (obviously) a movement of people *en masse*. This is the first and most literal signification of the term. Then it suggests the idea of a people moving in obedience to some instinct or for the achievement of some purpose, or both combined. The wanderings of migratory tribes are mass movements—so, perhaps, were the Crusades, and so is the leaping to arms of a nation upon a declaration of war. In its religious or missionary connotation a mass movement is the simultaneous and (more or less) concerted acceptance of Christianity by a whole people, usually in groups or companies here and there, and their baptism in groups (as in our "picture"), such group-baptisms occurring with comparative frequency until the whole, or a large proportion, of the people have become Christian. Sometimes a movement ceases after a few years. The distinctive feature of mass movements is, of course, that they are corporate movements. They are so, humanly speaking, for psychological reasons. Looking higher, we see in them the Holy Spirit working through the group instinct.

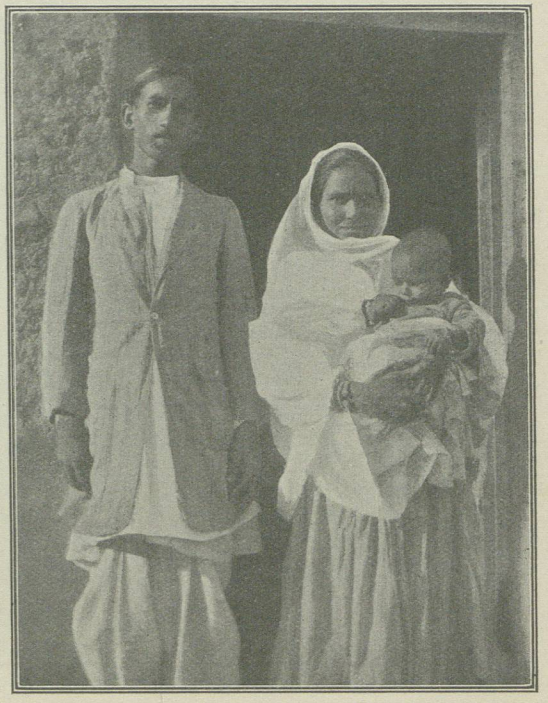
In India the people who are thus moving belong to a particular community. The community which is

OUTCASTES SHOPPING IN TRAVANCORE



Photograph] [*Rev. E. Fieldhouse*

OUTCASTE WOMAN AND CHILDREN,
ALIGARH DISTRICT



Photograph] [*Miss M. H. Laurence*

A TEACHER AND HIS WIFE, MEERUT DISTRICT

moving to Christianity is the outcaste community—or, more strictly, certain outcaste communities in certain areas. And no doubt it is because they are primitive people, in whom the sense of individuality is still faint, that they thus act corporately in what seems to us so individual a thing as a change of religion.[1]

Mass movements are among the most outstanding of present-day missionary phenomena. They are fraught with divers and wonderful potentialities. Will they be a glory to the Church, or a shame? They call, and call urgently, for wise statesmanship, as well as for prayer and liberality on the part of the Church. We start with the conviction that they are the work of God the Holy Spirit. Whether they be ultimately for His glory depends largely upon His Church at this moment.

II

IN no case that we can remember has a mass movement been courted—at any rate since the Middle Ages, when mass baptisms were the normal method of church expansion.[2] The aim of every modern missionary undertaking has been, at its inception, the conversion of the individual. If the idea of a mass movement resulting from their labours entered missionaries' minds it was as something to be prevented rather than welcomed. Mass movements have been feared as likely to lead to baptized heathenism, and to deter the coming in of converts from other communities. The history of the Mediæval Church shows the fear to be well

[1] There have been mass movements of other communities in the past, and there may be again.

[2] See appendix to this chapter, page 111.

founded. To convince individual souls that life eternal is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent, has been the avowed object of every modern missionary and of the Church that has commissioned him. And this policy has been gloriously successful—witness the long roll of notable converts, confessors, and martyrs, and the still longer roll of those unremembered save in Heaven. The hope with which missionary enterprises have been begun has no doubt been that converts might be many, but as individuals, or at most households, one here and another there, not in groups or masses. The latter, however, has sometimes happened. The Holy Spirit, working through the group instinct as well as directly upon the individual, has brought souls into the way of salvation, and thus extended the Kingdom of God. In the case of primitive peoples whose capacity for individual initiative is undeveloped, He could act (one may almost dare to say) in no other way.

Mass movements are going on in the widely separated parts of India mentioned above, and in others. The report of the last Indian census, taken in 1921, showed that "there are now two and a half times as many Christians [in India] as there were in 1881," and gave the following remarkable percentages of increase during those forty years, namely, in the Punjab 1134.3; in Baroda 862.5; in the Central Provinces 489.9; in the United Provinces 326.2; in Haidarabad (which includes a large part of the Telugu-speaking country) 360.2; and in Travancore (where there has been a Christian community for many centuries) 135.3. The greatest increase of all was in Assam, where there were only

7000 Christians in 1881 and are now 132,000, a growth of 1762.5 per cent. It is mainly to mass movements that these increases have been due.

III

THE story of the beginnings of the present mass movements is, in many cases, thrilling. Though they are *mass* movements, it has not seldom been through some individual outcaste of unusual force of character seeking after God that they have begun. Sometimes it has been through the meeting of two strong men of East and West. And an overwhelming movement has been known to come in an area where fruit was almost despaired of.

The earliest of still-existent mass movements among Indian outcastes—that in connexion with the London Missionary Society's mission in South Travancore—followed upon the baptism of a Tamil-speaking Pariah. He appeared in the Danish Mission church in Tanjore one Sunday morning at the beginning of the nineteenth century, smeared with the holy ashes that betoken a Hindu pilgrim. His presence among the congregation naturally caused surprise. Subsequently, in answer to the missionary's inquiries, he explained: "I came from Travancore to the holy shrine at Chidambaram,[1] seeking salvation, and the supreme God brought me here." He remained for some time in Tanjore, and at length, convinced of the truth of the Christian faith, was baptized, taking the name Vedamanikam, and then returned in haste to the other side of India to tell his own people the Good News. A year later

[1] A famous Hindu temple.

he reappeared. Two hundred of his friends, he said, were now worshipping in the Name of Jesus, but were so severely persecuted that they went in daily fear of extermination. The missionary comforted him, and promised that a colleague then learning Tamil in Madras should be sent to them. In due course he came. His name was Ringeltaube, and he is worth remembering, not only as the first Protestant missionary to labour among the outcastes, but for his own sake. He lived among the people in a dwelling little better than their own, and knew all the privations enumerated by the first and greatest of missionaries in 2 Cor. xi. 26–28.

Nine years after his arrival the Christians numbered 1100, gathered into six or seven congregations. The next year (1816) Ringeltaube was compelled by ill-health to leave them. His successor baptized large numbers of Shanars, as many as 3000 in one year, and Shanar converts and their descendants have been ever since the predominant element in the South Travancore Church. About sixty years ago, however, Malayalam-speaking outcastes called Pulayas and Pariahs[1] "literally crowded to the Mission," and a similar movement a few years ago (it was at its height about 1918) added thousands of these Malayalam-speaking outcastes to what is now known as the Travancore section of the South India United Church, which has about 100,000 adherents.

"Ragland, Pioneer," has recently become to many readers a living personality through Miss Amy Wilson Carmichael's vivid little book. Systematic work among the Pulayas in Central and North Travancore (the region in which the Church

[1] For explanation of these names see page 32.

Missionary Society works) began under his inspiration. In 1850 he visited the country, and was struck by the " deep degradation under which these despised races seemed to lie " ; they were at that time the property of the land-owning classes. He had seen one of them unequally yoked with an ox pulling a plough, and had been touched by their patient, uncomplaining toil, and their total ignorance of God. At his suggestion a school was put up, almost clandestinely, in an out-of-the-way place, and a few slaves were induced to attend. " It consisted of four upright corner posts on which a roof of coco-nut-palm thatch was placed, and walls of mud about three feet high . . . between the corner posts," and has been the standard pattern for such " schools " in their first stages ever since. An earnest, humble-minded teacher was placed in charge, and he stuck to the work, despite the scorn of his fellows, until his death.

The first baptisms took place in September, 1854, in torrential rain. Two families, consisting of eight souls, were baptized—after four years' instruction. Others desired baptism, but caution was felt to be necessary. There were " many adversaries." Twice the school shed was burnt down. Learners in other schools were beaten and driven away. But an enthusiasm for learning had seized the outcastes, and the work went on. As the numbers grew, persecution grew. Yet baptisms gradually increased to 2000 or 3000 a year. There are about 60,000 outcaste converts and descendants of outcaste converts in Central and North Travancore, of whom 40,000 are members of the Anglican Church.

A few years later (in 1859) a missionary sat in his

bungalow at Bezwada, 200 miles north of Madras, in a dejected mood. For eight years he had been preaching the Gospel, and not a single soul, as far as he knew, had been affected. Raising his head in the midst of these thoughts, he was aware of a group of men standing just beyond the veranda, whose leader, as soon as he saw that their presence was noticed, advanced and said that they wished to know about "the great God." Overjoyed, the missionary poured out from a full heart the gospel story, and when at length he paused, the man solemnly arose and said: "This is my God; this is my Saviour. I have long been seeking Him; now I have found Him." The man's name was Venkayya. He was an outcaste belonging to the section called Malas. A few months later the missionary baptized him and his family in their village of Raghavapuram. Venkayya became as earnest a seeker after souls as he had been after God. He spoke of Christ to outcastes wherever he went, while the mission workers followed up these openings and were led on from them to others. He continued his labour of love to the end. Old and blind (he never learnt to read), he sat at his door and expounded the Way to any who came near. There are now 117,000 Christians connected with the Anglican Church in the Telugu-speaking Andhra country, where the S.P.G. and the C.M.S. are working. This is the Diocese of Dornakal. The numbers have increased by 40,000 in the last three years.

Medak has become a familiar name because of the Rev. C. W. Posnett's intriguing advertisements. It is a station of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Haidarabad, in this same Telugu-speaking

area. During the terrible famine of 1896 and following years the mission compound and a big open plain beside it were turned into a relief centre. "Families poured in from all the country round. This crowd of idle, starving, poor people, many of them weak and unskilled, were set to work. . . . Not only that, but the whole camp became a Bible school. . . . By the time that the famine ended they could sing by heart many Christian hymns, and repeat the Gospel in their own quaint fashion. In this way the ground was prepared for a movement towards Christianity." The movement came, and in less than twenty years the adherents of this mission increased from 7000 to 33,000. The last census (1921) showed about 320,000 Telugu-speaking Christians distributed among the various Churches.

"O Lord, a thousand this year!" was the prayer of a missionary in the United Provinces twenty-five years ago. He was pleading for a thousand converts, and, feeling a little abashed at asking such a seemingly great thing, he added: "Canst Thou trust us with so many?" This was at a meeting of American Presbyterian missionaries. The others present were thrilled at the petition, for the mission had seen little fruit for some years past. They now made this a regular request, praying for "a thousand souls." Soon after, they were led to work among the sweepers, and the movement among them began, bringing in since then 30,000 adherents.

When a movement of this kind had shown signs of developing in the same part of India some time earlier, a missionary of another American body,

the Methodist Episcopal Church, who reported ninety baptisms in two years, was censured by his brethren as "indiscreet." He was transferred to another station. Their views changed, however, and the M.E. Church is now, perhaps, the greatest of mass movement organizations. Following upon a "revival" in 1905, there were 18,000 baptisms. In the quadrennium ending with 1919 there was a yearly average of 31,000. In one district 15,000 names were on the waiting list, and the total number refused baptism mounted up to more than 100,000 in a single year. They were refused for lack of teachers. At the time of the M.E. Centenary, a few years ago, there were on the rolls of the Church 400,000 names, ninety per cent of whom were mass movement converts.

The census of 1921 showed that the number of Christians in the Punjab had increased since 1901 from 37,000 to 332,000. During that period the Christian community connected with the C.M.S. more than trebled, reaching a total of 32,000, and the work of the American Presbyterians is on a far larger scale. Most of the converts are Chuhras (agricultural labourers). Shortage of workers is felt in this field even more than in the others, and the great distances that the missionaries have to travel in order to visit the scattered congregations make the work exceptionally arduous.

The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.

CHAPTER II

The Untouchables

TWO more sketches of "things seen" to begin with.

We are standing just before sunset near a bund in Cochin. A *bund* is a causeway carrying a road through the rice-fields. During the rainy months these fields are transformed into a shimmering, rippling, shallow lake; later, when the rice is springing out of the semi-liquid mud, they are a sea of vivid green. The road is raised well above the level of the fields, but it is sometimes flooded. Here and there it crosses a bridge.

It is an important road leading to an important town, and many persons pass along it. There are also bullock-bandies, pony-jutkas, and rickshaws, "Fords" converted into motor 'buses, and cars of other make. Goats and skipping kids are plentiful, as well as cows in search of grass, striped squirrels, hens and ducks, and the ubiquitous crows and kites.

An elderly Hindu lady, holding in one hand a little brass vessel, emerges from a side-path into the road just before it becomes a bund, and looks cautiously to right and left, before and behind. Then she walks swiftly towards the bund. As she nears it she hesitates, and calls out in an (apparently) angry tone, edging away to the left. There she halts, continuing to call. Five small black people, like

the members of the congregation in our last " picture," are coming towards her—a man, three women, and a girl. Each carries a rude sickle and a big bundle of grass on his or her head. They are trotting in single file along the other edge of the bund, but come to a standstill when they hear her call. They look abashed and very plebeian, and she, by contrast, aristocratic and commanding. Her raiment is as scanty as theirs, but of an almost muslin-like material; theirs is coarse and nearly as black as themselves. She advances to a point where the bund widens a little, and, as she advances, they back away. She stops on the extreme edge of the bund, and again shouts in an angry tone and waves to them with an ample, imperious gesture. Immediately the five splash down into the mud and water on the farther side from her, and, making a wide detour, pass on their way, while she goes on hers grumbling. She is a high-caste lady and they outcastes, and she is returning from her bath in the temple tank, purified by its sacred but stagnant and weedy water, and is terribly afraid lest they should come too near her.

During an afternoon drive in Travancore we come upon a group of people whom we now recognize as outcastes. A dozen of them, some standing and some squatting, are in the middle of the road facing a very humble shop. In its open front various wares are displayed, chiefly comestibles—rice, chillies, plantains, etc. The shopkeeper lolls against the door-post, preparing a " chew " of betel and chatting with two or three friends. His wife is bathing her lamenting and kicking baby in an areca-palm spathe beside the well; her little daughter

is washing a cooking-pot. From time to time one or other of the group on the road calls out in a whining tone, occasionally the shopkeeper tosses a scornful reply, and the dog curled up at his feet utters a low growl. The outcaste people are would-be purchasers, and a bargain is in process of being struck between them and the shopkeeper. At length it is completed. The outcastes deposit a few coins on the road and back away. The shopkeeper comes leisurely forward, picks up the coins, puts down in their place the articles bargained for, and returns to his shop. Then the purchasers advance, take up their purchases with muttered grumblings at their smallness, and trot off with them, single file, along the edge of the road.[1]

Outcastes, from the moment they are born until they die, are " unclean." They are so unclean that their proximity, much more their touch, pollutes. If one of those little grass-cutters had come nearer to that Hindu lady she would have been polluted. She would have had to return to the temple and to re-perform her somewhat complicated ceremonial ablutions, and possibly to undergo other purificatory ceremonies involving the payment of fees, before she could associate with her friends and relatives or eat her evening meal. And, if one of these outcaste purchasers had gone too near that shop, no Hindu could have patronized it until its polluted contents had been destroyed and it had

[1] Sir Valentine Chirol, in his " Indian Unrest," p. 179, after describing an incident in Cochin similar to the first of the sketches above, adds this : " In the native States of Travancore it is not uncommon to see a Panchama witness in a lawsuit standing about a hundred yards from the court, so as not to defile the Brahman judge and pleaders, whilst a row of *peons*, or messengers, stationed between him and the court, hand on the questions to him, and pass back his replies."

been ceremonially cleansed, for which again the priest would have to be paid.[1] But we must not suppose that Hindus avoid pollution merely because of the trouble and expense which it causes. To the orthodox it really matters. It has for them "the nature of sin." It affects their karma, and, therefore, their status in their next life. That high-caste lady would genuinely believe that she had been made unclean, that her ceremonial purity had been besmirched, by the propinquity of those unclean outcastes if they had dared to come too near to her. Ceremonial purity is, indeed, for the reason just mentioned, the Hindu's most prized possession. More will be said about karma presently.

All this feeling, it ought to be explained, is stronger in the part of India in which the incidents sketched above took place than in most other parts. In Cochin or Travancore such prescriptions of the Hindu religion, or of custom, are more scrupulously adhered to than elsewhere. Generally speaking, the farther south you go in India the stronger you find this feeling. Naturally it is strongest in remote, old-world country places and weakest in towns, where people are jumbled together in trams and jostle each other in streets, and where western ideas have fuller play. In the medley of town populations, indeed, some outcastes manage to pass as "higher" people, and there is a general tendency to be less strict than formerly in all these matters. Hence the unwisdom of generalizing about India. Things are changing, and that rapidly; and what applies to one part does not apply to another. Of

[1] It has often been remarked that coins handled by unclean outcastes are (apparently) unpolluted. The shopkeeper does not hesitate to pick them up.

this the present writer is constantly reminded. In the house where most of these chapters have been written are three members of the family who have lived in different parts of India, one in the United Provinces fifty years ago, before they were known by that name; one, much more recently, on the North-West Frontier; and the other in the South. When the writer is there he makes a fourth. Any assertion about India made by any one of them is almost sure to be challenged by the others. We must always remember that India is a sub-continent, made up of different countries, inhabited by different peoples. Still, the distinguishing thing about outcastes all over India is that their touch pollutes. It is this that first catches your attention. Caste people and their belongings are defiled by their touch. Even the lowest castes, who themselves pollute those of higher caste, are polluted by them. Outcastes are outside the pale of Hindu society, though in a sense annexed to it. They are regarded much as lepers were in Jewry, and the regulations respecting them are not very different from those concerning lepers in Lev. xiii. 45, 46. Like the lepers, they have to live outside towns and villages, and (in some parts of India) to announce their approach by a cry equivalent to "Unclean! Unclean!" and that although they may be, unlike the lepers, altogether free from any contagious disease, or any moral taint. A healthy, clean-minded outcaste would have to keep the prescribed distance from an immoral and leprous Brahman, so as to prevent the latter from being polluted by him. The uncleanness inflicted by outcastes is obviously different in kind from that felt

by the Psalmist when he cried: "Make me a clean heart, O God"! Perhaps it is not altogether unlike that of the Pharisee, with his sedulous washings, and very much like that which said: "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou"!

