OUR MISSION POLICY IN INDIA.

PRINTED AT THE
S. P. C. K. PRESS, MADRAS—1907.

OUR MISSION POLICY IN INDIA

BY THE

RT. REV. HENRY WHITEHEAD, D. D.
Bishop of Madras

MADRAS: S. P. C. K. DEPOSITORY

1907

THREE of the following Chapters (I, II and IV) have already appeared in the *Guardian*. I am reprinting them by the kind permission of the Editor, in view of the fact that the subject will probably be discussed at the approaching Pan-Anglican Congress. I have slightly modified some passages which I find were misunderstood when the original articles were published.

HENRY MADRAS.

ELLORE, SOUTH INDIA,
October 14, 1907.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION ix

I

THE EDUCATED CLASSES 1

II

MISSIONARY COLLEGES 8

III

THE OUTCASTES AND ABORIGINES ... 24

IV

THE POLICY OF THE FUTURE ... 30

INTRODUCTION

SINCE sending the following articles to the press I have again visited the C.M.S. Telugu Mission and am now writing at Ellore, where a large body of the C.M.S. Missionaries and Telugu Clergymen have assembled together to celebrate the jubilee of the Rev. F. N. Alexander and his wife, who arrived at Madras on October 13, 1857, and with short intervals of leave have worked here continuously for fifty years. The results of their work in the district illustrate very forcibly many of the points which I have emphasized in this pamphlet. When they arrived in Ellore fifty years ago there were only six Native Christians in the whole district and they were the wives of Christian sepoys, who had been left in the cantonment, while their husbands went on foreign service. A year after their arrival the great movement began among the pariahs or panchamas, and Mr. Alexander threw him-

self heart and soul into the work among them. And to-day there are, in round numbers, six thousand baptized Christians in the Ellore District, twelve hundred communicants, and a thousand catechumens preparing for baptism. The effect of Christianity in elevating this despised and degraded class, whom no Brahmin or high caste Hindu could, in former days, touch without being defiled, is seen in the simple fact that now the Brahmins and Sudras in the villages send their children to Christian schools to be taught by Christian masters of pariah origin and sit side by side with pariah children. This afternoon I attended a large garden party given by Mr. and Mrs. Alexander at which about a hundred Hindu girls of good caste were present, many of them the daughters of high caste Hindu officials and pleaders and merchants. Every single teacher, both man and woman, in the school is a Christian sprung from the despised outcastes. And more significant still is the fact that the elevation of the outcastes is already beginning to produce a movement among the Sudras. In a neighbouring district four hundred have, within the last nine months, put themselves under instruction for baptism, and throughout the Ellore district there is a striking change in their attitude towards Christianity. And

meanwhile the stream of pariah converts flows on with increasing force. In the Ellore district there are a thousand preparing for baptism and many more ready to be taken over as catechumens. In the neighbouring district of Bezwada there are seven hundred catechumens. But, unhappily, the work of gathering in the harvest is checked for want of teachers, just at a time when it ought to be vigorously pushed forward. Facts like this have been brought constantly before me in both the C.M.S. and S.P.G. Telugu Missions for the last eight years, and have gradually led me to the conclusion that the ideas and hopes with which I first came out to India twenty-five years ago were mistaken, and that instead of looking forward to the spread of Christianity first among the higher castes and educated classes and then to the conversion of the masses through their agency, we ought to look forward to the foundation of the Church among the poor and outcastes in the village districts and direct our energies mainly to that end. I am well aware that the conversion of India is a complex problem and needs to be looked at from many points of view; but I am inclined to think that the point of view put forward in this pamphlet is one that has been unduly neglected, especially in our North India Missions.

The statement made in the following articles to the effect that our main energies in the past have been thrown into the work in towns and cities and the work among the educated classes has been called in question, and it has been maintained that the Church has always endeavoured to divide her energies between different sections of the population in proportion to their relative numbers. The facts are that the proportion of the town population to the village population in India is, at the most, ten per cent; while two years ago there were, roughly speaking, one hundred and thirty European missionaries working in towns all over India and less than a hundred working in villages. My contention is that labourers should be sent first where the harvest is waiting to be gathered in. We pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest and then deliberately send them off where there is no harvest to be reaped, and allow God's harvest to rot upon the ground.

OUR MISSION POLICY IN INDIA

I.

THE EDUCATED CLASSES

FIFTY years ago it was the general opinion of missionaries in India and of the Missionary Societies in England that the right policy was first to attack the great cities and towns, the centres of European influence and civilization, and to direct our main efforts towards the conversion of the higher castes and educated men, with the idea that they would be the classes most ready to receive the Gospel, and that from them the Christian faith would naturally spread to the villages and permeate the lowest strata of Hindu society. This policy seemed obviously to be in harmony with the plan of action adopted by ST. PAUL. He concentrated his efforts on the great cities of the Roman Empire, the centres of commerce, Government, and intellectual life, and established in them great strategic positions from which the Church afterwards advanced to the conquest of the villages. These ideas, accordingly, have dominated our Mission policy for the last fifty years. Our strongest Missions,

manned by our ablest men, have been concentrated in the large cities and towns. Places like Calcutta, Madras, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Allahabad, Cawnpore and Benares, Bombay and Poona, are the main objectives of the Christian attack. Colleges and schools have been established for the education of the higher castes, and, when the era of missionary brotherhoods dawned, some thirty years ago, the brotherhoods were naturally planted in Bombay, Poona, Delhi, Calcutta and Cawnpore.

But, meanwhile, during the last fifty years a series of great influences have been at work, which have greatly modified the attitude of the educated classes towards Christianity. First, came the establishment of the Universities, with a purely secular course of studies, and a large body of affiliated Colleges of an entirely secular character. This at once changed the whole aspect of missionary education. The time and energies of the Christian teachers and professors became absorbed in secular teaching, the keen competition of rival institutions made it difficult to press Christianity as vigorously on the attention of the students as was done in former days, and the money value of a University education secularized the minds of the students themselves and made them less and less inclined to spend their time on the

study of Christianity. Then, as English education and English civilization spread throughout India, they brought with them other influences that were distinctly antagonistic to Christianity. At first they came in as handmaids of the Christian Church, but very soon they brought the Indian mind into close contact with the scepticism of the West. Educated Indians became aware that Christianity was by no means universally accepted by all thinking men in Europe and America. The scepticism of the West furnished the opponents of the Gospel in India with ready weapons against the Christian attack.

In the third place, owing to the influence both of Christianity and education, there was a great revival of Hinduism itself. When Dr. DUFF began his work in Calcutta he found Hinduism at its lowest ebb. There were no movements of thought in the Hindu community. In the centres of Sanskrit learning the great principles of Hindu philosophy were buried beneath a mass of dialectical trivialities. The best literature of the past was unknown to all but a few pundits. There was nothing between the gross superstition and idolatry of popular Hinduism and the Christian Faith. The men who broke away, under the influence of English education, from the worship of the Hindu temples inevitably became Christians.

But very soon the advance of Christianity and education awakened the dormant energies of Indian thought. The Brahmo Samaj in Bengal preached an eclectic unitarianism; then the Arya Samaj in the North-West endeavoured to lead men back to the old Nature-worship of the Vedas. In recent years a still more influential movement has arisen in favour of a revival of Vedantism, the most popular form of Hindu philosophy. And this latter movement has been strangely stimulated by influences from the West. The Theosophical Mission of Colonel OLCOT from America and Mrs. BESANT from England, the welcome given to the Swami VIVEKANANDA in America after the Chicago Parliament of Religions, and after his death to his disciple, the Swami ABHEDANANDA, and even the recent agitation about the "New Theology" of Mr. CAMPBELL, have tended to strengthen the attachment of educated Indians to the old pantheistic philosophy, which seems to have its roots so deep down in the Indian mind and character. Finally, the political movements of the last thirty years have injuriously affected the attitude of the educated classes in India towards Christianity by concentrating their thoughts and aspirations on political aims, and still more by widening the gulf between Indians and Europeans. It might have been