"Caste" and "pollution" are big subjects that cannot properly be explained in a few sentences, but a word or two by way of reminder may perhaps be useful. Hindus are divided into four castes: (1) Brahmans (priests); (2) Kshattriyas (warriors); (3) Vaisiyas (landowners); (4) Sudras (labourers). They do not now necessarily follow these traditional avocations. Brahmans may be lawyers or professors or shopkeepers or cooks, but there are certain priestly functions that only Brahmans can perform. Sudras are nowadays practically a "good" caste. They are often landowners, merchants, and in all kinds of business, etc. The other two castes have now a comparatively small number of representatives. Whatever the caste of a Hindu's parents and forefathers, that is his caste until his life's end. He may be out-casted for some breach of the law of his caste, but he cannot in this life rise (so to speak) to a higher caste. He is inexorably fixed where he is.[1] That differentiates caste in India from what is sometimes called "caste" in England. As the late Mr. Gokhale once pointed out, a certain English politician whose original social position was the English equivalent to a Sudra, married the daughter of the English equivalent of a Brahman, and mingled freely with that "caste," and became practically a

[1] And yet it is said that some Hindus are of higher caste than their ancestors were. It is unsafe to dogmatize about things Indian.

member of it. Caste in India is ordained by religion; in England it is not. There are innumerable divisions and sub-divisions of each caste. Not only do people of different castes, if they are orthodox, not feed together or intermarry, but people of different sub-castes within the same caste as a rule do not. Pollution would occur if they did. Food is polluted if touched by a person of lower caste. The lower a man's caste the more polluting he is, and the higher he is the more sensitive he is to pollution. A Brahman in Malabar is polluted if an outcaste comes within ninety paces of him, but a man a little lower is not polluted if the outcaste keeps fifty paces away. People of the same caste or even sub-caste pollute each other in certain circumstances, e.g., when a death has occurred in the family of one of them. It is all highly complex. Outcastes are completely outside all this; it is not so much that they are lower than the lowest castes, they belong to another category.[1]

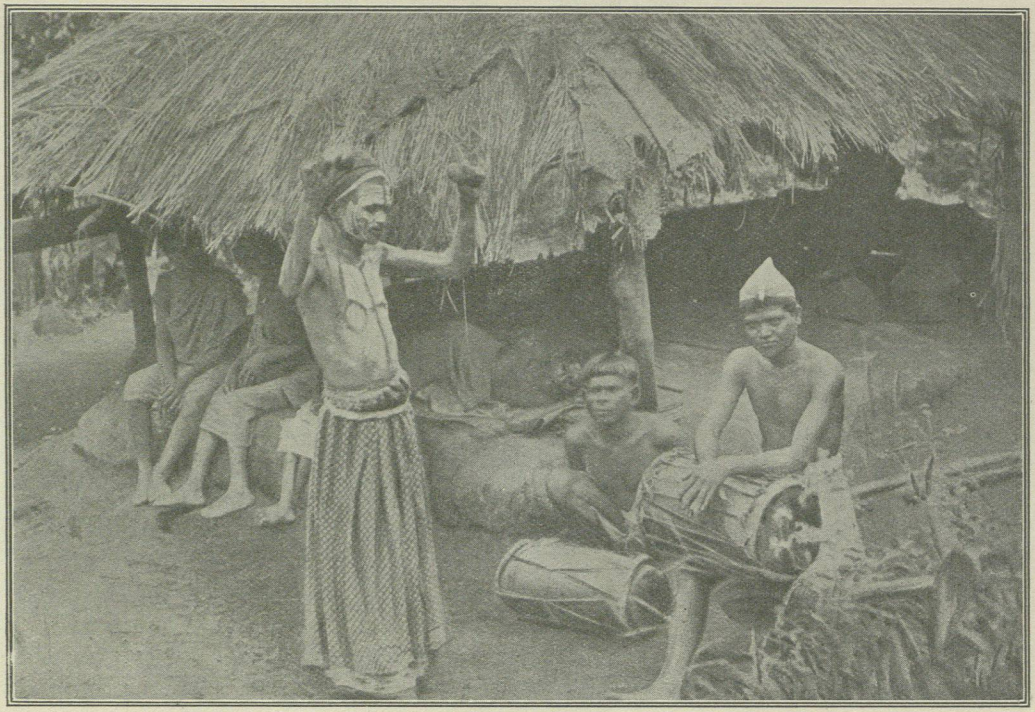
Hindus account for the low estate of the outcastes in this way: it is due, they say, to *karma*. "That which a man soweth that shall he also reap." That is karma; but a man will reap in subsequent lives on earth the fruit of his acts in his present life. Hindus believe in transmigration. If a man live a good life, according to Hindu standards, doing all that a man of his caste should do, he will in his next life be born a member of a higher caste than that to which he now belongs; if he is a bad man,

[1] A curious incident showed the present writer the strength of the feeling. He had been talking with an enlightened young Hindu visitor who had spoken of the folly of "pollution" and "untouchability." As he was about to leave he saw two outcaste converts approaching, and instinctively signed to them to move before he passed the place where they were standing.

according to the same standards, he will be lower in caste than he is now, or an outcaste—perhaps even an animal or reptile. Outcastes are outcastes because of bad former lives, because of persistent infractions of caste rules. They are but working out their karma, and (from that point of view) are hardly to be pitied. How they pollute by proximity is sometimes thus explained. Every one has an *aura*, a kind of invisible, ethereal sheath around and extending beyond the body, possessing the same qualities as himself. The aura of an unclean outcaste is unclean, and therefore defiles the pure aura of a holy man if it touches or mingles with it. Cleanness and uncleanness are, of course, *ceremonial*, not moral or physical, though the poor outcaste is often terribly unclean in the latter respects.[1]

Another explanation of the outcastes' low estate, and one that is more in consonance with western ideas is this: there are several racial strains in the Indian people. The chief of these are Dravidian and Aryan. There is also a Mongolian strain; and there are others. All these are believed to have been introduced from outside at different periods. Force of circumstances has impelled certain races, at various epochs, to leave the lands of their origin and to migrate to other parts of the world. Lust of battle and conquest have drawn others to do the same. A race called Dravidian is supposed to have swarmed into India from the north-west at some remote, almost prehistoric, period. At a later period—say 1000 B.C.—Aryan people followed them, other Aryans

[1] It is strange and beautiful that, despite all this, there have been holy men, who were outcastes, whose sayings Hindus treasure, and stories of whom they love to repeat. Hindus are often more human than their customs and philosophies.



A Sorcerer Ejecting a Spirit from a Sick Man, Travancore

HARVEST TIME IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

going farther west and settling in Europe. Both—first the Dravidians and then the Aryans—gradually penetrated farther and farther into the land, bringing their respective religions and cultures with them, a process in each case stretching over centuries. But, of course, there were already people in the land, people with ruder religious concepts and a more immature culture. They tended to retreat, before these oncoming tides of superior races, to the remoter and least accessible parts of the land, as the British did to Wales and Cornwall before the Saxon advance. There are still tribes in the denser jungles and in the mountains who are supposed to be the remains of the aboriginal inhabitants. They are a wild, shy, semi-nomadic folk, generally called the jungle tribes.

These are not the outcastes. They are not *our* outcastes. The outcastes about whom we are thinking, though shunned by other men, do not, like the jungle tribes, shun the haunts of men, but live on the outskirts of villages and towns and serve the inhabitants. But they also, or some of them, are considered by certain authorities to be descendants of the aborigines. The myths of the Hindus represent the Aryans of the heroic ages as encountering, when they pushed southwards, repulsive little black creatures whom they could hardly believe to be human, half ape and half devil, and whom they drove before them into the jungles, or exterminated. These no doubt were the ancestors of the forest tribes. Others they enslaved. These may have been the ancestors of the outcastes. The outcastes may, therefore, be descendants of the aborigines, or they may be the offspring of unions between

Dravidians and aborigines, or even between Aryans and aborigines, unions felt by the community in general to be unholy. Or perhaps they were undiluted Dravidians. (There are those who account the Dravidians aboriginal.) Whoever they were, they were not admitted into the caste system. They are out-castes. They are not only outside it; they are felt to be below it—in a way that others who are outside it, as for example Mohammedans and non-Indians (such as ourselves), are not apparently felt to be. Yet they are a kind of appendage to Hinduism, their position being, perhaps, akin to that of the "mixed multitude" in Israel.

Assuming that the outcastes were aborigines, difference of race, difference of colour, difference of food,[1] difference of customs and culture, and the aversion such differences produce, easily account for their exclusion from the castes (i.e. from Aryan or Dravidian society), and for the prohibition of intercourse with them. The sense of their inferiority, and the needs of the community, account for their enslavement. The determination to keep their race pure and dominant led the Hindu lawgivers, typified by Manu (the code called by his name may have been contemporary with that of Moses), to prevent for all time any kind of social intercourse between their people and people of other races, including outcastes—the aliens with whom they were in actual contact. This the caste system has achieved. To clinch the matter, the keeping of caste became for Hindus their "practical

[1] Hindus are as sensitive as Jews about clean and unclean food. A Brahman is a strict vegetarian, to whom meat is abhorrent. Outcastes eat meat, if they can get it; some live chiefly on carrion. Their bodies, it is held, are made up of unclean material, and are, therefore, unclean.

religion" (*dharma*), and contravention of it the sin entailing the heaviest retribution.[1]

"We may touch a dog," says a Hindu writer, Mr. G. A. Natesan, "we may touch any other animal, but the touch of these fellow human beings is pollution. These men, women, and children, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, are made to feel at every moment of their lives that they are a degraded and inferior set of beings. They cannot use the common well or even the common tank in some places. . . . Hinduism, which says with one breath that they belong to its fold, still seems to tell them that they are out of it, and even at the present day it is a common occurrence in every village and even in some towns that they are made to scurry off the road if a Hindu of superior class comes along. They are not admitted to the temples, and yet with what pathetic affection these people, oppressed, degraded, and ill-used, cling to the Hinduism that flouts and outrages them!"

"What crimes," exclaimed Mr. Ghandi, "have we not been guilty of towards our untouchable brethren!"

The stigma of ineradicable and contagious impurity that has rested upon them for innumerable generations has condemned them, not only to perpetual banishment from the society of other human beings, but to superstition, semi-starvation, squalor, dirt, disease, and ignorance. It has been so long-continued, and has brought them so low,

[1] Other races have taken steps to achieve the same ends, e.g., the determination to keep certain areas "white," but whereas the Hindu in this is entirely consistent with his religion, the Christian in so acting is not in harmony with the spirit of Christ. The word "race" has been used, but what is race? See, e.g., "The Clash of Colour," by Basil Mathews.

that they have come to regard it as natural, and themselves as almost of another order of beings from the rest of mankind. This is rapidly passing away, but it has been the deadliest of all the effects of the stigma, to rob human beings of the sense of being human.

Is it not wholly consistent with Christianity to do all that we can to raise these " little ones " from such degradation? It is certainly our duty to teach them to know the compassionate Saviour Who came that they might have life, and have it abundantly.

" Being moved with compassion, he stretched forth His hand and touched him, and saith unto him: ' Be thou made clean.' " What He did for the leper He can and will do—and is doing—for the untouchable. He touches him and he is made clean, not ceremonially, but actually.

CHAPTER III

How They Look, Live, Work, and Worship

HERE is a typical Travancore outcaste. He is one of the group whom we saw shopping. The rest have trotted off to their homes, and he was making for his when we stopped him. He wonders what on earth we have stopped him for. His first instinct, when we hailed him, was to run ; and now he stands with a kind of sheepish, bewildered, uncertain, "cornered" air, instinctively backing away from us as far as he can, not unlike a dog anticipating undeserved punishment. He stands with his back bent and covers his mouth with his hands. He is, in truth, the picture of servile fear. And yet immediately, as soon as he has recovered from the shock of having been stopped, other things besides fear and servility appear in his eyes—cunning, and a kind of whimsical impudence. This last increases as he detects in our questions a note of chaff, but his demeanour remains as cringing as ever ; he speaks through his hands in a semi-whining tone, with a strange pronunciation and stranger grammar, alluding to himself in ultra-depreciatory terms and to us in ultra-exalted ones. When, however, we ask him about his religion, all expression dies out of his face. There is a flicker of fear, then utter blankness.

He is a man of perhaps 45 ; the scanty, stiff,

three-weeks' stubble on his chin is grizzled. His height is something under five feet. He is brown-black. His legs and forearms and his sole garment, a waist cloth, are caked and smeared with the mud of the paddy-field in which he has been working all day long. He is a sinewy, not unhefty little chap. His legs are rather bowed, and his hands are very knobly from incessant labour, and there is not an ounce of fat upon him; otherwise he is not unshapely. Rugged you would call him, both in limb and feature. His nose is very short and broad, and his lips thick and cheek bones prominent. He is certainly very much like a negro. But his hair is real hair, not wool; it is generally hidden by a palm-leaf cap, which is now doffed out of respect for us. His eyes are dark brown, the whites bloodshot. His mouth and teeth are stained red with betel juice; a chew of betel and tobacco is his sole indulgence and stay. There he stands, with his back humbly bent, and his mouth and nostrils covered by his joined hands lest his breath should sully us, but, as we have dropped the subject of his religion, his natural expression has returned, and there is a twinkle of humour in his eyes. When we dismiss him he scuttles off along the narrow ridges between the fields to his home. It would not be easy for us to follow him unless, like him, we were unshod; the ridges are narrow and uneven, and broken in places, and it is easy to slip off them into the soft black ooze; and there are frail bridges, awkward for the inexperienced, made of sections of palm-trunk. Let us look at another home like his.

It stands on a raised corner of a rice-field, now flooded, and reminds us of a beaver's dam, only it is

more untidy and less substantial-looking. Of course, it is bigger—about as big as a bell tent, perhaps. It has a floor of beaten mud a little above the level of the ground on which it stands. This floor has, so to speak, been turned up at the sides and back, to make walls about two feet high, with spaces in them for doors. The roof almost reaches them, or rather descends as low as, but stretches out beyond them, making diminutive verandas. It is supported upon branches of trees stuck into the floor for pillars. You will find the inside of the hut, if you will stoop and enter, dark and odorous and very grimy. It is well smoked daily by the cooking-fire and never dusted, though the floor is sometimes swept, sometimes also smeared with cow-dung and water. Hanging beneath the roof is a net, the receptacle for domestic utensils, mostly made of coco-nut shells, and for other odds and ends. The mats which are the family's beds are kept there in the daytime, rolled up, so are some dirty cloths. Other possessions are stowed away on the rudimentary rafters. One part of the dwelling is partitioned off by a single plaited palm-leaf. You will look in vain for furniture of any kind. There is, however, a wooden box—and, yes, a kerosene tin.

The housewife is squatting just outside, scraping a small fish with her only cutting instrument—one can hardly call it a knife—and a very thin, once-white cat rubs against her, mewing unceasingly. A cooking-pot containing rice for the family meal is on the fire. A sickly baby lies near her ; a bigger child is playing at the edge of the flooded field. That is an outcastes' home in Travancore. Some are better than that, others are flimsier.

"I once went near to the shelter of an 'untouchable' in Malabar," says Mr. C. F. Andrews in "Christ and Labour,"—"it could not even be called a hovel it was so wretchedly made." "As I approached," he adds, "the shrinking fear was so abject and the cries of miserable fright were so piteous that I simply dare not approach nearer, though I had come on an errand of love."

Here are three sketches of Travancore outcastes at work.

(1) Christmas is drawing near. We are going to spend it with friends, and are being punted in our *wallam* along the canals and over the flooded fields. The wallam is sometimes called by old-fashioned Europeans a "country boat." It is "uncouth, without nails or iron of any sort" in its construction, but "sewn together with twine . . . having one sail of matting and ropes of husk." That description was written in the thirteenth century by John de Monte Corvino, and is still true. The wallam is a bit of the unchanging East, now so quickly changing, and it has in these days to compete with steam- and motor-launches.

Five o'clock is past, and we can discard our topees. We stand on the cross plank of the wallam, luxuriating in the strong sea-breeze from the west, where the sky is already growing pink. Delightful indeed is the hour, and delightful the way of travelling. Ever and anon we see a rather broken line of men walking through the watery fields holding baskets to their sides with their left hands. They dip into the baskets with their right and fling out handfuls of seed with a kind of jerk, so that it may cut through the water and sink into the soft mud

below. And as they sow they sing. Our last sight of them is silhouetted against the fiery sky like a design for a frieze.

Before this, of course, they had had to plough the fields. The plough they used was a primitive one—merely a piece of shaped wood. The ploughman can carry it on his shoulder like a musket when he "homeward plods his weary way." Two small oxen, or unwieldy buffaloes, pull the plough, splashing through the mud and water. The ploughman encourages them with sounding thwacks, and with a kind of falsetto tremolo croon between the thwacks. Mr. Gandhi has said with pride: "We have managed with the same kind of plough that existed thousands of years ago." Upon this an American writer has commented thus: "I can testify that, while travelling five thousand miles in India, I never saw any agricultural implement not used by the sons of Abraham three thousand years ago. They reap with a sickle and thresh with a flail that was old when Methuselah was a child."[1] American ploughs have been introduced, but they have not always been a success; in some places they make too deep a furrow, the slight scratch that the Indian plough makes being all that the soil can bear.

(2) We are aroused, as we travel through the night, by the sound of singing. We have been sleeping on a palliasse in the bottom of the boat. We are now returning from our Christmas visit. One of the boatmen and our "boy" are peacefully, if noisily, slumbering; the other man is punting us along. As we advance the sound of the singing

[1] Dr. Claud H. Van Tyne in "India in Ferment."

grows louder. Bursts of laughter and snatches of conversation accompany it, also a regular, continuous splashing sound—evidently a number of people are there. Raising the plaited palm-leaf cover of the boat, the first thing we see is a huge, almost round, coppery moon making a broad lane of light along the canal. There is a faint suggestion of chill in the soft night air. On the right bank, a little ahead, is a big irrigation wheel, and there are others beyond. Behind the bank is a long stretch of flooded paddy-fields. The singers are the men working the wheels.