thought that, as English education spread, a class would arise who would become more and more in sympathy with their English rulers. Unhappily, it has not been so. It is needless for me to discuss the reasons for this. The facts are obvious. The educated classes in India have steadily become more critical of their English rulers, and more distinctly opposed to English influence. And, true though it may be that Christianity is essentially an Eastern religion, still to India it comes as the religion of the West, and the religion of the English conqueror. A growing opposition, therefore, to the English Government involves of necessity a growing opposition to the Christian Church. The following extract from the last report of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi sums up fairly the influence of this nationalist movement upon the attitude of the educated classes towards Christianity throughout India :—"There is a great admiration for JESUS CHRIST as a teacher, and a considerable assimilation of Christian morality, for which we ought to be devoutly thankful, but that is all; all their aspirations seem to be political, and religion is pushed into the background."

Owing mainly, then, to these four influences the hopes raised by the initial successes of missionary work among the higher castes in

the middle of the last century have not been fulfilled. I very much doubt whether the average for all India would amount to twenty converts a year from this particular class among all denominations of the Christian Church. I believe I am correct in stating that, for the last five years, the Oxford Mission to Calcutta have hardly made six converts, and it is stated in the last report of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi "that there is not a single case of baptism to show" as the result of twenty-five years of College work, while in Madras the converts that can be traced, directly or indirectly, during the last forty years to the Christian College, the finest missionary College in India, manned by a splendid staff of able and devoted missionaries, and dominated since its foundation by the strong and inspiring personality of Dr. MILLER, are a mere handful. The same is true of the S.P.G. Colleges at Trichinopoly and Tanjore, which have long been regarded as among the best pieces of missionary work done by the S.P.G. in South India. I do not think that more than six converts can be traced to either of them for the last twenty years. Looking back, then, at the experience of the past half-century, facts compel us to admit that so far as the building up of the Christian Church in India is

concerned, our Mission work among the higher castes and educated classes has failed, in the same way and in the same sense as the work of the Apostolic Church failed among the Jews. For over fifty years the Gospel of Christ has been put before them in every conceivable form, by philosophers and teachers, by the simple preaching of Christ and the Cross, through earnest moral appeals to the conscience, and the powerful influence of saintly lives and noble characters. And to the appeal of the Gospel in every form and shape they have, as a body, turned a deaf ear. It is true that a few converts of great value to the Church have been made, and that there has been a general diffusion of Christian ideas, both moral and religious, among educated men, and without doubt the life and character of Christ and the teaching of the Bible have been potent and widespread influences for good throughout India. But, so far as I am able to discern the signs of the times, I can see no evidence of any movement towards Christianity in the higher ranks of Hindu society at present, nor any hope of it in the immediate future ; on the contrary, the educated classes seem to me further off from the definite acceptance of the Christian faith to-day than they were when I first came out to India twenty-three years ago.

II.

MISSIONARY COLLEGES

THE question as to the value of Missionary Colleges needs to be considered apart from the more general question as to our work among the educated classes. Even if it were thought desirable to continue to devote our main energies to the work among the higher castes and educated men in towns and cities, it would not follow that Missionary Colleges were the most effective instruments for the purpose. It has been assumed, I am well aware, that this question was fully discussed and settled in favour of Missionary Colleges some thirty years ago. But circumstances have changed since then and I doubt whether it would be wise to accept the verdict without question as a safe guide to our policy in the future. The changes in modern India, which I have described above as seriously affecting our whole work among the educated classes, tell with double force upon the work of Missionary Colleges, since it is the student class that is most influenced by them. And there is another change impending which will

have to be taken seriously into account. One result of the recent Universities Commission will undoubtedly be to raise considerably the standard of University education; so that it will become more and more, as it ought to be, the work of specialists. Hitherto it has been possible for it to be carried on largely by amateurs. Missionaries, whose main interest is in evangelistic work, have been able to take up higher education simply as a means towards the spread of Christianity. But that will become less and less possible in the future. If our colleges are to be efficient and keep up to the standard, which the University will soon set them, it will be essential that the English professors be men whose main interest lies in education itself and who are thoroughly qualified for their work. It remains to be seen, then, whether the Missionary Societies will be able in the future to command the services of a body of specialists in education inspired by missionary enthusiasm. It is more than possible that, whatever we may think as to the value of Missionary Colleges as instruments for spreading the Christian Faith, the higher teaching will soon pass out of the hands of missionaries in our Indian Universities, just as at Oxford and Cambridge it has passed out of the hands of the clergy.

But however that may be, it is certain that the progress of University education will make the maintenance of our Colleges far more costly than it has been in the past, and this fact alone makes it desirable to carefully examine the experience of the past half-century and see what the real value of colleges is from a purely missionary point of view. The best defence of them, which I have read, is given in one of the "Short papers of the S.P.G. and Cambridge Mission to Delhi (No. V)," *written by the present* Bishop of Lahore, when he was the head of the Mission. It describes so well the highest ideal of a Missionary College and the conditions under which alone it can become really effective, both as an educational institution and a Missionary power, that I will quote the whole passage in full—

"*Educational Work.*—In a previous paper I pointed out the very serious position that is being brought about—and recognized even by many of the more thoughtful natives who are not themselves Christians—by the system of secular education which is being introduced widely into the country, and which, while bearing with absolutely destructive force on their older beliefs and habits of thought, is powerless to replace it by anything deeper or truer. The duty seems then very bounden

on the Church of England to do that which the State cannot do, and at any rate put within the reach of the young men of India an education based on the religious principle, in which, therefore, all respect will be shown to that same principle as it appears with such remarkable power in the social life of the land, and yet in which they shall be pointed to Christ, the risen and living Lord, as the only true fulfilment of all that is best and deepest in the life and thought of their own nation in the past. This is the task to which, above and beyond all others, we have set ourselves in the Cambridge Mission, and from which I am convinced with the most entire conviction that the deep foundations of the future Church of Christ in the land may best of all be laid, a mass of material prepared which shall be ready to receive the Holy Spirit when, in God's own time, He shall come in His full quickening power, and a moral consciousness implanted to which the offer of a Saviour from sin and of a fashioning into the likeness of God can appeal with real meaning and with prevailing effect. Only let it be remembered that if educational work is to mean this—to produce this—it must be taken up *con amore*, must be heartily believed in and treated with all the honour that is due to it, not, as is too often

the case, be pushed into a corner and viewed with half-suspicion, as a perhaps necessary but only very partially satisfactory means of preaching Christ. If a mission school, or College, be manned by a staff of teachers all Non-Christians, except perhaps a native head-master, if the religious instruction be given merely by scripture-readers or catechists, who come in for one or two periods in the day, group several classes together, give their lesson and depart, having no real personal contact with, or possibility of effective influence on the boys, if the missionary come in, sparing the time with difficulty from other—and as he considers them more directly evangelistic—occupations, two or three times a week for purposes of general supervision, and, perhaps, to give a religious address to the whole school massed together, all of them in reality utter strangers to him as he is to them, then, in the name of common sense, let no one expect religious results from such an institution, and, in the name of justice, let no one quote the absence of results from such an institution as disproving the value of real religious education when such is given, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. And that, too, much of our missionary educational work in the very recent past, if not, as I fear even in the present, has been

characterized by this attitude of semi-apology and mistrust, no one well acquainted with the work in India will, I think, be found to question. At any rate, in Delhi this is not in the least our standpoint. We go in thoroughly, and with a whole soul, for education. Our men do not take the religious subject alone, but—while every day's work commences with that—they pass on to guide the thoughts and form the minds of the young men in English literature, history, philosophy, science, and the like, presenting everything from the standpoint of Christian belief, and finding in all their work a multitude of allusions to the deepest subjects, of opportunities for showing the bearing on all the problems of thought and human life of the religious teaching which has preceded, of interpreting Hindu thought and custom, etc., etc., which can scarcely be realized by anyone who has not enjoyed a similar experience. Then, again, intercourse is not confined to the school hours, but in the cricket field, the club-room, the debating society, and the like, every opportunity is taken of really entering into close relation with the boys, helping them in the formation of character, learning to understand them—with their habits of thought so very alien in some respects to our own—and in all ways bringing to bear