The nearest wheel must be eight or ten feet in diameter. It has been set up in a kind of rough scaffolding of bamboo poles. The men sit on the scaffolding and make the wheel revolve with their feet in order to pump the water out of the field. When the seed was sown there was about a foot of water on the land. That must be pumped out now to enable the young plants to sprout; by and by it will be slowly let in again. Like all the work in connexion with rice cultivation, this is done in Travancore by the outcastes. The spokes of the wheel, which are flat and about a foot broad, extend beyond the rim, and, as it revolves, scoop the water out of the trench through the bank into the canal, making the splash, splash that we heard. The men work rather like prisoners on the treadmill (only that they sit), pushing down the blades as they come round, first with one foot then with the other. They are sitting—on the scaffolding—at different heights, three or four to each wheel. One man leads the singing. He shouts a lilting line at the top of his raucous but ringing voice, and the rest repeat it. It is a rollicking sort

of thing, but with a plaintive undertone so Indian, and it carries far, hoarse though the singers be after night-long bawling.

We pass them, and they, too, as we leave them behind, fit into our frieze: the wheel, the delicate curved lines of the bamboo scaffolding, the singing irrigators, the regular movements of their legs, the wet blades flashing as the moonlight catches them at each revolution—all black against the big moon.

(3) Driving along in our bullock-bandy a month or two later we observe a number of women at work in a wide-stretching field. The sun shineth in his strength, but the good Travancore breeze mitigates his ferocity. The workers are moving, in a more or less orderly manner, among the thickly-growing, brilliant young paddy. They are bent almost double, plucking up handfuls of the tender plants by the roots. Each bunch, as they pluck it, is given a flick (to dry it and rid it of any earth that may cling to it) and then tossed to a heap. They thus progress right through the field, thinning out the plants, and they will presently re-plant in another field those that they have tossed on the heap. All the day long they do this, stooping over the plants, except when, now and then, one and another raises herself to stretch, or to tend a loudly-lamenting baby, or to refresh herself with betel or with a snack. Chatter and laughter and badinage, all rather coarse-sounding, come from them in waves rising and dying down. The owner of the field or his agent is watching and directing, squatting under a *cadjan* (palm-leaf) umbrella on the ridge, out of pollution range. The ridges and banks are made by the outcastes. They stand in the river up to

their necks, and duck to fill their baskets with sand and mud from the river-bed. This they empty into a boat, and use to build or repair ridges or to reclaim land.

I

THE little people whose appearance, dwellings, and work we have been observing are *Pulayas*. They form the largest group of Malayalam-speaking outcastes. *Pariahs* are the next largest. There are Tamil-speaking Pariahs also in Tinnevelly, throughout the Madras Presidency, and in South Travancore, a numerous community, less depressed than their Malayali brethren.[1] Symptoms of a mass movement among the Tinnevelly Pariahs are discernible.

Pulayas and Pariahs, though we are accustomed thus to class them together, are really distinct

[1] " Pariah " is one of the many Indian words that we have adopted into the English language. We sometimes speak of people who have gone under as " social pariahs." The word is often loosely used of all outcastes, though it is really, as we see here, the name of one section of South Indian outcastes. " Pariah " is the Anglicized form. In Tamil it is *paraiyan*; in Malayalam it is *paraya*. Analogous sections in other language-areas have different names. Other descriptive designations for the outcastes are " the depressed classes," because of their low, serf-like social position, and because of the disabilities which the stigma of " uncleanness " entails; " the backward classes," because they are less intelligent and civilized than other classes, and almost destitute of education; " the untouchables " and " unapproachables," which are self-explanatory; " panchamas," a polite euphemism signifying fifth caste; " outcaste " rather gives it away, showing them to be outside caste and therefore of no caste. Sometimes they are called " the submerged sixth " because they (outcastes and jungle tribes together) are about a sixth of the population, and constitute the social underworld of India. Other names applied by themselves are " Adi-Andhras " (aboriginal Telugus), Andhra being the ancient name for the Telugu country; and " Adi-Dravidas," for those whose language is Tamil. The distinction between " outcast " and " outcaste " should be noted. The latter have not, like " social outcasts," been cast out of society; they were never in, though some claim that they once were. An American missionary thus describes their position: " The outcaste has fallen, not *to* the bottom, but on *through* the bottom " of the social order.

communities, with different characteristics and customs, different dialects, and different traditions of origin. They behave towards each other as high-caste Hindus do to fellow-Hindus of other castes than their own, refraining from associating with each other and from eating together, and holding intermarriage in abhorrence. Some sections are divided into sub-sections, who do not intermarry or "interdine." Pulayas, for example, are thus divided into "westerns" and "easterns."

Outcastes are, in truth, as zealous about "caste" among themselves as Hindus are among themselves, though it is to caste that their low estate is due. This looks like imitation of their betters, and a quaint, pathetic attempt at self-assertion by a downtrodden people. It is as if the outcaste said: "Well, I may be low, but there is so-and-so lower still. I will show my superiority by cold-shouldering him." That which has ostracized them is imitated in order to ostracize others. But is it imitation? Or have the Hindus imitated the outcastes? Is the caste system possibly older and even more Indian than the Aryans who have made it so distinctively theirs? Does it derive from aboriginal totemism? These are questions that have suggested themselves, but they cannot be discussed here. We note this fact—that the outcastes arrange themselves in "castes," and that some are so low that they pollute their fellow-outcastes, the *Nayadis* in the Cochin State (rat-catchers and eaters) touching the lowest depth. And this tendency has created a difficulty in connexion with mass movements among them.

In the Telugu-speaking area of the Deccan (the

Andhra country) this difficulty has manifested itself in connexion with the simultaneous movement among the two great sections of the outcastes called the *Malas* and *Madigas*. Of all the present-day mass movements in India this is now in fullest flood. Malas are agricultural labourers, and some of them weave coarse cloth in the agricultural off-seasons. Madigas are primarily workers in leather, though they also are cultivators. Leather-working has always been looked upon as especially polluting, involving, as it does, the handling of the skins of dead beasts. The prejudice against those who follow the trade, the feeling of uncleanness attaching to it, is easier to understand than that against cultivators of the soil. The Jews, in common with other oriental peoples, in order to keep ceremonially clean, shrank from touching any dead thing (Lev. xi. 30, etc.); the instinct is, no doubt, primitive. The great group of outcastes, the *Chamars*, in the United Provinces, Punjab, etc., are primarily leather-workers. The agricultural labourers of the Punjab are the *Chuhras*, a numerous body; those in Bengal are the *Namasudras*, less depressed than the generality of such workers; in Western India they are the *Mahars*. Another body of outcastes in that area are the *Mangs*, who are also (or were) professional thieves, and have to answer to a roll-call every evening to prove that they are not engaged in any nefarious depredation. One of their duties is to beat drums before the images of the village or household deities, which, seeing that they are so polluting, seems strange.

In other areas, also, outcastes have their allotted parts in the village festivals. Though outside the

village community, they have their recognized functions in relation thereto—perform menial or other services for the good of the community, and are included in the annual festivals, to perform analogous duties for the village goddesses and godlings. A good many outcastes are scavengers and sweepers, e.g., the *Doms* and *Bhangis* in the United Provinces. Only a few of the groups of outcastes have been mentioned in these paragraphs; there are many others in different parts of India, divided and sub-divided into septs or clans; those that have been mentioned include the groups among which mass movements are taking place.

It must not be supposed that all these people resemble our timid Pulaya friends in appearance and manner. A rough general resemblance there may be, but each area presents its differences. The Chuhras, for instance, are a fine, upstanding race of men, anything but servile in demeanour. Bishop Whitehead wrote of them after a visit to the Punjab: "I was very much struck by the sturdy independence of the people and their friendliness and sense of humour. The simple, natural way in which they came up to shake hands and say good-bye was delightful." Certainly it is hard to picture southern outcastes so "free" with a bishop. The Chuhras made good soldiers, and served in Mesopotamia, France, and other fields during the war. Many outcastes, indeed, joined the army, the labour corps especially, "for the duration," and brought back to their people strange tales of the great world. Their experiences, widened outlook, temporary possession of money, and the military life of discipline combined with freedom, reacting on village communities,

have contributed not a little to the present unrest.

In respect of habitat also the Pulayas are hardly typical. They live, as a rule, in isolated huts. Elsewhere in India outcastes' dwellings are usually a compact clump of hovels outside the village to which they are attached, but inside which they may not live.[1] Many of their hamlets (called *cheris* in South India) are a huddle of huts in a confined space, filthy to the last degree and surrounded by filth. "No decent European farmer would house his cattle in them," says the Aga Khan. Disease naturally is never far off. Infant mortality is inevitably high. The moral atmosphere of the cheri is generally as impure as the physical. Obscene nicknames are common. The untruthfulness, thievishness, and deceit of some outcastes are proverbial. It is only fair to say that others, especially among the agricultural ex-serfs, are hardworking and faithful.

II

NEXT to their untouchability the most noticeable thing about outcastes is their poverty. All that has been said about them up to now has borne witness to this. Though it varies in degree in different parts of India, with varying standards of pay, it can only be described as universal, perpetual, and intense. The vast majority of outcastes are desperately, unbelievably poor. Their influx into the Church in such numbers has an intimate bearing on the question of self-support.

[1] When "village" is used adjectivally, as in "village education," it often refers to the extra-village huts of outcastes, or, as in Travancore, where there are no villages, to the area in which their isolated huts are situated.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in his little book, "The Awakening of India," wrote some time ago: "India is the home of the poverty-stricken. For days one goes through the land and sees nothing but thin bodies toiling, toiling, toiling, trudging, trudging, trudging." That is the common impression of "rural" India viewed from a railway-carriage window. Mr. MacDonald's acquaintance with India is, of course, much more intimate than that; but what he describes can be seen by any one. He does not refer only to outcastes, but they are the poorest of these poor, and poverty has brought its invariable accompaniments. Outcastedom has four D's—dirt, disease, debt, and drink. The people are so poor that they are habitually ill-nourished. Sir William Hunter said long ago that 40,000,000 Indians go through life with insufficient food, and Sir Charles Elliott estimated that one-half of the agricultural population never satisfy hunger from one year's end to another. A recent writer, Mr. Daya Shankar Dubey, calculated that 64.6 per cent of the population lives on insufficient food, getting only about 73 per cent of the minimum required for maintenance of efficiency.[1] How, indeed, can efficiency be expected? The marvel is that the outcaste can toil so incessantly. He shares the oriental tendency to slack and to work spasmodically—to leaven spurts of labour with spells of leisure—but exhibits on occasion a wonderful and sustained endurance. "Some villagers near Benares," mentioned by Dr. D. J. Fleming in "Building with India," "said that they ate only once in two days for a month

[1] Quoted by Miss Kelman in "Labour in India."

or two in the cold weather before the winter harvest, when they get the pulses and barley. But in the hot, dry months they gorged themselves at marriage feasts. When asked why they did not save up for the lean season before harvest, they replied that it would all be taken up for interest and rent. 'We live in fear—fear of the moneylender, fear of the landlord's agent, fear of the police.' With false interest and extorted land assessments they felt that they would never get any benefit from saving."

Until the middle of last century the Pulayas and Pariahs were slaves, the property of the landowners. Others also were formerly slaves, and many are still virtually serfs. When they were slaves their owners were accustomed to give them food enough to keep them going, a cloth once or twice a year, a feast when they were married or after harvest, or possibly on other occasions. They received no wages, either in currency or kind. After their emancipation, when they were paid for their labour, was it likely that they would know how to use what they received, or to save, even if their pay was ever enough for them to save on? As a matter of fact, there has never been for the bulk of them any "margin." Theirs is literally a hand-to-mouth existence. Many (certainly in Travancore, where the average earnings of a Pulaya family are equal to about 4*d*. a day) are still paid in kind. When a girl is married heavy expenses have to be incurred—a dowry should be given with her, and the whole "caste" should be lavishly feasted, or the family will be made to suffer; dresses, jewellery, conveyances, musicians, etc., must be hired. The

money for all this has, of course, to be borrowed. The sum needed may equal half a year's or even a year's income. How can it ever be repaid? It cannot. At harvest time, as indicated in the quotation above, the family can earn more than at other seasons—perhaps three or four times as much. Then the lender demands repayment. Or, rather, he asks for his interest. He charges almost any rate he likes, or names any sum he likes; the illiterate borrower is unable to dispute his contentions. (Cases have occurred where one anna per rupee per month has been charged, equal to 1*s.* interest a year on a loan of 1*s.* 4*d.*) All that the borrower can do is to pay the interest, or part of it. The balance accumulates, and is added to the principal. The borrower practically works for the lender until his death, when his heirs inherit the debt and become his serfs. Again, illness or a lawsuit may necessitate a loan, and if the outcaste owns a bit of land he has to borrow in sowing-time to purchase seed. When his crop is ready the lender reaps and carries off grain to the value of the loan and interest. "In many districts," says a Madras government report, "the panchama field-labourer is so tied up by debt to his master (who takes care that the debt shall not be redeemed) that he is practically in the position of a serf. The system of man-mortgage, by which a labourer binds himself and frequently his heirs to service till the debt is redeemed, is well-known." A well-known missionary in South India rescued many lads from this kind of servitude. Of course, this burden of indebtedness is not so severely felt in a land where it is almost habitual and no odium attaches to it. "He is a great man," said a young Hindu to

the present writer, indicating a neighbour, " he has a debt of ten thousand rupees ! " Perhaps, after all, this is a method of assessing financial stability ; it indicates a man's credit.

Anyhow, Christianity, " the religion of compassion," as Sir Harry Johnston has called it, is out to fight the four D's. Its representatives have also helped, as we have seen, to cope with the gaunt spectre of famine that has held the land in its iron grip from time to time.

III

THE growing industrialization of India is affecting the outcastes in several areas. Large numbers of labourers are constantly leaving their villages for the factories in the cities. Problems that arose in England during the industrial revolution in the early years of last century are arising, and, indeed, becoming clamant, in India. Here, too, the religion of compassion has something to say touching hours and conditions of labour, housing, and welfare work.

Another matter that must be noticed is the increasing unrest among the outcastes—the fact that the hitherto " silent millions " have become vocal. " All-India Conferences of the Depressed Classes " have assembled during the last three or four years to discuss their grievances, to protest against their treatment by the higher classes, and to agitate for social uplift and the general betterment of their community. Local organizations for like purposes have sprung up in various areas. When the Prince of Wales was in India in 1921–2 a huge deputation

from the " all-India " body waited upon him by the roadside near Delhi and presented an address. Their chairman said : " May I request your Royal Highness to convey to His Imperial Majesty our message that there are in India sixty millions of human beings who are untouchables, and that these must be raised if India is to be made really fit for *swaraj* (self-government) ? " The Prince made a sympathetic reply. " Whoever heard," exclaimed one of the deputation afterwards, " of a raja or a nawab sahib receiving a petition from such as we ! *But the King's son did !* "

Their message to the King echoes a sentiment often expressed by Indian nationalist leaders—notably, of course, by Mahatma Gandhi—and seems to indicate that outcastes are being drawn into the vortex of the current political ferment. They have been for ages impervious to public opinion, oblivious of the happenings of the world around them, unable to feel interest in anything outside their toilsome daily round and the petty interests of their own hamlets. In some parts of India this is so still, and, indeed, to think of the outcastes as one huge compact body of fifty millions, conscious of solidarity, would be wrong, or, at least, premature.[1] There is, no doubt, a growing sense of solidarity among those who speak the same language, though the divisiveness of that sectionalism which we have likened to " caste " is operative, and the wider community-consciousness may come. Mr. Gandhi's championship has stirred them deeply. His followers have let it be known, and it is known even in seemingly

[1] According to the census returns for 1921 the depressed classes number 52,680,000, and the hill and forest tribes about 9,750,000.

buried villages. To this, as well as to the direct and indirect influence of education and (as already mentioned) the return of those who served in the army during the war, the widening of their outlook and growing sensitiveness to the unrest infecting other classes must be attributed. No one—certainly no Christian missionary—has condemned untouchability more strongly than Mr. Gandhi. And he has not only spoken ; among other things, he has made an outcaste girl a member of his household. His words and action are the outcome of pity and policy. In one of his most recent utterances since his release from prison (1924) he has declared " removal of the curse of untouchability among Hindus " to be the first plank in his platform, and he has said : " To remove the curse of untouchability is to do penance for the sin committed by Hindus of degrading a fifth of their own religionists." His followers endorse this, and the National Congress has included " removal of untouchability " among the most urgently needed of reforms. So far not much result has been seen. Enlightened Hindus agree that this " curse " ought to be removed, and some are anxious to remove it, but custom is paralysing. Many have honestly, if perhaps rather wistfully, praised the philanthropic work of Christian missions among outcastes—wistfully, because an alien faith has done what they have hitherto felt powerless to do. The Arya Samaj has, however, ceremonially " cleansed " large numbers of untouchables and declared them touchable. There are also Depressed Class Missions at work which are not Christian, though Christians are associated with them, and most of their methods

are copied from those of Christian missions. Other philanthropic efforts—such as the digging of wells for outcastes, who are not allowed to use the public wells—have been made by benevolent Hindu gentlemen. And the Government is doing what it can to improve their lot. Outcastes are nervous about the "Indianization" of Government. Though flattered by the interest of enlightened and political Hindus, they cannot forget the long past, and fear that this interest may prove transient, especially if British influence be lessened.

IV

"THE feare of things invisible is the naturall seede of religion." This dictum of Thomas Hobbes, who enunciated it three hundred years ago, would be more acceptable, doubtless, if "naturall" came immediately before "religion." But "the feare of things invisible" does most accurately describe the "seede" of the outcastes' religion. From that "feare" it springs, and a rank crop it produces. It is called *naturism* when the fear is produced by natural phenomena, *animism* when "spirits" (*animae*)—so to call them for want of a better word—are what are feared. Naturism, the religion of aboriginal jungle tribes, is probably even more "primitive" than animism, and is thought to be the religion of the human race in its infancy. And it is so like ideas of our own early childhood—the ideas that darkness and thunder inspired, the awe we felt if left alone where trees grew thick, the ideas that "uncanny" and "eerie" suggest—that it is easy to suppose that it may have been. Animism

is present in the more highly-developed religions of India (at any rate, it lurks in the minds of those who profess them); it strongly leavened Jewish and Roman thought in the first century, and mediæval Christianity; it survives wherever there are superstition and faith in magic and mascots.[1]

"What the animist worships and seeks by all means to influence and conciliate is," says Sir Herbert Risley, "the shifting and shadowy company of unknown powers or influences making for evil rather than good which reside in the primeval forest, in the crumbling hills, in the rushing river, in the spreading trees; which give its spring to the tiger, its venom to the snake; which generate jungle fever and walk abroad in the terrible guise of cholera, smallpox, and murrain. Closer than this he does not seek to define the object to which he offers his victim, or whose symbol he daubs with vermilion at the appointed season. Some sort of power is there, and that is enough for him."[2] The outcaste tries to placate the spirit or demon or power by offerings of a few grains of rice, a bit of rag, a flower or fruit, or any other insignificant thing, in the place, or before the stone or other object, which it is supposed to haunt, or which represents it, sometimes smearing it with vermilion to symbolize a blood sacrifice. A cock or goat is occasionally slain before

[1] See, for example, Chapter I of "Jesus in the Experience of Men." "The Gospel," says Dr. Glover, "did not, in so many words, deny their (the demons) existence, but first degraded them and broke their hold, and at last annihilated them. By so doing it took terror out of men's souls, it made obscene and cruel rites needless, and greatly purified and sweetened life." This has been the experience of primitive peoples, including outcastes, who have become Christians. It is hardly necessary to say that their religion is not Hinduism, though Mr. Gandhi speaks of them as the Hindus' "own religionists." They know practically nothing of the Hindu pantheon or philosophy.

[2] "The People of India."

it. At other times "spirit-dancing" is performed. Gambling, drunkenness, excess, and obscenity are the almost invariable accompaniments of their religious festivals. Sorcery is resorted to when any one is ill and upon various other occasions, and magic when an enemy is to be injured and for other similar purposes. But these practices are not confined to the outcastes; they are indulged in by "higher" people, especially those in whom the Dravidian strain is strongest. They also resort at times to outcaste sorcerers.

In Bishop Whitehead's book, "The Village Gods of South India"—a storehouse of information on the subject—is a detailed and accurate description of a village festival in the Telugu country. It takes place when an epidemic of cholera is feared. It lasts for two or three days and nights. The chief feature is the sacrifice of a buffalo to the village deity, a local goddess named Pedamma, the Great Mother, whose displeasure is the supposed cause of the epidemic. In this festival various classes of the community participate, but the outcaste Malas and Madigas have a prominent part in it. It has nothing of a festal character, nor anything of the nature of worship in it, but is for the most part gruesome and revolting. The buffalo, dyed yellow with turmeric powder and garlanded with margosa leaves, is led in procession through the village and worshipped by the inhabitants as it passes each door, the heads of the households pouring water over its feet. It is then tied up before the decked-out image of the goddess, and remains there while various further preparations are made.

At dead of night, by glare of torchlight and

to the accompaniment of wild music, the sacrifice takes place in the presence of an excited crowd. The chanting of the musicians and the drumming increase in fervour as a Madiga brings forward the buffalo. He makes it stand in front of the canopy which covers the goddess, and there decapitates it. Every effort is made to prevent any of its blood from falling upon the ground. What does fall is instantly buried, and water is thrown on the place, lest it should be carried off to some other village, which would obtain all the benefit of the sacrifice! The din of drumming and shouting is deafening, and the excitement is delirious. The Great Mother has accepted the sacrifice. She is delighting in the blood, of which quantities have still to flow. A feast follows; the people consume the material food, and Pedamma is supposed to take the essence of it.

About 3 a.m. a procession makes its way through the village. There are drummers and musicians, the former drumming with machine-like precision and the latter producing wail-like skirls and an accompanying drone. In the middle of the excited throng are two Malas, one of whom carries a basket, in which are blood-soaked rice and still more horrible things. Both men are in a state of quivering excitement, and become from time to time "possessed," one or the other falling down shrieking in a fit or a faint. Indeed, they have to be held fast with ropes lest they should dash away. As the procession surges along the man with the basket throws a handful of the rice upon the roof of each house to protect it from the spirits, the crowd meanwhile shouting "Food! Food!" and

flourishing clubs, choppers, staves, and what not, tossing cut limes in the air, occasionally smashing coco-nuts and making a great din, all to distract the spirits, which are eager to impair the efficacy of the sacrifice. This slow, delirious progress goes on until day dawns; then all return to Pedamma under her canopy.

Various ceremonies occupy the day—sheep, goats, and fowls are slain and offered to the goddess. Finally, at nightfall, Pedamma, with the buffalo's head, is dragged in a little cart in solemn procession to about a furlong beyond the village boundary; she is divested of her ornaments, and all return quietly home. The goddess, having been appeased by the sacrifice and copious blood-shedding and the frenzy of her worshippers, is thus, as it were, put out of harm's way—at least, so far as that village is concerned, and that is all that concerns that village.

CHAPTER IV

What Kind of Christians are They?

FROM the gross darkness in which the last chapter closed we now enter into light. We pass from an animistic to a Christian festival. The people who formerly took part in the one now take part in the other. They have become Christians, being fruit of the mass movement in the Telugu area. The transition from the one scene to the other is typical of the change wrought in them by conversion.

The festival is a harvest thanksgiving in Dornakal, described by Bishop Whitehead. No one has done so much as he during the last twenty years to arouse the Church to the significance of mass movements in India, and their potentialities. "The Bishop" referred to in the description is, of course, Dr. Azariah of Dornakal. The festival is taking place in his "cathedral."

"This cathedral" (says Bishop Whitehead) "is, I imagine, the cheapest cathedral in Christendom, having cost just Rs 600 (£40), but at the same time it is really beautiful. The proportions are perfect, the nave being fifty feet by twenty-eight feet, and the chancel twenty by fifteen. The materials used are just those in ordinary use by the people. The walls are of brick and mud, the framework of the roof and the pillars supporting it

are of wood, the roof itself of thatch, and the floor of beaten earth ; the decorations consist of festoons of coloured paper suspended from the beams. It gives the impression of extreme simplicity, real beauty of form, and perfect adaptability to its environment and purpose. It has no seats except for the Bishop and clergy.[1]

" It rained heavily in the morning ; but, in spite of the downpour, there were 120 communicants at 7.30 a.m., many of them having come in from neighbouring villages. About 350 came for the morning service at 11. The note of simplicity and naturalness and adaptation to the needs of the people pervades all the services. They are framed on the lines of the Anglican Prayer Book, but in all possible ways are adapted to the spirit and ideas of the village folk. The music and singing are entirely Indian ; the canticles, including the Te Deum, are all turned into Telugu lyrics, all the hymns are Telugu lyrics sung to Telugu tunes, and all the singing is accompanied by small brass cymbals and a small drum.[2] The Bishop has told me that the old Hebrew songs and ancient Christian hymns lend themselves extraordinarily well to adaptations of this kind.

" The most characteristic feature about this particular service was the presentation of the alms. The Bishop and I stood at the altar rails side by side, and all the people trooped up to present their alms ; first the little children, then the women, and

[1] With the rapid growth of the Christian community this " cathedral " is now becoming too small, and the Bishop has plans prepared for a successor, spacious and lofty, but " Indian " in its architecture.

[2] " Lyrics " in India are hymns composed by Indians and sung to Indian tunes. " Hymns " are translations from English, sung to English, or, at any rate, western tunes.

lastly the men. Some put money into the alms-dish which the Bishop held ; others gave offerings in kind—bags of grain, pots of *ghee* (clarified butter), vegetables, fowls, a goat, pieces of cloth woven by weavers, articles of furniture made by carpenters, all of which I received, the livestock being passed out through the chancel window to a pen made to receive them outside, while the rest were deposited at the sides of the altar. There were a cow calf and a buffalo calf among the offerings. These were brought into the church, but at the west end, and when all the other offerings had been presented, I went down to receive and offer them to God. At the conclusion of the service all the offerings in kind were sold by auction, and fetched very good prices. Considering that famine conditions had prevailed over the whole of the Deccan owing to the total failure of the monsoon, it was very touching to see the poor people come and offer their fowls and other gifts out of their deep poverty. Very many of the men and women were clothed in rags, and some literally dressed in sackcloth, having no garment but an old gunny bag.

" Pervading all the arrangements there was a spirit of common sense and reasonableness, a freedom from the bondage of tradition combined with a wise conservatism and an entire absence of any mere striving after effect that was very impressive. The edification of the people themselves and the adequate expression of their devotional feelings were obviously the law that governed everything, but what impressed me most was the catechizing of the children on the following Sunday. It must be remembered that the children all come from the

poorest, most ignorant, and most depressed class in all India, but for twenty minutes the missionary (an Indian) absolutely riveted their attention, and played on their feelings as a musician plays on an organ. Now they were listening eagerly to his words, then a ripple of laughter would pass down the ranks, and one saw rows of white teeth and dark eyes gleaming with merriment; then in an instant their eyes were shut and their hands clasped reverently before their faces as they sang after him the Telugu verses which he had specially composed to illustrate his teaching.

"The schoolgirls came in the evening to the Bishop's house and sang some of our Lord's parables as action songs. These are most effective, and the women and girls seem never tired of singing them, or the men of listening to them. Nearly all the miracles and chief incidents of the gospel story have been put into this form by one of the ladies of the Wesleyan Mission in the Haidarabad State, and are most popular among both Christians and non-Christians. It is just the kind of thing that is needed for making the story of our Lord's life known far and wide."

. . . . . .

The first Christians in Dornakal were baptized in 1906 by Bishop Whitehead in the compound in which the cathedral now stands. They were thirty in number, outcaste Malas, won and taught by Tamil-speaking Indian missionaries from Tinnevelly, whose own forefathers were the fruit of one of the first of modern mass movements. Dornakal, which includes the S.P.G. and C.M.S. Telugu

Missions, is the Tinnevelly Church's foreign mission field. The Bishop is a Tamilian from Tinnevelly. He has lately welcomed three Anglican missionaries from the Church in Travancore who will work in a part of the diocese hitherto untouched.

I

CHRISTIANS of outcaste origin throughout India now number several hundreds of thousands. In the areas in which mass movements have arisen they constitute the majority of the members of the Churches founded by the missions working in those areas. That is a fact the significance of which must be grasped. It raises various questions: What *kind* of Christians are these? What is the quality of their Christianity? Is it, in any sense, real? Before attempting to answer this, there is another question that ought, perhaps, to be faced: Why do they become Christians? What are their motives? It is difficult for us to fathom their minds. There may be a variety of motives, but they can be summed up generally as the hope of betterment, and this includes social, economic, intellectual, and religious improvement.[1]

Outcastes are so frightfully "down and out," so desperately poor and despised, that it would be wonderful if they did not desire better material conditions and jump at any chance of obtaining them. "Such a chance," some people say, "they

[1] Is not desire for betterment at bottom the cause of all the present unrest? Wherever, the world over, there is discontent with present conditions, and hope of improving them, and the effort to realize the hope, unrest is caused. The ferment seething in India may be thus diagnosed. With most classes it assumes a political aspect. This, as has been said, is not unfelt by outcastes.

see in the missionary. He is, in their eyes, an influential person able to confer benefits. What more natural than that they should be willing to oblige him by becoming Christians, which in itself raises them in the social scale?" Any other explanation of mass movements is incredible to quite a good many people. But the religious motive does enter in. It would be strange if it did not. First, because in India religion has a place—and a predominant place—in the thoughts and lives and motives of all classes of people, and could hardly help being among the "mixed motives" that lead these Indian people to change their religion. Second, outcastes feel that Christianity is a better religion than their own, and one from which they will derive more good.

The characteristic feature of their religion is, as we have seen, fear—fear of malignant spirits. Outcastes are all their lives "subject to bondage." They and their families and poor little possessions (if they have any) are, they believe, at the mercy of all-pervading powers, irresponsible, capricious, unaccountable in their actions, but hurtful unless placated. Outcastes go in fear also of offending the high-caste people by polluting them. They are a prey to superstitious terrors and the dread of sorcery and magic. Is it not probable—nay, inevitable—that to people so circumstanced the message of the Gospel, when they have grasped its import, will make an intense appeal? For they then learn that they have an almighty Father, stronger than all demons, Who loves them, though men despise and detest them—Who loves them and cares for them as much as He cares for any other men, loves them

so much that He has given His only Son to die for them, that they may have eternal life. Does it involve too great a strain upon our sense of what is reasonable to suppose that, ignorant and degraded though they are, they will hail this as good news? Is it not likely—nay, certain—that they will be attracted by it? "Instead of dæmons that deceive," wrote Tatian in the second century, "we have learnt a Master Who deceiveth not."[1] That was the experience of those who became Christians then, and it is the experience of those who exchange animism for Christianity to-day. The exchange is, however, not only of fear for love, but of what is degrading for what is ennobling, what is low for what is pure. And the outcastes appreciate this, however dimly. They feel that they and their children will be happier and higher and better people, as well as better-off people, if they "join."

What are the tests of reality in religion? Willingness to suffer for it and to make sacrifices for it, changed lives and consistent conduct—are not these among them? Outcaste converts have shown these. In the early days of the movement in Travancore, during a time of persecution, a number of the Christians and inquirers fled to the hills, where they were found by a missionary.[2] After a time their consciences pricked them. They were

[1] See T. R. Glover, "Jesus in the Experience of Men," p. 7.

[2] The Rev. Henry Baker, junior, the apostle to the Hill Aryans, who are now almost all Christians; this was a mass movement, but the Hill Aryans are not an aboriginal or outcaste tribe in the sense in which the terms are used in this book. The thrilling story of Mr. Baker's mission to the Hill Aryans is one of the romances of missions. (See, e.g., "The Anglican Church in Travancore and Cochin," pp. 182 *et seq.*)

slaves, and they felt that, as Christians, they ought to go back to their masters, as Onesimus did to Philemon. So they went back. Many of them were unmercifully punished for having run away, tortured, or made to do degrading things. One, a girl named Elizabeth, was chained to a tree and threatened with death unless she renounced Christianity. She would not, but was released during the night by a more kindly-disposed person and made her way back to the hills, where she died—happy, she said, to be going to her Father's house. Others also died, while still others, despite persecution, became missionaries to their fellows.

Nowadays persecution is usually less severe, but is trying enough to its victims. Early in the present year (1924) a number of outcastes in a district in the Madras Presidency were baptized by a Wesleyan Methodist missionary. At once persecution by the caste people began, and the Christians were refused access to the wells or permission to pass through the streets of their villages. Finding that these measures failed to shake the faith of the converts, the Hindus of three villages called a meeting and forced every Christian to stand on one leg for six hours if he would not renounce his faith. Until there was official intervention to deepen a well for their use these converts were in danger of death from lack of water, but through all their sufferings they have stood firm. In another place a group of inquirers, twenty-five in all, had their huts burnt down and all their store of grain for a year destroyed. That has been a not unusual occurrence in the history of mass movements. Every mass movement worker has cases of petty

as well as more serious persecution brought to his notice continually. It is not always true that outcastes "have everything to gain and nothing to lose by becoming Christians."

In Western India, when their neighbours see that Mangs or Mahars are contemplating baptism, they are jeered at, and threatened with all kinds of boycotting. After baptism their allowance of bread, which they have been getting for certain duties performed, is stopped. This bread is not theirs by legal right, but only by time-honoured custom, but it represents half a man's income, and that the more certain half. The village grocer also refuses to sell to them, and demands immediate payment of all dues—a most embarrassing demand. The sowing season comes round, and the money-lender refuses the customary loan for the purchase of seed, however exorbitant the rate of interest offered. This is like depriving them of their very life. In dozens of ways those who are commonly thought to have nothing to lose but all to gain by becoming Christians are bearing their cross. The persecution that outcaste converts have to face is, as a rule, not of such intensity or accompanied by such domestic anguish as that for which high-caste converts must be prepared, but it is frequently real and painful. "Many are the marks and stripes I have seen on the backs of our people because they have refused to labour on the Lord's Day, or pilfer grain from their neighbour's fields, or join in some idolatrous ceremonies," wrote Bishop Gill, of Travancore. "Beatings, loss of work and wages, deprivation of grazing rights, being turned out of their houses, driven away from wells,

cast off by their non-Christian relatives, and, still more, relatives-in-law—all this, together with threats to life itself, has fallen upon mass movement converts," wrote a missionary working in the United Provinces, and she added: "But they stand. I have heard a man whose life was threatened for bringing his whole village to Christ say calmly: 'They may kill me, but I have only done my duty', and a woman from another village cry defiantly: 'They say they will kill us. Well, let them. *Then* what more can they do?'"

Instances of such staunchness under persecution constantly appear in missionary magazines. Other instances, again, illustrate the converts' consistency in conduct. We may take the testimony of non-Christians. "Formerly," said a Hindu landowner to Miss Laurence, the missionary just quoted, "our cattle were never safe. These people used to select the fattest and best and give it 'something,' so that in a few weeks it died." They would then be called in to remove the carcase, which would be their perquisite, and on which they would feast. "That never happens now," he added. "This fellow used to be the terror of the neighbourhood," said a Hindu to a missionary in Travancore, pointing to one of the converts. "Now," he continued, "he is a perfect gentleman. And not only that. His influence keeps the others from their old ways." "The change here is marvellous," said a rich man to a woman missionary. "We didn't believe our labourers could help pilfering the paddy and carrying off anything they had the chance of taking. Since they have become Christians it hardly ever happens."

Among a group of about thirty Madigas baptized a few years ago was a woman who received the name of Rachel, and who had been noted for drunkenness and immorality, but after her baptism led a consistent Christian life. A Mohammedan constable one day ordered her to carry a pot of toddy to the police station for the other constables. She refused, saying that it would be wrong for her to do it, and that she had given up drinking and would not touch the pot. He then beat her severely, but she still refused. Many of the Christians were so impressed with her firmness that they too gave up drinking. The consistent walk of these humble Christians, illustrations of which could easily be multiplied, surely witnesses to the reality of the change wrought by conversion. Consider their heredity and environment—the many generations of heathen indiscipline and unregulated indulgence behind them, the enticements of heathenism all around them, with their constant appeal to the old instincts. A genuine *metanoia*, the work of the Holy Spirit, there must have been.

The poverty of the outcastes has been described. Christians are not, on the whole, better off than their non-Christian fellows, in the sense of having more to spare, but they give what they can to the Church, as is shown by the description of a harvest thankoffering with which this chapter begins. At the weekly services also there and in many other places the offertory is largely in kind, because money is scarce among the worshippers. They have a custom called *pidiyari* in the South. Every morning, when the mother of a household takes out rice for the chief and often only meal of the

day, she puts aside a handful. That is for the Church, and on Sunday morning, when the collection is taken, she will bring the week's accumulation and pour it out on the floor of the church. The little heap of the several households' contribution is afterwards sold by auction, together with any fruit or vegetables included in the offertory, the proceeds going to church funds.