on them the influence of personal character. Work of this kind, I need scarcely say, is slow—very slow indeed—but slow, as I believe, only because it goes deep; and if as yet we have seen, to our great sorrow, scarcely any cases of individual conversion and whole-hearted acceptance of our Lord's claim, we have on the other hand seen an advance, both in their personal relations to ourselves, their hearty respect and affection, and also in their appreciation of our teaching, resulting in honest efforts—often under exceedingly difficult conditions—to raise themselves to a higher level of thought and life, which is of the utmost significance for the future, and gives us cause for most abundant thankfulness. Results of this kind are, in their very nature, difficult—or rather impossible—to tabulate or convey clearly to those not in personal touch with the work."

I do not think that it would be possible to put the case for Missionary Colleges more powerfully, and at St. Stephen's, Delhi, the conditions needed for success have been as fully realized as at any Missionary College with which I am acquainted in India. It has been manned for years past by a singularly able and devoted body of English professors, assisted by an unusually strong staff of Indian Christians. The number of students has

not been too large and has been leavened by a considerable body of Christians. The English professors have mixed freely with the students in their games and recreations, and have brought to bear on them the influence of strong and inspiring personalities. There has been no hesitation about preaching the fundamental truths of Christianity boldly and forcibly. And, then, we have to face the fact that for twenty-five years not a single conversion has been traceable to the work of the College. It is quite true that the students have developed a "hearty respect and affection" for the members of the Mission and made honest efforts after a higher life, and that many of them are conscious of the great debt which they owe to the distinctly Christian teaching of the College. But still not one has been led to accept the Christian faith. I would not for a moment under-value the results achieved: but I doubt whether they can justly be regarded as very deep foundations for the Church of Christ in India. We must, I think, frankly recognize the fact that the knowledge of Christian truth, the affection for Christian teachers and the respect for Christian character which are imparted in Missionary Colleges, have not brought the general body of students appreciably nearer to the definite acceptance of the Christian faith. The same is true of

the reforming movement of the Brahmo Samaj. It gave to educated men a wide knowledge of the Bible, a sincere devotion to Christ as a man, and a higher standard of morality; but so far it has not formed a preparation for the Christian faith. It is, on the whole, further away from Christianity now than it was in the earlier days of Keshub Chunder Sen. We must not build our hopes, then, on a growing respect for Christian teachers or a growing appreciation of Christian teaching. Experience shows that this is quite compatible in India with a growing disinclination to accept the Christian Creed. For this reason I do not attach the same importance to the theistic prayer used at the opening of the last National Congress which has been attached to it by many Missionaries in India. Theistic language and theistic prayers of this kind have been freely used by the Brahmo Samaj for the last forty or fifty years, and in the speeches and writings of its leaders may be found statements about our Lord which might seem almost Christian. Yet the Brahmos are no nearer to Christianity now than they were half a century ago, and I doubt very much whether the theism expressed in the Congress prayer indicates any greater advance towards Christianity than the language of the Brahmo Samaj. The general attitude of mind with

which we have to deal is very well expressed in a letter from a highly educated Hindu.