" When we were heathens we had to give through fear of the curses of the *sanyasi* (holy man) and the priest. Now we are in a religion of love, so why should we give ? " said a new convert to a missionary. At the beginning of mass movement work missionaries were, as a rule, so struck by the extreme poverty of the people that they asked nothing in the way of self-support from them. In a certain mission four or five years ago the amount which each family was contributing did not exceed twelve annas a year ; now almost everywhere each married man contributes one rupee per annum, besides free-will offerings. In most places the regular monthly subscriptions to the " sustentation fund," or similar fund, are felt to be rather a burden, like many things that have to be done regularly ; it is easier for people of their temperament to give generously at some time of *tamasha* (show), when they are in a joyous mood. But the progress from the attitude represented in the quotation above to that indicated in the sentences that follow is general. As long ago as the early 'sixties of last century a Bishop of Madras (Dr. Spencer), after confirming over a thousand candidates in Kottayam, referred in his primary charge to " the efforts on a very humble scale of the very poor slaves of Travancore who, out

of their deep poverty, pay fellow-slaves to read to them and instruct them." That was frequently done. In places never visited by missionaries rude sheds were put up by would-be catechumens, and in order to learn the rudiments of the faith they maintained as their teacher some convert who could read. The movement is still largely self-extending, a paid agency for that purpose being conspicuous by its absence, as Bishop Gill has said. In many places congregations have utilized their leisure to accumulate building materials, and have even sometimes given their time (forfeiting their sorely-needed pay), to help in erecting their churches—that is, *pakka* churches of stone to supersede the mud-walled sheds of the first stage and the school building that did duty for a church as well in the second stage. A certain elderly convert in a little out-station once brought to a Travancore missionary Rs 10 towards building a church. Before he died he gave altogether Rs 150. His pay had averaged 2½*d.* a day.

If giving to their Church, consistent Christian living, and patient endurance of persecution, are true tokens of the Holy Spirit's work in transforming lives that were sinful and degraded, such tokens abound. But, in fact, those who know these Christians at all intimately entertain little doubt of the genuineness of the faith of many among them. There are not a few humble saints in their ranks, and the faith of numbers is of a robust, literal, living sort. This need not surprise us. While they share the constant awareness of the unseen that constitutes so large an element in the spirituality of India, their original religious concepts

are so comparatively simple, so much less complex than those of Hindus, that they have, so to speak, so much less to unlearn. Many exhibit the *anima naturaliter Christiania*. In some there may have been also a vague notion of the existence of a benevolent Being superior in might to the demons whom they fear. The Chuhras of the Punjab do indeed worship a god whom they call Balashah, and their religious ideas are more or less coloured by those of Hindus and Moslems. But with most other outcastes this is not so. There is, however, in them a predisposition to faith. How truly that is to become Christian depends very largely on the teaching they receive. "Their preparation for baptism," it has been well said, "is a sifting process whereby we test the sincerity of those who would take the Christian name, as well as prepare them for its privileges,"[1] Hence the supreme importance of right teaching, and, therefore, of a supply of proper teachers.

If a group of outcastes desire to "join" because their neighbours have already done so, and because they have heard and dimly understood something of the gospel message, and realize that learning more of it is the way of admittance into the Church and of attaining the "betterment" that comes thereby; and if the man who has prepared such a group has been content to follow the line of least resistance and to drum into their heads the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Commandments until they can repeat them parrot-wise (no small undertaking, especially with the elderly, some of whom never achieve this), their faith can hardly be expected to

[1] The Rev. R. Sinclair, in "The East and the West," July, 1919, p. 266.

be of a living sort. Indeed, they probably perceive no connexion between the great God of Whom they have heard and the formulæ they have learnt to repeat. But if the teacher's own faith has been living, and he has striven to communicate it to the learners, it is almost certain that he will have succeeded in doing so. Not less vital, of course, is it that the man in charge of them *after* baptism shall be a living Christian.

If, however, we could visit such congregations as that depicted at the beginning of Chapter I (and there are hundreds of them), we should be conscious, under a great deal that was distracting and quaint and uncouth, of something very "live" in the service. The tinier children, naked black mites, openly play or sleep on the floor, a baby cries piercingly, a goat and her kids skip in and glance around inquisitively, a cow pokes in her head, and lizards wriggle up the walls. The older people nod and even snore until awakened by a violent nudge, and others stretch and yawn capaciously, or make noises even less polite, or rise to rearrange their cloths. All their poor cloths are clean, and they themselves are bathed and oiled. The older faces are quaintly rough-hewn. But there is often a wonderful *reality* in the worship. Souls really are poured out in adoration, and there is a continual effort to concentrate (so hard for them) and to make the prayers their own, often by the repetition after the minister of the closing words of each clause. There is an earnest expression on many faces, too, especially of the younger people of both sexes, that is unmistakable.[1] Bishop Azariah once noticed

[1] The present writer recalls the deep effect of seeing a lantern picture of the Crucifixion upon even the most immature congregations.

a number of high-caste Hindus watching a confirmation service which he was conducting, and when it was over he greeted them. One of them said that practically all the confirmees, of whom there were about fifty, were their labourers. "Their parents," he said, "have been working for our parents for years and years. We know them well. They are not superior to us in caste, they are not superior to us in education, they are not superior to us in looks." He meant that they were much inferior in all these respects. "But," he continued, "as I was standing there and looking at them, I felt that the light of the great God came to rest upon their faces. They have a glory, a joy we have not got. Now, I want you to come and tell my people what Christianity can do for us. If it can do that for these people, surely it can do something for us also."

One feature of their faith is their conviction of the power of prayer. There is the story of the old Telugu convert who never mastered the Lord's Prayer, but was heard asking God quite simply to make him good, to guard the family from wild beasts, and to cure his child's boil. Their extempore prayers, indeed, often show a surprising acquaintance with Scripture truth and a valid Christian experience. To them it is natural and obvious that Christ will hear and help, and cure also if you ask Him to do so. He did this when on earth, and He can do so still. Not a few of those who have "joined" in various places have done so because their womenfolk have been cured by the "prayer of faith." Prayer to God has been effectual where the spells of the sorcerer have failed. Therefore, God must be more powerful than the spirits which send the

sickness, and prayer to Him more powerful than the sorcerer's spells. *Therefore* it may be wise to trust in Him. In some such crude way the impulse to "join" has sometimes come. It has induced a disposition to be taught.

"Is their Christianity real?" Perhaps the question has been answered. The Christianity of some is real. There is also the other question as to their motives. These have been summed up as the hope of social and economic uplift, and intellectual as well as religious betterment. Certainly they hope, by becoming Christians, to rise in the social scale, to be better off, to be more intelligent, and this is often thought of collectively rather than individually—that the community will be raised. That is "the outcastes' hope"! Is their hope realized? In most areas they lose the stigma of untouchability; their status is that of Christians, whatever such status may be. This, of course, is great gain. A few of them have been ordained, and minister to congregations of converts and descendants of converts—not only from among their fellow-outcastes, but from various castes. This has been difficult of achievement, especially in the South, and, from time to time, prejudice against the man because of his origin asserts itself. But the rise in status is great. Some have become teachers, and have high-caste children among their pupils. As non-Christians they would hardly have been tolerated in the schools in which they now teach, or, at any rate, would have been made to suffer various indignities. So much for individuals.

Are Christians, as a whole, better off than

non-Christian outcastes? Probably the answer is "Yes," though it is difficult to say. In such matters as cleanliness, decency, and the like, the difference between Christians and non-Christians is generally very marked, and has been publicly acknowledged time and again by high-caste Hindus. Here is the testimony of an English official, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, concerning a hill tribe in Assam :—

> The most striking feature of the Khasis is the zeal with which they are embracing Christianity and the material benefits that follow conversion. The houses of Christians can be picked out in a village without a moment's hesitation; in neatness of construction and cleanliness they stand apart from the others, and little flower-gardens and rose-covered porches indicate a living appreciation of the beautiful. . . . The people have undoubtedly a natural turn for the artistic. . . . But the development of this talent is entirely due to Christian influence. There are those who are inclined to suspect the gifts that Christianity can offer to India. I would that they could see what it has bestowed upon the hills of Assam. . . . Energized by Christianity, those whom Hinduism now despises will effectively compete with it. Already Khasi magistrates, engineers, and doctors are taking places under the State that were appropriated by educated Bengalis.[1]

Travancore is an exception to most of the things just mentioned. Outcastes do not cease to be

[1] The Census Report for 1921 remarks: "Perhaps one of the most marked features of the decade is the extraordinary progress made by Christianity in Assam. . . . The spread of Christianity in the Lushai Hills is phenomenal. There has been a sort of revivalist wave over the whole Lushai population. . . . At first I was inclined to cast doubt upon the accuracy of the figures [which showed in one district an increase in the number of Christians during the decade from 2000 to 27,000] and suggested that zealous Christian enumerators might have made entries according to their own wishes rather than the facts. The superintendent, however, thinks the case is rather the reverse. Mr. Scott tested many entries himself, and he quotes an instance of the rigorous standard adopted by the new converts; the five-year-old son of Christian parents being entered as an animist because the young scoundrel was so greedy that he failed to say his grace before meals!"

untouchable when they become Christians.[1] But you cannot mistake them for non-Christians if you look at their faces ; the women you can tell by their distinctive dress, but the men reveal their religion by their expression. In an economic sense those who follow their hereditary occupations are no better off than the rest.

The hope of protection from oppression, of help in litigation or in acquiring land (the hunger for which is so great and general), are among the motives which may or may not be included under " betterment." They are, of course, common. There are others strangely simple, and still others perplexingly unsimple. Sometimes a movement seems to be wholly communal ; numbers have " joined," so the rest feel that they must join too. Sometimes a family wishes to join because of a marriage. There is also, undoubtedly, the hope of intellectual betterment—at any rate, of improvement in the case of the young. This has led to the reception of catechumens, whose motives may have seemed inadequate, in the hope that their own period of instruction might purify their motives, but still more that their children might become intelligent Christians. A quotation from Dr. Sherwood Eddy illustrates the realization of the hope of intellectual betterment in the second generation. " In a certain mass movement church," he says, " I saw one man who seemed to me to be the lowest human being I had ever seen. He could count up to ten painfully and slowly if he

[1] One has known cases where Christians of the third generation have had to avoid certain roads in which Hindu temples stand, and have been driven away from other roads for " pollution " reasons. A Christian schoolboy who was often late for school was delayed, it was discovered, because he could not use the ferry-boat over a river when Hindus were crossing by it.

could look at his ten fingers or ten toes, but not beyond it. I asked him how many children he had. He scratched his head, and replied with some hesitation that he had twelve. His wife told me that they had ten. I think the missionary estimated the number at eleven. But that man had three sons in a college! One will go out as a preacher, one perchance as a Christian doctor, and one perhaps will enter government employ to compete with the Brahman, who has had the monopoly of culture for more than a thousand years. 'It is not yet made manifest what [they] shall be.'"

An Indian clergyman who belonged originally to the outcastes, in a letter to a former missionary, gives the following account of the welfare of various people known to the latter when he worked in the C.M.S. Telugu Mission, all those mentioned being members of the depressed classes:—

> Mr. S.'s eldest son passed his B.A. and is a clerk in the collector's office; his second son passed matric. and is a clerk in the District Board office; third son passed civil engineering (B.C.E.) a few months back, and has gone to Haidarabad to take up an assistant engineer's work. . . . You will be glad to hear that my eldest son . . . was for three years a Revenue Tahsildar, and since last March the District Collector has given him a higher appointment as District Labour Officer, whose main work is to help the depressed classes in giving them house sites, lands, drinking water, starting schools, and co-operative banks, etc., etc. . . . My second son is the assistant teacher of our training school; my third son, whom you blessed just before you left the compound, was for some three or four years a teacher in the Noble branch school, and, when that was abolished, joined the head-quarters police office as a clerk.

In this way is the hope of betterment being realized in the rising generation.

II

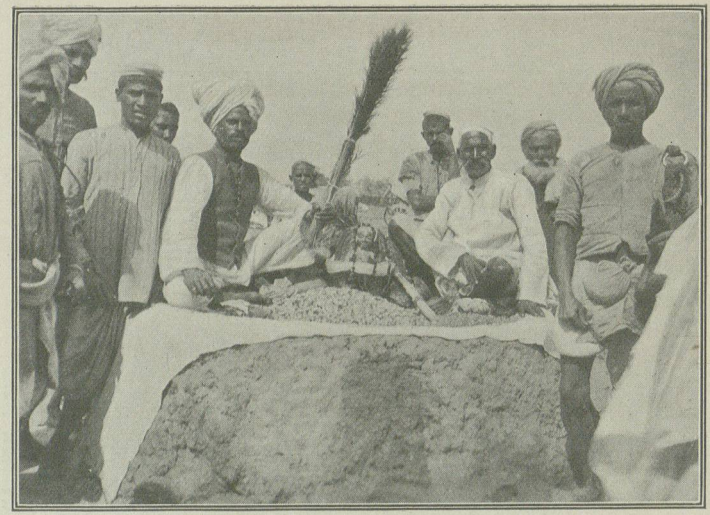
THERE are now hundreds of congregations of mass movement converts in various parts of India, worshipping God in their several ways, trying to live clean Christian lives, rising out of their age-long depression and bringing others into the Kingdom. Every year the number grows. Every year souls enter into God's marvellous light. Every year more and more are led into the Good Shepherd's fold. They are adding to the growth of the Kingdom of God. It is a heart-warming thought.

Another aspect of mass movement work, however—the dark one—must not be slurred over. It is real. Dr. Sydney Cave relates how, when he was in charge of a divinity school in South Travancore, "in the New Testament class, when the chapter read from St. Mark spoke of Christ's expulsion of devils, student after student, when asked his experience, related, as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world, how he had gone with the deacons of his congregation and exorcized evil spirits by prayer. Christ is stronger than the devils; Christians must trust in Christ and not fear devils; that plainly was their effective faith."[1] In some this faith has been just not effective enough. When the cholera epidemic has come, or some other imminent peril has awakened fear, the temptation to revert to sorcery has been too strong to be resisted. The sorcerer has been only too glad to re-establish his sway over those who have deserted him, and ceased to pay his fees. Secretly and fearfully his

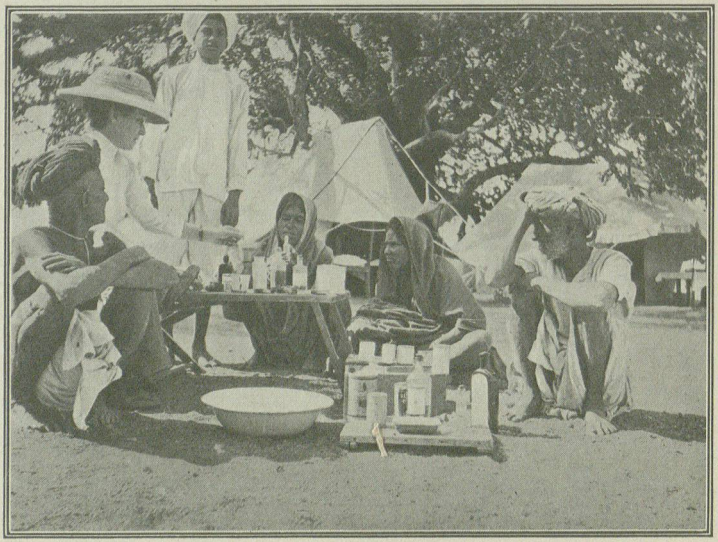
[1] "International Review of Missions," October, 1918.

Photograph] [*Mr. J. G. Barclay*

THE RISING GENERATION, WESTERN INDIA



A Village Deity, United Provinces



Photograph] [*Rev. W. Wyatt*

A Travelling Mission Dispensary, Western India

aid has been accepted and the old poison has re-entered the system, and sometimes it has spread.

In connexion also with marriage unlawful things are sometimes done. Old community *convenances*, regulating who is to marry whom, are still felt to be so strong that sometimes a Christian is married to a non-Christian, and, because the marriage cannot be solemnized in church, it is performed with heathen rites, in which the Christians participate. Again a powerful heathen relative, exercising a right which (heathen) custom gives him, takes away a young Christian wife from her husband and gives her to a heathen man, and the family are not strong enough to withstand him. Marriage is lightly esteemed among outcastes, in some sections being terminable at the will of the parties concerned. The Christian ideal of marriage is to them a new thing, not easily assimilated. "Of all the lessons to be learned by our mass movement converts this of the sanctity of marriage is perhaps the most difficult," says Bishop Gill. "But it is, of course, essential to Christian sanctification." Because it has not been learned a wife may be only too easily forsaken. She may be turned out for almost any reason; usually it is mercenary. If a man gets work on the hills and his wife must remain behind, he is apt to take to himself another partner, because he must have some one to cook his food. It is often hard for the deserted wife's relatives, though they be Christians, not to sympathize with her if she too does the same, or indeed to connive at the transaction. Sometimes a family or group of families lapses for this or some other reason, e.g., a quarrel. We shall have to speak in the next chapter

of " heresies " (blends of Christianity and animism) which have drawn away many from the Church. There is this dark and distressing side of the movement which gives us anxious hours. Gold and dross are mixed, and sometimes the latter seems the more evident, but never when we get the true perspective.

The Bishop of Manchester (Dr. William Temple) said some time ago :—

> After all, Christianity has always permeated the lower trata of society first, and no doubt there have always been mixed motives in those who, being oppressed in their old religion, have sought refuge in the new. But, once brought in, the Spirit of Christ worked upon them, and from this lowest stratum the leaven worked upwards through society. We who owe our own religion to such a process in the past certainly ought not to sneer at the repetition of it in India, nor to despair of the future because the beginning is not as we should have chosen. If at present only the babes accept the truth, that is in accordance with the experience of our Lord Himself.

CHAPTER V

The Pin of the Wheel

BETWEEN Chapters III and IV—in other words, between people such as those taking part in the animistic and those taking part in the Christian festival—there is an all-important interval. If we think of the former as having become the latter, what has happened in the interval is this: The desire to become Christians has arisen in them; they have asked the nearest pastor or missionary for a teacher; a teacher has been sent to them; he has taught them the rudiments of the faith as regularly as possible for a considerable time; eventually they have been baptized. They are now Christians. The *kind* of Christians they are is almost entirely due, under God, to the teacher who taught them during their catechumenate, and to him who is now shepherding them. In connexion with mass movements there is no more vitally important person than the "village teacher." He is the pin of the wheel.