"The modern educated Hindu," he writes, "is not astonished at, nor does he find anything incongruous in the pantheistic character of his religion. He is ready with his justifications of such a situation and he says that his religion is essentially one which can supply food, and be acceptable, to minds of all sorts and degrees of development. The enormous machinery of the manifold and intricate theories of philosophy, mythologies and rituals seems to him to run very smoothly wheel within wheel and in perfect order. He thinks his religion embraces every type of mind and method. There are gods and their number is legion, ranging from the Viran, Irulan and Katteri of the pariah to the Parabrahman of the highest Yogi, forming objects of meditation and worship according as the worshipper is a barbarian with a mind thoroughly untutored and in the lowest grade of development, or a Yogi possessing almost divine wisdom. Such is the idea that the educated Hindu possesses of his own religion." In the same way he is quite satisfied with his own philosophy. "To the educated Hindu the unique character of his philosophy consists in its being *both* a religion and a philosophy, and in its being able to satisfy at once a Thomas

á Kempis and a Huxley. To him the Vedanta appears to have its ethical side as well, and to inculcate a higher code of morality than any other religion, and he thinks it is broad and liberal and the only philosophy that entirely solves the puzzling problem of life. He realizes that its theories are such as 'no logic however penetrating and rigorous could dislodge,' that 'there is nothing in it which is not deeply rooted in the nature of things, nor does he perceive aught therein which is unnatural, forced, false or fanciful." His attitude towards other religions, Christianity included, is one of impartial toleration. "To him it does not in the least matter whether one is a Buddhist, a Christian, a Muhammadan or a Parsi. . . . . .With Jesus Christ or His teachings he has no quarrel. He regards Jesus in no way different from his own Yogis. . . . . .Then as regards Christianity his feelings are very similar. The noble truths of Buddha, the Sermon on the Mount, the Bhagavad Gita or the Song Celestial and the sublime philosophy of the Upanishads are all alike to him. He always remembers the idea emphasized in the Gita, namely, that 'the rivers of the great religions of the world joyously empty themselves in the Ocean of God.' Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has said pithily: 'As one can

ascend the top of a house by means of a ladder, or a bamboo, or a staircase, or a rope, so divers are the ways and means of approach to God, and every religion in the world shows one of these ways.'" So that a growing appreciation of the truths of Christianity among educated Hindus is quite compatible with a growing determination to abide by their ancestral religion. "The preachings that are now going on everywhere around them, the education that they have received and are now receiving, the facility of spreading broadcast knowledge received from whatever source, these and a thousand other movements have created of late quite a Renaissance and have, side by side with the complete sweeping away of the Hindu's former aversion to Christ and Christianity, helped to create a deeper knowledge, borne of a thorough understanding of their own religion, which till then was more or less a sealed book to them, and produced a religious toleration, and also a reverence for their own religion which to them now appears to be perfect in itself. Such is, in a nutshell, the attitude of the educated Hindu towards Christianity." The letter was written by a Hindu in the Madras Presidency, but it represents, I think, very fairly the attitude of the general body of educated Hindus all

over the country; and it does not seem to me the kind of attitude which can fairly be regarded as a preparation for Christianity, or as a very solid foundation upon which to build our hopes for the conversion of India.

A different line of defence set up on behalf of Missionary Colleges is that they are necessary for the higher education of the Native Christians. With this plea I have the greatest sympathy. No one can doubt that the higher education of the Christians is a matter of the greatest importance for the life and growth of the Christian Church; and it is essential that the Christian students at the Universities should at this critical period of their lives be brought under good moral and religious influences. But it is still open to question whether the existing system of Missionary Colleges is the best method for securing this result. It is by no means certain that it is ideally the best system to include Christians and Non-Christians in the same colleges. In many of our Missionary Colleges the Christian students, and often the Christian Professors, are in a small minority, and the 'atmosphere' of the college is in reality Hindu and not Christian. Christian ideas and Christian morals struggle for recognition against strong Non-Christian influences. I cannot think that this is the best atmosphere

for Christian students to be brought up in. I should myself greatly prefer to have purely Christian Colleges with Christian Professors and Christian students, where the whole tone and atmosphere would be thoroughly Christian. I know that many Missionaries would not agree with me in this. They believe that the mixture of Christians and Non-Christians keeps the Christians in close contact with Indian life and thought, prevents them from becoming exotics, and gives them a certain robustness of character. All this may be true, but I am inclined to think that these advantages are gained at the expense of things that are far more important, namely, a high tone of Christian morality and a thorough teaching of the Christian Faith. I should like to see myself the various Christian bodies unite to establish in Madras a truly Christian College, which might contain the ablest Christian students from all parts of the Presidency. If what is sometimes called the 'Pan-denominational' system were adopted as regards religious teaching, and each denomination had its own hostel, the denominational difficulty need not be at all insuperable. Were such a college to be established and made, as it could be made, thoroughly efficient, I firmly believe that it would do far more to