The chief mass movement problems to-day are to obtain an adequate supply of teachers and to give them adequate pay. The supply is at present inadequate, with these results: large numbers of outcastes who wish to become Christians have to be left in heathenism because there is no one to teach them; some who have been baptized can

so seldom be visited, each available teacher having so large an area to cover, that they are left practically uninstructed and unshepherded, and lapse into virtual heathenism; and Christian children are growing up illiterate, portending an illiterate Church, which must become a prey to superstition and to other evils.

"I have spent the greater part of the past four months sitting in my office interviewing all manner of people," wrote a missionary in Western India a few years ago. "There has seldom been a very long interval in the hours of daylight that there has not been a queue of people outside my office door, waiting their turn for a talk. In most cases I have had to answer 'No' to the requests which have been made to me, and to almost every one I have wanted to say 'Yes.'

"Let me give samples of such conversations. An Indian clergyman . . . tells me of his latest tour in the district. It is full of thrilling accounts of listening crowds drinking in the gospel story and of earnest inquirers waiting to be taught in preparation for baptism. He suggests certain strategic villages where teachers should be sent at once to garner in the waiting harvest. I have to answer: '*No*, we have no one to send; these people must wait.'

"Deputations from distant villages come or send a message to say that they are anxious to have a teacher to live among them to instruct them in the faith of Christ. They say that they are willing to give him a house to live in if I will only send him. I know that a teacher should be sent to them while they are willing to learn and before their keenness

wears off. I have to say ' No ' to almost every one.

" I know that we have about 800 Christian children of school-going age in the Mission and that 500 at least are out of reach of education of even the most elementary description. I know that, if they are not taught to read, the Bible will be a closed book to them, and that, if they have no schooling, they will in all probability grow up to a life scarcely distinguishable from slavery. Yet there is no teacher to send.

" In many places missionaries cannot get the people to allow their children to come to school. Here we are inundated with requests to which we have to say ' No.' You see the father standing before you pleading that his boy should be given the chance to learn. You see the lad, with sparkling eyes, watching your lips for the answer which is going to make all the difference in the world to his future life. You have to say ' No,' and you see the light fade out of the boy's face. You know that the father is going to take the boy back to the village, where he will grow up in utter ignorance to a life of virtual slavery. If I could have said ' Yes,' the boy might have had the chance of growing up an intelligent member of the Christian community, and might even have become a missionary to his own people."[1]

The Bishop of Dornakal once found a congregation of over a hundred people who had been left to themselves for fifteen years after baptism, because there was no teacher available. They had contracted non-Christian marriages, and the children were unbaptized. There were baptized persons

[1] The Rev. H. T. Vodden, C.M.S., Aurangabad.

who answered the question: "Who is Jesus Christ?" with "How should I know?" Doubtless they were taught before baptism, but they had forgotten. Here are two quotations from Northern India mission reports: "There are more than 700 new disciples baptized during the year for whom no teachers are ready." "There are 400 villages (in which Christians live) without a resident teacher, and 450 villages without a school." "It is a mad policy to go into debt," wrote a well-known missionary. "It is madder still to baptize Pariahs and leave them to sink or swim without a teacher. But it does seem to me the maddest of mad things to throw away, for lack of a little extra sacrifice, the opportunities for which three generations of missionaries have prayed and given their lives."[1]

Occasionally we hear of a group of people severing their connexion with the Christian community and returning to their old religion, because of insufficient teaching and the non-fulfilment of their hopes of betterment.

If we are to avail ourselves of the opportunity for the extension of the Kingdom of God in India, which the present mass-moving disposition in the outcastes presents, and if we are to proceed in safety, a very large and annually increasing number of men and women who are able to teach must be found in each mass movement area, their ability must be enhanced by training, and funds for their support must be forthcoming. Only so will missionaries be able to say "Yes" where now they must say "No." Only so will the scandal be avoided of "Christians" not knowing who Jesus

[1] The Rev. C. H. Monahan, in "The Call of India," p. 168.

Christ is, and living heathen lives. Only so will apostasies and secessions be prevented. Only so will this great community be raised from its age-long depression, degradation, and grovelling superstition. Only so will it become a glory and not a shame to the Church of Christ.[1]

The Rev. E. S. Tanner, through the C.M.S. "Mass Movement Quarterly" some time ago, introduced to us a teacher working in the C.M.S. Telugu Mission. He is the son of a convert, and his own education began in a mission school when he was 7 or 8 years old. His father was a poor labourer, and he himself had to lend a hand in the fields in busy seasons, which made school attendance irregular. The school he learnt in, like that in which he now teaches, had mud walls and a thatch of palmyra leaves. The furniture comprised a table, stool, blackboard, and three or four pictures of animals and plants, supplemented by the same number of drawings by the teacher about which it would be unkind to be too critical; also bags of seeds, bundles of sticks, and various kinds of measures. He had about twenty fellow-pupils, half of whom, their fathers being comparatively affluent, possessed a primer or reader, while half of that half had slates as well as books. The rest had neither. The bulk of the scholars were in the

[1] There is no uniform standard of qualification for baptism recognized by all the various missions dealing with mass movements. Some advocate and practise "comparatively speedy baptism," while others baptize only after prolonged instruction. The practice of the different missions is affected, no doubt, by the view of baptism held by the Churches that have sent them out. The fact that certain missions baptize outcastes after little or no instruction may explain some of the things mentioned in the extracts given above. Though such missions may not feel the need of teachers for pre-baptismal instruction, yet, in common with all other missions, they need them for post-baptismal edification and for the education of children.

infant standard, a smaller number in the first, and still fewer in the second. As there was only one teacher, it is not surprising that most scholars took four years to learn what they would have learnt in two in a properly-staffed school and if their attendance had been less intermittent. Our friend, being bright, passed in due course from this village school to a mission boarding school, where also he did well. All the books he needed were provided; he had regular meals; there was a trained teacher for every class. He took an interest in the religious as well as in the secular subjects, and each year creditably passed his exams in both. After he had got through the seventh standard he entered the normal training school, where he spent two years, at the end of which time he passed the government examination and obtained a certificate. He taught in a school, under an experienced head-master, for eighteen months, and then sat for another examination, passed it, and became a fully trained certificated teacher. Thus he was qualified to take charge of a village school—and congregation.

He was posted to an outcaste hamlet, separated by a field from the village in which the upper classes live. His school stands between the two. At 7 a.m. school begins, or should do so. At that hour the teacher bangs a tin can to summon the scholars, and a few gradually appear. He goes round to some of the huts to hunt up the rest. (Were he in watery Travancore he might have to go round with a boat to collect them in the morning and re-distribute them in the afternoon.) When a decent proportion of the children are present he rings a little bell and opens school with prayers. Then

follows the Bible lesson—an Old Testament or New Testament story in simple language with some memory work, in which the Lord's Prayer, the Commandments, and the Creed take a prominent place. This is followed by reading, writing, and arithmetic of a very elementary nature, and the morning session closes with drill. In the afternoon, drawing, action songs, "general knowledge," and gardening are taught. Teaching is very uphill work, for three chief reasons, namely, there are insufficient books and slates; he is the only teacher for three classes (the undisciplined urchins in the infant standard really require his undivided attention); attendance is irregular. But, unsatisfactory as the standard reached by the scholars is, the lessons of discipline and cleanliness tell in after life, and the simple Bible story, assimilated and repeated at home by children of Christians and non-Christians, is, from the missionary point of view, of no small value. Moreover, the desire for knowledge has been sufficiently stimulated in some of the older lads to bring them of their own accord to a night school.

Besides the children and adult Christians who wish to learn to read, there are generally three classes of persons whom the teacher has to instruct: the *catechumens*, who have to be prepared for baptism; the *baptized*, who have to be instructed for confirmation; the *communicants*, who have to be taught their set lessons. He is not only in charge of the school, but also of the congregation, and he is responsible for evangelizing the non-Christians.

On week-days the teaching of adults usually takes place in the evening. Naturally they are not

at their brightest after a long day in the open air followed by their principal meal. The teacher is tired, too, but he must exert himself and put forth his best efforts, or these weary folk will not make any headway. On Sunday, which is his best opportunity for teaching them, he has morning and evening service, with an address at each service following an authorized plan. During the day he may have a special class for candidates for baptism, or confirmation, or both. In his capacity as quasi-pastor he visits the sick and prays with them. He buries the dead and tries to comfort the mourners. He is, moreover, the general clerk for the people, writing and reading their letters for them, checking their accounts with the village merchant, drawing up agreements or promissory notes. He settles quarrels, gives advice, and sometimes does a little doctoring. He has to look after the mission property and keep it in repair, raising at least half the cost of this from the people. Of course, he has to receive and be responsible for the offertories, collections, etc.

Then, as has been said, he must try to evangelize his non-Christian neighbours. If possible, he will visit other hamlets for this purpose once or twice a week, after his school work is over. In one of them he may " bring out " a congregation, in which case he must do his best to teach the people and prepare them for baptism until another teacher can be sent, and this, on account of the shortage, probably cannot be for a long time. To trudge over the fields in the evening after a good day's work and teach the new congregation, returning in the dark to teach his own congregation (cooking his evening

meal in between if he is unmarried), is, says Mr. Tanner, " not easy."

With this every reader will assuredly agree. The village teacher's job is not a light one, and he who faithfully discharges all the duties required of him must be steadfast and keen indeed. There are, of course, teachers and teachers. Some are slack, but there are those who, day in and day out, according to their lights, do their work conscientiously. We little know what it costs them. When we look at the outcaste and consider his nature and his ways, and remember that our teacher's forbears were, for countless generations, just such as he, we do not wonder at slackness when we find it ; rather, we marvel when we find its opposite—steady application to the daily round of duties. Where the endeavour to do this is found it is entitled to rank among the miracles of grace.

This humble village teacher's task is indeed one of great responsibility. Upon his work and influence, and those of his fellows, depend the future of the Church in India. He is moulding, spiritually and intellectually, the great majority of her members, and this humble but highly responsible worker is usually paid on a very humble scale.

What of the *quality* of the village teacher's work ? We should hardly expect it to be high. We remember his origin and antecedents, the difficult conditions under which he works, and the varied offices he has to perform, and we probably feel that it would be unreasonable to expect too much of him. After all, in so far as he is a schoolmaster he is only a primary teacher, and his difficulties are great. The report of the missionary Commission

on Village Education in India of 1920 refers to "the deadening routine" characteristic of village schools. That is a just phrase. The teacher, poor fellow, has often no real aptitude for teaching, and does it in a wooden, uninterested, uninteresting way. It is just work that has to be got through. The larger aspects of his calling he is incapable of realizing.

The Commission just referred to, which was appointed by the united missionary societies of Britain and America to study village education and to recommend improvements, after travelling through India and seeing almost every mass movement area, noted that, in many schools, a child takes two years to master the primer, which in others is completed in six months. This discourages parents who, though they would like their children to be able to read and write, feel it a real sacrifice to send them to school and forgo their minute earnings. In every school the lowest class ("infants") is the largest, because very many never get beyond it. "The lowest class in many schools," say the Commission, "is characterized by the presence of what in the Punjab are called 'volatile and stagnant infants.' They remain in the school for several years, but are not promoted. When such a child leaves school, continued literacy is practically impossible." "In British India," says the same report, "only 2.8 per cent of the population are undergoing elementary education. . . .[1] The Government of India estimate that the average length of school life is only 3.8 years, and that one-tenth of the pupils never complete the four

[1] The percentage in England and Wales is 16.5 per cent.

years necessary for the production of literacy in a child. . . . It is officially stated that thirty-nine per cent of the children relapse into illiteracy within five years of leaving school." This refers to scholars of all classes throughout India, not to outcaste children only. Presumably the percentage would be higher if confined to the latter; on the other hand, if confined to the Christians the figure would, no doubt, be lower, but it would be distressingly high.[1]

It is not only these poor results that have made missions dissatisfied with their village schools. The *kind* of education imparted is generally felt to be unsuitable. Most missions would be unable to carry on schools in their present numbers were it not for government aid. Acceptance of this aid involves teaching according to the government curriculum. That curriculum has been designed to produce clerks and lawyers rather than intelligent labourers and artisans. The idea that labourers should receive any kind of education at all would have been regarded as fantastic in most parts of Asia twenty years ago, just as it was in Europe sixty or seventy years ago. Artisans and craftsmen are, in the Hindu system, members of castes who are trained by their fathers in the lore of their craft. No one but a member of the carpenter caste, for example, would do carpentry, and that caste is the depository of all knowledge of carpentry. Similarly with the other trade castes. With the coming of Christians upon the Indian scene, however,

[1] The present writer has met men in Travancore who had been to school in childhood who could not read a verse in the Bible or sign their names. But they were exceptions. And similar exceptions are to be met with in England.

and the beginning of industrialism, all that has been encroached upon.

What is the object of mission schools? They are, for one thing, a means of evangelization—that is, when the pupils are predominantly non-Christians. But what is it when they are Christians? It is to make them good Christians, teaching them the things that they ought to know for their souls' welfare, and how to impart that knowledge to others, but also, surely, to make them good citizens. To raise up Christian teachers is certainly one object, but there are many among the pupils who are unfitted for the teaching office. What of them? In the case of children of agricultural labourers the object should be, surely, besides enabling them to read the Bible, to write, and to do simple sums, to make them more intelligent labourers than their forefathers, and to increase their earning power; and, in the case of those fitted for it, to prepare them for some other honourable and higher walk in life than that which they have inherited. This the present system has not succeeded in doing to any considerable extent. The cleverer boys and a few girls have become teachers, and a very few have become clergy and clergymen's wives, while in some areas a few others have risen to other professions. The rest have either followed their fathers' calling (where it has been field labour, at any rate) and many of them have drifted into illiteracy, or they have been unfitted to follow that calling, and so have been unable, as things are in India to-day, to find any other calling for which they were fitted, and too often they have become wasters and fomenters

of discontent. Increasing industrialism is, however, providing more openings. Those who do well in a worldly sense are generally those who, like Dr. Johnson's Scot, turn their backs upon their native place and go to the towns.

But village schools have not been utter failures. Though capable of improvement, they have done a great deal. Even the former scholars who relapse into illiteracy often have a " tone " not possessed by those who have never been to school, and there has been the assimilation of Scripture teaching referred to above. Teachers (of sorts) have been produced, and some who have risen high began in village schools. But, as the extent of illiteracy and the facts mentioned in the last paragraph show, the schools have not been altogether successful. They have done comparatively little to produce good citizens and to raise the level of intelligence of the community.

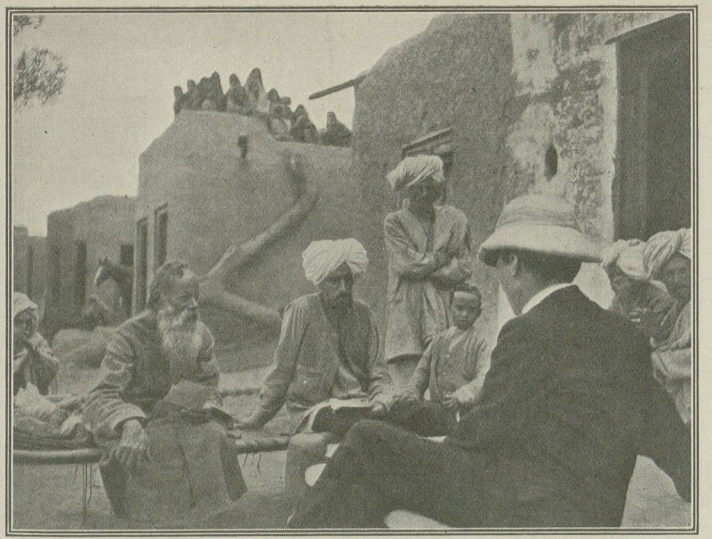
CHAPTER VI

The New Era

"TO discover just what to teach in a village school is one of the greatest and most baffling problems before educationists in India to-day." This was written in 1920 by an experienced missionary educationist. The problem seems distinctly less baffling now. It would be premature to say that it has been solved, but educationists believe that they are on the right track. Experiments with a view to discover both what to teach and how to teach it, as well as to produce teachers able to teach it, are being made by those engaged in educating mass movement converts' children. Let us look at one or two of these experiments.

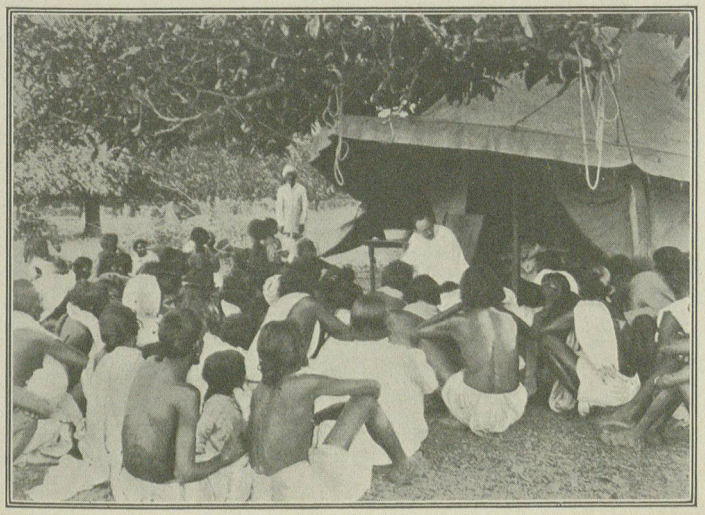
(1) First, we will re-visit *Dornakal.* We have already in imagination been there. We saw a thanksgiving service in Bishop Azariah's cathedral.[1] Close by is a school, in the developing of which the Bishop has been the moving spirit. The buildings are on the same inexpensive scale as the church. The girls' school, which is also their hostel, is an old distillery. This, and in fact, the whole property, was obtained for a surprisingly small sum. Other departments are housed in sheds. In a way, it is an advantage that the mission (financed by the

[1] See p. 48.

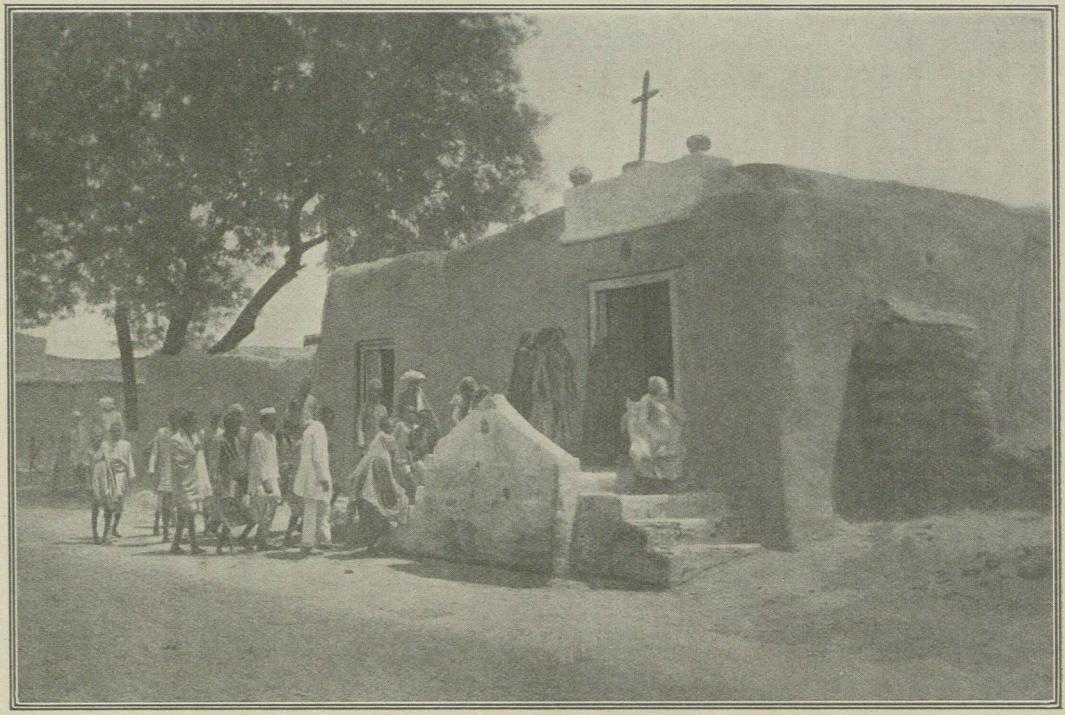


Photograph] [*Mrs. Force Jones*

VILLAGE PREACHING IN THE PUNJAB



INSTRUCTING INQUIRERS WHEN ON TOUR IN THE TELUGU COUNTRY



SUNSET AND EVENING BELL: A VILLAGE CONGREGATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

Tinnevelly Indian Christians) is in the Nizam's Dominions, where the requirements of the Government with respect to buildings and plant are not as high as in British India. On the other hand, there are no government grants; but that has freed the management from the restrictions that accompany the acceptance of government aid.

On the morning after our arrival we are awakened by the singing of the girls on their way to the school farm in the freshness of the dawning. From another direction come the shouts of boys also making for the fields. These fields cover an entensive area, stretching away from the Bishop's bungalow. From the upper veranda we can see the children moving about at their work under the guidance of their instructors. The click-clack of the looms in the weaving-sheds reaches our ears, and from the building in which the young carpenters are at work the sound of hammering proceeds. There is constant singing, of which these Telugu people are so fond. It comes not only from the children, but also from the divinity students in their class-room, and from their wives, whom Mrs. Azariah instructs.

Agriculture is the chief vocational subject, for it is the principal occupation of the community (Mala and Madiga) from which these young people have come. It was not at all easy to get the children to take to it at first, and their parents disapproved of their learning it except as a book subject. But the Bishop was firm, and made a rule that if a boy "will not work, neither shall he eat." He himself used to shoulder his spade and go with the youngsters to the farm and do his share of digging. Unless a boy showed signs of having worked and worked

hard—in other words, unless his brow was like that of Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith"—he got no food. Now the pupils are not only reconciled to it, but most of them enjoy it. It is found, as was to be expected, that their health is better than if they were cooped up in a schoolroom, conning their books all day long, and they are brighter and do better book work. Generally speaking, about half the time is given to manual and half to "literary" subjects. Some boys have passed on to higher education in other institutions, and have done exceptionally well. At Dornakal they are paid for their work, contributing from their earnings the cost of their board. The bulk of the residue of their earnings is banked, a little being allowed as pocket money. With their accumulated savings they are able to buy a plough and oxen, or a loom, or a bit of land when their course is completed. Most of the vegetable food needed for the school is raised on the farm, and the new agricultural methods adopted have begun to be copied by neighbouring farmers, to the benefit of the community.[1] The scholars are clad in the products of the looms, the making of the garments being one of the girls' lessons. The girls are paid for this work, as also for cooking. Carelessness, dilatoriness, and theft are penalized by fines. The furniture is made by the young carpenters. The pupils wash their clothes, gather

[1] The "Times," reviewing Lord Ronaldshay's "India: a Bird's-eye view," in May, 1924, pointed out "that over 70 per cent of the people of India are dependent on the soil," and proceeded: "The improvement of her agriculture offers possibilities for the development of her wealth far transcending any industrial growth. . . . A competent authority declares that the out-turn of the soil in Gujerat and the Deccan could be doubled by the mere consolidation of fragmentary and scattered holdings."

firewood, carry water, break stone, make bricks, repair floors, and do any necessary odd job.

"The results of the school," says Bishop Azariah, "have been wholly satisfactory. Three weavers, three carpenters, and one farmer have gone out, and are all useful members of the community, and some are honorary Christian workers in villages. Four boys have proceeded to high-school education and we hope will soon come back to be instructors in the school. The manual training has developed self-respect to a remarkable degree. Field work has created a spirit of fellowship and the capacity for team-work. Incidentally, the school gardens help in providing the children with a greater variety of food than is available in most boarding schools. . . . The economic status of the parents has been improved, some families having purchased land, bulls, etc., with the earnings of the boys."

To break down the prejudice against hand-work, to combat the laziness and tendency to dependence so strong in these people, and to develop self-reliance and self-respect, were among the chief aims of the school. Another aim was to raise up a body of self-supporting voluntary Christian workers, who, while earning their living in the daytime by following the industry learnt in the school, would instruct the people in the evening and on Sunday, their wives running the day school for the children. A further aim was to make the school a centre for community betterment by giving the children an education related to their home conditions. Each aim has been, or is in process of being, achieved.

(2) *Moga* is in the Punjab, a station of the American Presbyterian Mission, the moving spirit being the Rev. W. J. McKee. The main purpose of its Village Teachers' Training School is to produce a better type of mass movement teacher than has been available hitherto. Besides the normal department and the practising school, it possesses a school garden of eight acres and a school farm of twenty-three acres. Each student has a plot in the garden, and those in the higher classes have one-sixth of an acre of irrigated, and one-third of an acre of un-irrigated, land in the farm. They are entitled to what they produce after paying for seed and fertilizers, and from their earnings they contribute part of their board and expenses. There are other industries—rope-making and weaving, basket-making, sewing and mending, making sun-dried bricks, carpentry and smithery for ordinary farm repairs and other trades, which they may teach the villagers so that the spare time of the latter may be put to profitable use. Some of the school buildings were partly built by the students. The life is kept as simple as possible and in accord with village conditions. During the school sessions the pupils sit on mats on the floors, a number of the classes being held out of doors. They do their own washing, cooking, mending of clothes, etc. The food arrangements are organized on a co-operative basis. The pupils buy their own foodstuffs, keep accounts, and work out the cost of each boy. The students have their own governing council, who look after the welfare of the school premises and help in matters of discipline.

What is most interesting in this institution, and

perhaps of the greatest value potentially, is the method (called the "project" method) employed for teaching village children to read, write, and cipher. "When they first enter the school, the teacher talks with them about their home and its relationships, because that is so close to their experience and interests. Gradually various problems arise, and the pupils become interested, and purpose to find solutions for them. It may be the problem of housing the family, and the pupils purpose to build a house. They observe other houses, make inquiries, and mobilize their own experience. They decide in consultation what materials they will use and how large a house they wish to build.[1] In the measuring of this and laying out the plan, there is the necessity for learning how to measure and how to count (arithmetic).

"Suppose they decide to build their house of sun-dried bricks. They must make these bricks, and that raises the question of their size, the making of a mould, and the determining of the number they will need for each row (more measuring, counting, and arithmetic). In the building of the house, questions of drainage, lighting, and ventilation soon arise, so that hygiene and sanitation become living and practical subjects to the children. Soon the need arises for writing. Figures must be written, and the things they have made must be labelled. Thus they become desirous of learning how to write; they have found that it is something they need to know in order to solve their problem and carry to completion their activity. The same is true of

[1] When the Rural Education Conference met at Moga in 1923, the boys were building a house about four feet high, large enough for the smaller boys to go in and out of it.

reading. They cannot secure all the information they need through observation and inquiry, so the teacher writes simple directions on the blackboard or refers them to a book, and reading is found to be one of the tools they urgently need. Or the teacher may read stories to them about certain homes, and the pupils form the purpose of wanting to read such stories for themselves. In this connexion all the beautiful Bible stories about home and home relationships are available either for the teacher to tell or read, or for the pupil to read. Their eagerness causes them to learn very quickly. The problem of beautifying the house and grounds, and the animals in connexion with the village home furnish opportunities for nature study. Elementary geography is provided for in deciding upon the direction the house is to face, the determining the time of day (sun-dial), and in meeting other weather conditions as they affect the health and comfort of the family. In all this work the pupils' thoughts are directed to their village homes ; in solving the problems which arise there, and in the improvement of present conditions they find the need for a wider knowledge and outlook. The emphasis is first upon the village and its life, then upon the wider outlook (additional information and experience), with the object in view of using these to improve existing conditions. The responsibility for finding a solution to these problems is largely placed upon the pupils. They collect the information, formulate their plans, carry out the work, and judge the results. The teacher acts mostly as a guide, seeking to direct the work into the most profitable channels and to keep alive the pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

This method has not only educational advantages but cultural ones as well."[1]

One thing more about Moga must be mentioned, namely, the "extension" work which it carries on. It sends out supervisors of village schools; conducts teachers' and supervisors' "institutes," and brief training courses for teachers in service; it issues an educational journal which is sent to practically all teachers; holds gatherings for village Christians for economic and spiritual instruction; undertakes agricultural extension work; conducts special services in surrounding villages; sends all the members of the normal class for three weeks into the villages for practice-preaching and community work, etc., etc.

I

DORNAKAL and Moga are attempts to break away from tradition. Education has now been carried on in India for a long time, both by missions and Government. Its methods have become traditional. These are efforts to jerk it out of the ruts. In a land like India, where tradition has such sway and climate makes the line of least resistance habitual, this was more difficult than it would be in many other parts of the world. These two are not the only or the earliest efforts. Others

[1] From an article by Rev. W. J. McKee in the "International Review of Missions," July, 1923, p. 351: "The foundation and principal source of character emphasis is the Bible and the religious life of the school."

"The New Era in Education," a little book edited by Ernest Young, B.Sc., published by G. Philip and Son, Ltd., containing accounts of similar experiments at home, should prove very suggestive to missionaries in mass movement areas.

before them have struck out original lines.[1] But when these two were made the time was ripe. There was an atmosphere favourable to them. For the previous fifteen or twenty years a divine discontent had been growing, which the mass movements increased, and of which the Commission on Village Education was the outcome. Dornakal and Moga embody its spirit and most of its recommendations; indeed, they suggested them. They tingle with alertness. Those who run them are not afraid. They are ready for continual experiment. One hopes that the students and pupils who pass through them will imbibe their spirit, that they will emerge "live wires," and, whether they go as paid or voluntary teachers, or as villagers, will carry that spirit into the villages where the four D's of outcastedom flourish. One hopes that they will be so stiffened by the mental, moral, and most of all spiritual discipline that they will not be swamped by their environment and heredity. Supervision and after-care will help them to resist these down-dragging influences.[2]

[1] We should have liked to say something of Melrosepuram, and the labours on behalf of the outcastes of its founder who rejoiced in his nickname of "Pariah Andrew"; of Medak, with its emergency methods for training illiterate village leaders to teach the villagers and the teaching of illiterate villagers through song, drama, and dance; and of many another fine piece of work. Some, alas, have not survived. "It was pathetic," say the C.M.S. Delegation to India, "to find that institutions of like nature to those which we are now urged by specialists on village education to set up in order to help solve the village education problem, have again and again in the past been started by the more far-sighted among our village missionaries, only to be closed down by their successors when the originator of the work went on furlough or for some other reason left his station." This is part of a plea for continuity of policy such as we hope now to have.

[2] "The elementary teacher lives in a deadening isolation, with no stimulus to good work and a constant temptation to deteriorate. The down-drag of the village is terrific. A man has to make a constant fight or he goes under."—Report of the L.M.S. Deputation to India, p. 123. An extraordinarily true word.

The whole weight of public opinion in the villages will quite probably for a while be against their efforts. Mass movement Christians, in common with the bulk of non-Christian outcastes, have, as yet, not much use for this new type of vocational education. They do not care for the idea of their boys becoming better villagers. They prefer that they shall receive education of the old "literary" type, so that they may be not better fitted, but unfitted for the village and become clerks, or teachers, or even perhaps rise to the dizzy height of becoming *vakils* (lawyers). In this, of course, they resemble parents the world over; not many, especially in the humbler ranks of workers, but hope to see their children more highly placed than themselves. But this ambition, so natural and well-nigh universal, is accentuated among outcastes, because manual toil is regarded by them and their neighbours as the distinguishing badge of the outcaste. It is felt to be degrading because it is done by outcastes. Parents value education, in so far as they do value it, because it may raise their sons above their own level, make "gentlemen" of them, and gain them better pay. But most of all is it valued because of the hope it holds out of relief from the stigma and disabilities of outcastedom. Sons welcome it for the same reasons, and because they suppose that schooling involves less effort than field work, that the "gentlemanly" life is an easier one than their fathers', and that—joy of joys!—it may even lead to a position in which you can order about some one humbler than yourself. Though this hope is disappointed in nearly every case, inevitably producing discontent, the belief is clung to.

No new type of education proposed will debar village boys who are fit for it from a higher career than their hereditary occupation. But outcastes and outcaste converts do not grasp this, and consequently they resist the substitution of " practical " for " literary " education, or, rather, the leavening of the latter with the former. Missionaries who have introduced weaving or some other vocational subject into the curricula of boarding schools have found the move unpopular with pupils and their parents. " I don't send my son to your school to learn coolie work," said a Christian of outcaste origin, himself a coolie, to a missionary who had taken this step. Until the community are convinced by experience of the value to their community of the change, public opinion is likely to be against the vocationalizing of education. At present, with comparatively few exceptions, the leaders of the community suppose that social uplift (the thing that they are keenest upon) will come through as many of their sons as possible exchanging the hereditary employment for office work, or teaching, or some other " gentlemanly " occupation, or especially " government " employment. This is an old story in other parts of the world.

The following extract indicates the kind of teacher that the vocational school will, it is hoped, produce :—

The village teacher should be imbued with the idea that his sphere is not limited to the children on the register, but embraces the whole community. The school itself should be the centre for spreading light and knowledge to all the people. He should have an adult night class, a library, a supply of public literature for distribution, a small stock

of quinine and other simple medicines, the use of which he should know. He should be capable of working co-operative credit societies, and arranging agricultural, weaving, and poultry demonstrations for the neighbourhood. His wife should be able to help the women in similar ways, and also by teaching them sewing, the elements of nursing and hygiene, village sanitation, and the care of infants. The school work itself should have a more practical turn given to it by including . . . a little manual training involving the use of local raw products (the making of baskets, mats, ropes, leaf-platters, etc). It should cultivate Indian music and songs, the use of Indian musical instruments, and Indian games. The school gardens or compounds should be developed to foster the dignity of manual labour, to encourage powers of observation, and to bring in a little profit. The " project " method will no doubt be attempted.[1]

No two things are more strongly stressed by the Village Education Commission than the supervision and after-care of teachers. Both have, on the whole, through force of circumstances (which means *ultimately* lack of funds), been insufficiently provided. Government inspection has been trusted to keep teachers up to the mark, and that has naturally tended to make them more sedulous to satisfy the inspector than to shepherd the sheep. And, while the value of such aids to continuance in well-doing as vacation schools, conferences, refresher courses, etc., has been fully appreciated, yet in some missions, where the rush of converts has been great and recent, and teachers few and thinly spread over a large area, and the hands of the missionary (on whom all depends) full, they have been crowded out, and have seemed counsels of perfection. An effort is however, being made everywhere to develop them. English women educationists are finding a sphere both as supervisors and as organizers of summer

[1] Report of the C.M.S. Delegation to India.

schools, and teachers welcome their efforts. "Supervisors," it has been said, should be not merely inspectors but inspirers, not merely critics but warm-hearted friends.

II

WE have seen that one aim at Dornakal is to produce *voluntary* workers. In most areas the natural leaders of the people, through whose influence very often they have become Christians, retain their old authority over them. This is recognized by the Churches and missions, and these leaders are entrusted by them with responsibility in connexion with their congregations. In Travancore they are known as *mooppans*, in the United Provinces as *chaudhris*, elsewhere as elders, of which indeed mooppans is the equivalent. There are those who believe that this might be developed to the extent of dispensing with a paid agency.

The idea of dispensing altogether with paid workers, with schools, training institutions, and western organization and methods generally, and reversion to simpler, more apostolic, more eastern (and, of course, much less expensive) ways, has been insistently urged by Mr. Roland Allen. There are few who have not been captured by the idea, though those who have deemed it practicable are also few —or, at any rate, few are prepared to scrap present methods in order to put it to the test. Among the few is the Rev. J. C. Winslow, of Ahmadnagar. He says :—

> The communities with which we are dealing were entirely self-supporting as Hindus ; but we have made Christianity more expensive for them than Hinduism by telling them

that they must support, not themselves, but a school and master, a catechist or padre, and perhaps a church also. Is there no way of creating a community of independent, intelligent, and devout Indian Christians without burdening them with organizations foreign to their conditions of life, and which they will never be able entirely to finance by their unassisted efforts?

He would have Christian boys learn in government schools, with perhaps a few mission schools in selected villages, maintained by the government grant and produce of the pupils' work. He would follow St. Paul's method of "ordaining elders in every place," such as those mentioned above. "They will receive no salaries, but continue to earn their own living by their regular occupations. But they will be responsible in their spare time, and particularly on Sundays, for conducting the devotions of the people, for instructing them, for leading the evangelistic work of the community, and—if the people so wish—for the distribution of alms."[1] They may, in Church of England areas, be raised in time to the diaconate—perhaps even be permitted to administer the Sacraments. But how are they to be trained for this service? "We are trying in our part of India to form small evangelistic bands of European and Indian workers who are free to tour from place to place, partly to preach the Gospel to non-Christians and partly to instruct the Christians, and specially these leaders of the congregations. . . . A common course of teaching can be carefully prepared beforehand, and the workers then scatter themselves among a group of villages, so that the same teaching is given in every place."

[1] "The East and the West," April, 1923, pp. 114, 117–8.

This extremely interesting experiment will be studied by mass movement workers all over India. By this method Mr. Winslow hopes to solve the problem of self-support, and to develop in the Christian community a vigorous and independent life, such as it cannot have while depending largely upon foreign workers and foreign money.[1]

III

THIS naturally leads us to the economic question. The new type of village school and community middle school will, we hope, turn out much more alert villagers than the present schools. Those who have passed through the middle schools will return to their villages equipped with practical knowledge of a handicraft and a little capital to begin working on, as well as with improved knowledge of agricultural methods, which they can pass on to such neighbours as can avail themselves of it. Teachers will help in various ways to stimulate village industries. All this should increase the earning capacity of the people. Agricultural labourers have a good deal of spare time for such extra employment, the product of which is marketable; and almost all labourers in India are accustomed to intervals of rest, which might well take the form of change of employment. The intense poverty of the people and its accompaniments, the four D's, are the great obstacle to their uplift, as is also their insensate thriftlessness. To remedy this, co-operative credit banks have been started, and in working them

[1] See also an article on "The Education of Christians in India," by the Rev. W. Troth Williams.—"The East and the West," January 1924, p. 91.

missionaries as well as the Y.M.C.A. take a leading part. In all large cities and many country towns there now exist central co-operative banks. Madras has a Christian bank of this kind, with operations on a considerable scale. "The general public deposits its savings and takes shares in these central banks. The money thus invested is lent out to village co-operative credit societies at a reasonable rate of interest." The missionary "can organize credit societies among his peasant friends. A dozen or twenty men from the same village form themselves into a co-operative credit society. They agree to borrow jointly for productive purposes, and they undertake to become jointly responsible for the full repayment of the money they borrow. The control of the little credit society is in their own hands. They decide on the membership. A drunkard they will not admit, for he would probably be a defaulter on repayment day, and the other members might ultimately have to make good his share of the money. The members control the amounts of the joint loan which should be allocated to each, also the productive purpose to which any man wishes to put his loan must be sanctioned by the other members of the society. . . . A missionary can organize these credit societies among his people and enable them to get money (for purchase of seed, etc.) at about a quarter of the rate they have been accustomed to pay to the village money-lender. What is more important is that by means of these societies a break is made in the system of moral bondage and serfdom which is the inevitable outcome of the old method of borrowing.[1] An increasing number of

[1] See p. 39.

missionaries are now engaged in the organization of these credit societies. . . . They help the peasant people to save for themselves, and they set them on the path which leads to economic freedom."[1] They have also a distinct cultural and character-forming tendency. In other directions also missionaries are striving to raise the village Christian's economic status and to imbue him with self-respect. Irrigation colonies, in which Government and missionaries have co-operated, have helped greatly to raise the economic status of outcastes, especially Christians, in the Punjab. The growth of industrialism, drawing many villagers from the field to the factories, creates a whole set of new economic problems, with a call also for welfare work.

IV

A SUBJECT now engaging attention is the devolution of the work of missions upon the Indian Church. Missions have gathered in converts, organized them in congregations and, when these have become fairly established, have handed them over one by one to the Church. In the case of Anglican missions, this takes the form of "diocesanization." In Travancore all Anglican mass movement congregations and the evangelization of outcastes are under Indian clergy. Each pastorate consists of a group of congregations. The teacher in charge of a congregation is responsible, in the first place, to the pastor (i.e. ordained clergyman)

[1] The Rev. John Grant, "The East and the West," October, 1921, p. 336. See also "International Review of Missions," July, 1915, p. 438, article by the Rev. W. E. Wilkie Brown, U.F.C. Mission, Falna, Western India. And see "Social Problems and the East" (Lenwood), p. 132.

of whose pastorate his congregation forms a part. Outcaste-convert elders, as well as teachers, sit on the various district councils, and also on the Diocesan Council. The representative of the outcaste community on the Travancore Popular Assembly is a Christian teacher. In other areas progress in this direction has been made. In some (e.g., the C.M.S. Telugu field) clergy of outcaste origin occupy important and responsible posts in the Church. The elders take an intelligent interest in matters pertaining to their own congregations and community, and in the councils sometimes speak sensibly and well. They often form a *panchayat* (village council), and deal sagaciously with cases of discipline, etc.[1] When other matters are discussed they are, as a rule, silent members. Which brings us to a subject that exercises many minds, namely, the imperfect fusion of outcaste converts in the Christian community. In most areas village Christians feel their solidarity with the outcaste community of their own area, and especially that section of it to which they themselves originally belonged, rather than with the Christian community, in which indeed they exist as a kind of enclave. The outcastes, rather than the other Christians, are felt to be their brothers. The latter, it is true, have sometimes not welcomed their entry into the Church in brotherly fashion, but the reverse. There are stories of congregations leaving churches by windows when missionaries have brought outcaste converts in through the doors. Christians not of outcaste origin have been reluctant to partake of the Holy Communion with outcaste converts,

[1] In the American Presbyterian Mission in the United Provinces "the organization of the chaudhris in a given group is called the session. It is the local church government by means of ruling elders.'

to eat and drink with them—but so have outcaste converts from different sections of outcastes. Reluctance of outcaste converts to marry outside the section from which they have come has led to marriages between Christians and non-Christians. Among Chamar converts in the United Provinces, the *biradan* (caste brotherhood, of which converts remain members after baptism) "though possessing a *spiritual* affinity with the Christian Church, has no *social* affinity with it." Probably in their view it is the brotherhood that has become Christian, not they who have entered into a new brotherhood, the Christian Church. Some outcaste converts retain customs offensive to other Christians, which perpetuates the cleavage.[1] That deep-rooted, ancient thing, caste feeling, is not eradicated; it is still there, not far below the surface; it would be unreasonable to expect it to disappear for a long, long time. Only the grace of God can render it inoperative. There are abundant signs that it is doing so, even where the feeling was strongest. Higher-class Christians are more sympathetic than formerly to these humble brethren in Christ; in some parts there is, indeed, natural and unforced intercourse. Where there is stand-offishness it is chiefly on the other side, due to smouldering resentment against age-long supercilious treatment.

For quite other reasons than the one of which we have just been thinking the Indian Christian community in some areas has shown disapproval of mass movements, on two grounds—because they have been regarded as the missionary's own special

[1] E.g., the eating of carrion, the abandonment of which by converts is insisted upon in some parts of India.

idea, about which the Indian Church was not consulted (a grievance that development of church government should nullify), and because the addition of so many penniless members must retard the self-support of the Church.

V

IN becoming Christians outcastes relinquish that which has hitherto given to life its chief, almost its only spice. They have gained the Pearl of Great Price, but, in order to obtain it, they have had to dispose of all that they had. Almost the only thrills and enjoyments they have known have come to them through their religion. This is the case with converts from all primitive cults. The late Dr. W. H. R. Rivers pointed out not long ago what an effect the impact of Christianity has had on some of the island races. Denied that which so strongly appealed through many generations to some of their deepest instincts, they are slowly dying out. Christianity, while imposing new restraints,has failed to provide them with compensating interests such as their nature demands. They are fading away through inanition and lack of interest in life. Such a distressing result of conversion has not appeared in the case of Indian outcastes. Yet they also, after becoming Christians, miss something that ministered to one side of their nature ; and the question arises whether an effort ought not to be made to supply the lack, and further, whether there is any organization other than the Church that can supply it. Practically all their pleasures, except their very meagre domestic interests—everything

in their lives, came from their religion, and even into their daily toil religion also largely entered. The pleasure was often low and debased, but not wholly so. Is it incompatible with the function of the Church to replace it by pleasures and interests of a purer sort, yet such as will please and satisfy people of so primitive a type? In mediæval Europe, when the general cultural level was perhaps not much higher than theirs, the Church did so. This gradually ceased as the cultural level of the people rose, and fresh interests superseded those which the Church provided. These new interests also deteriorated, no doubt, but they did their work for a while. May it not be necessary for the Church to do more than she has done hitherto, in most areas, to bring brightness and gladness and fullness into the lives of these Indian children of hers?

The Church is doing this. Christianity is bringing brightness and gladness and fullness. Even the most (apparently) impervious, those who have merely moved as part of the mass, show this. Something of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge comes into their hearts. They are changed. They glow. But not always can they, any more than we, dwell on the heights. And there are the younger generations coming on. It is hoped that our new teachers may be able to make village life more interesting. The village school may, by their efforts, develop into the village institute or club—the "community centre." The boys and girls who have learnt in community boarding schools will bring back new interests to their homes, new games, and new songs, as well

as fresh potentialities of uplift. This, to some extent, they do now.

Then there are the church services and festivals. The former in some places are all that could be desired—full of joy and gladness, and instinct with praise and prayer—in others, it must be confessed, they are often dull. Not much of the brightness and cheeriness and warmth and colour that the soul of this people loveth appears in them. There is about them an air of repression, of austerity—and boredom. The teacher is ambitious to be "correct." His model is the big church at the mission's head-quarters which he attended during his training course, and he reproduces in his mud-walled shed as closely as he can the "use" of the big church and even the manner of the man in charge of it. He preaches *at* his poor little congregation. And there is the other teacher, alas, who has not even this ambition, but is simply slack. His people have been untaught; they have not learned to *love* their church.

In some areas the Church has been troubled by "heretics," akin to those who have arisen in mass movement areas in Africa; that is, among people very similar to outcastes in religion and culture. Usually the heresiarch is an outcaste convert with peculiar gifts of speech, or song, or leadership. After serving the Church or mission he has broken loose and become a free-lance preacher. Realization of his power to sway multitudes of very inflammable people has led him to give himself out to be "some great one." It has then been necessary for him to promulgate new doctrines, including esoteric teaching for the inner ring of the elect, to perform

miracles, and to hold exciting meetings, lasting all night, with singing and drumming and ecstasies. Often a good deal of the old animism has been mixed with fantastic interpretations of Scripture, nor has he failed to inculcate antinomian practices. Such movements have drawn many away from the Church for a time. The fierce thrill of it all, in contrast to the respectability of Christian services, has been one reason. But only one, and perhaps a minor one. The man has been believed in ; he has been one of themselves ; he has promised to lead them out of their social bondage ; he has been looked up to as a saviour sent by God. But the relaxing of discipline (including that of marriage) and the sustained excitement have, undoubtedly, been appreciable elements in the popularity of such movements, which have drawn away hundreds, indeed thousands, of Christians.

Of course, discipline cannot with safety be relaxed, and excitement, even of the most innocuous kind, cannot long be sustained without deterioration of character. But regard for the psychology of the people must be had if worship and prayer are to be made congenial, and therefore natural, to them. The central thing is that services should be *real* and *living*, which they can be only if the Holy Spirit informs them. But may they not also be attractive? No doubt there are dangers which cannot be ignored. Extravagance must be guarded against. And in isolated congregations, with little supervision, these may creep in. Church festivals are suitable occasions for an innocent tamasha. They can be made and have been made, to combine worship and teaching lasting the whole

day. The visit of the bishop for a confirmation is often a time of happy interest. Christian *melas* (fairs) have been organized in some places, and have provided simple pleasures. It is a good thing to be glad and rejoice.

VI

NOTHING is more obvious in the pages of the Bible than God's concern for the poor and the oppressed. It blazes forth again and again in the Psalms and through the Prophets, and shines with silver clearness in the acts and utterances of Christ. None so stir the divine compassion as victims of man's inhumanity to man. "It is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish" is the declaration of Him Whose foretold mission was, He Himself said, to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to those in bondage, to restore the sight of the blind, to set free those who have been crushed by oppression, and to proclaim the year of the favour of the Lord. In both its aspects, therefore, philanthropic and evangelistic, the work of the Church among the outcastes is in accordance with His will, and well pleasing in His sight. As fellow-members with ourselves of God's family, children with us of the one Father, we are bound, so far as in us lies, to make them inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. We are bound also to help them and to raise them. Apart from the natural impulse to do this we remember that He Who is our Brother and theirs has said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren ye have done it unto Me."

He has so identified Himself with all who need succour that in succouring them we succour Him, giving us what is surely the most tremendous of privileges, and an added incentive to philanthropy. "Every betterment of human relations is an eternal good which is being taken up into the eternal divine order."[1]

In a book just published we read: "It is literally true to say, 'The negro *cannot* do this, that, or the other,' while his mind is swaddled and bound in the fears that dog him through life—the perpetual dread of witchcraft, sorcery, and demons. It is, however, equally true and necessary to say that when the African has escaped those dreads and has received the one thing that 'drives out fear'—a real Christian education—his sheer mental capacity and powers of organizing leap forward. This has been shown, for instance, through Tuskegee, Hampton, and other American colleges. Lord Bryce said that the American negro had developed more in sixty years than the Anglo-Saxons did in six centuries."[2] The Indian outcaste, when released from the bondage of the same dreads, has already shown (in individual instances) ability to leap forward under the influence of Christian education. His leap may not have been as great as that of the negro, and the number who have made it is relatively small. We must remember that the outcaste has not only been swaddled and bound in fears that dog him all his life, but, unlike the African, has had assigned to him through many centuries a humiliating social position by a superior civilization

[1] C.O.P.E.C. Commission, I, p. 24.

[2] "The Clash of Colour," by Basil Mathews, p. 69.

on the fringe of which he existed. And a Christian education on Tuskegee lines has not yet been made available for him to any appreciable extent. It is because missions are convinced that, in his case as in the African's, the provision of that kind of education is what is needed to give him the chance of leaping forward that they ask for men and munitions—missionaries, pastors, teachers, and funds. Note this: we alone can provide that "one thing." The Government of India cannot. Its very proper policy of religious neutrality prevents it from providing real Christian education. The Church must take the initiative; Government may afterwards help. And, further, the outcaste is, as has been said, an appanage to an ancient non-Christian civilization which does not view with unconcern his Christianization. It must not be forgotten that this civilization will rapidly increase in political power.

Hence the urgency. But those who have read these pages will realize that this is not the only cause for urgency. Always the King's business demands haste. In this case certainly it does. Hundreds who wish to become Christians cannot be admitted into the Church of Christ because of the need of men and funds, and their disappointed hopes may close the door of opportunity; those who are Christians are not, in many cases, being properly shepherded because of the need of men and funds, and their Christian life is less effective than it might be; the coming generation of Christians is not being properly educated because of the lack of men and funds, and it is lapsing into illiteracy and its attendant evils; for lack of men

and funds outcastes are not being raised out of their immemorial degradation and poverty as they might be by a really Christian education on Tuskegee lines.

The Church of Christ has many claims upon her now—claims that become more insistent and more far-reaching year by year. Can any claim take precedence of the appeal of the outcaste who, in his degradation and oppression, has caught a glimpse of the glorious liberty of the children of God, and is stretching out his hands towards Him Who is Emancipator and Life-giver?

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

"MASS MOVEMENTS" IN THE MIDDLE AGES

CHURCH history, to a greater extent than is generally realized, is a record of mass movements. Mass-baptisms were the chief, and indeed normal, means of church expansion. They were the result of: (1) *policy*, as when the Empire became Christian after Constantine's conversion, or when Clovis's 3000 warriors were baptized with him; (2) *compulsion*, as in the case of the Russian peasants who, when Vladimir adopted Christianity, were driven into the Dnieper and baptized *en masse*, or in that of the Ceylonese subjects of the Dutch in the seventeenth century who might not own land or hold office unless baptized; and (3) the ferment of an *idea*, introduced to a community by a preacher, permeating and possessing a whole people, as when Patrick evangelized the Irish and Ulfilas the Goths.[1]

That dynamic idea is expressed in the call: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!" Ever since its first utterance it has awakened in those who have heeded it the hope of admittance into an order happier and holier than the existing one. Its content has without doubt varied. Men of different races at different times have interpreted

[1] These same three reasons account for the propagation of other religions besides Christianity, e.g., Buddhism and Islam, and of other than religious movements.

it differently. But the hope of betterment of some sort now and hereafter, as well as policy and pressure from authority, has moved men, as it is doing in India to-day, to take the Kingdom by force.

Tradition ascribes to certain of the Apostles the baptism of large numbers of converts, as, for example, St. Thomas in India; and the wonderful work of the East Syrian (afterwards "Nestorian") Church, now reduced by Moslem aggression and war to a pitiful remnant, began before Constantine issued his tolerating edict in A.D. 313. In subsequent centuries this Church had adherents in the Far East, in Tartary, in Travancore, and in other regions, many of whom had been baptized in companies, if not in whole communities. When, some centuries later, the Franciscans and Jesuits followed on the Nestorians' tracks, they found the fruit of their labours still surviving. They themselves baptized such multitudes that it almost seemed as if parts of the Far East would become Christian countries. The story of Francis Xavier summoning the South Indian fisher-folk with his bell to come and be baptized, as he tramped from village to village, and baptizing until he was so tired that he could no longer raise his hands, is well-known. In one month he baptized 10,000 persons.[1] That was in the sixteenth century. Ever since the fourth century, mass-baptisms—compulsory, politic, or induced by the hope of betterment—had been almost the rule. In our own country, on the Continent of Europe, in those parts of Asia already mentioned, in

[1] Boniface, the English apostle to Germany in the eighth century, is said to have baptized 100,000 in a few years.

North Africa (Abyssinia), and in South America by the Jesuits, the Church was thus extended.[1]

When we come to post-reformation missions we have mass movements in New Zealand and the islands of the southern seas, in parts of Greenland and the West Indies, in parts of Africa (Sierra Leone and the South, Uganda, Nigeria, etc.), in Korea and in India—Tinnevelly, Travancore, Chota Nagpur, among the Kols, Kassis, Gonds, Bhils, Santals, and other aboriginal tribes.

[1] Cf. Canon C. H. Robinson's "How the Gospel Spread through Europe" (S.P.C.K.), or almost any church history, for instances of wholesale baptisms.

FOR FURTHER READING AND REFERENCE

The C.M.S. Mass Movement Quarterly

The Organ of the Mass Movement Commission of the C.M.S., published quarterly. Price 3*d.* per copy, 1/– per annum, post free.

The Anglican Church in Travancore. By the Rev. W. S. HUNT. Price 5/–, by post 5/4

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