strengthen the life and promote the growth of the Christian community than ever could be done by the existing type of Missionary Colleges. I cannot feel that it is a duty of Missionary societies to try and remedy the defects of the present system of University education for Hindus and Muhammadans; but, on the other hand, I do feel very strongly that it is both their plain duty and highest interest to give the very best education that can be given to the Indian Christians. But, failing the highest ideal of a purely Christian College, I am inclined to think that in the future it may be found a better and more practicable plan to concentrate our resources on thoroughly good hostels for Native Christians in the Presidency Towns and to let the Government provide the secular teaching, than to maintain expensive colleges of our own. A well manned college in the future will cost about Rs. 10,000 a year at least: but for half that sum it would be possible to keep up a splendid hostel superintended by two European Missionaries, who would give to the Christian students a thorough religious teaching, exercise over them a strong personal influence, and also do direct evangelistic work among the Non-Christians.

I believe that under this system the Christians would get a better secular education and

far better religious teaching and moral influence than they have now in Missionary Colleges. Most colleges it is true have separate hostels for Christians; but they cannot afford to appoint even one European Missionary to live in the Christian hostel and devote his whole time to the religious teaching and moral training of the Christian students. And the result is that even in Missionary Colleges the moral and spiritual welfare of the Christians is often comparatively neglected. It is, then, at any rate open to reasonable doubt whether after all it is worth maintaining Missionary Colleges, at a large cost of men and money, for the higher education of Indian Christians.

III.

THE OUTCASTES AND ABORIGINES

In striking contrast to the failure of our Mission work in India to make converts among the higher castes and educated classes during the last fifty years stands the truly wonderful success of the work among the lower castes and aboriginal tribes all over India. The Kasias of Assam, the Kols of Chota Nagpur, the Santáls of Bengal, the low caste Hindus of the United Provinces, the Mhangs and Mhars of the Bombay Presidency, the Mhangs of the western districts of the Hyderabad State, the Malas and Madigas of the Telugu country, the Arrians, Chogans, and Palayans of the Travancore and Cochin States, and the Karens of Burmah, have been pressing into the kingdom of God and taking it by storm. A few statistics will serve to show the extent of these great movements in different parts of India.

In the Telugu country in the Madras Diocese, according to the census returns, the number of the Christians rose from 19,132 in

1871 to 222,150 in 1901, an increase of over 203,000 in thirty years. For the native States of Travancore and Cochin, on the Malabar Coast, no statistics for 1871 are available, but the number of Christians, according to the official census, rose from a little over 738,000 in 1881 to 896,826 in 1901, an increase of nearly 160,000 in twenty years. In Chota Nagpur, the number of Christians rose from a little over 40,000 in 1881, to over 144,000 in 1901, and in Assam from about 7,000 in 1881, to over 36,000 in 1901, an increase of 29,000. In the village districts of the United Provinces, where very large numbers of converts have been made from the lower castes of Hindus, the native Christians have increased by considerably over 50,000 in the last twenty years. It is the same in the Punjab; the census shows an increase of about 25,000 Christians in the villages from 1881 to 1891. So, again, in the Bombay Presidency. In the Kaira district the numbers rose in twenty years from about 1,000 to 25,000; in the Thana district from 39,000 to 42,000; in the Ahmednagar district from 3,600 to 20,000. With these large accessions, in the village districts, from the lower castes and aborigines, during a period of from twenty to thirty years, compare the number of native Christians in some of the large cities and towns, where

Mission work has been carried on upon a large scale, with considerable resources of men and money for fifty, one hundred, or even two hundred years. In Madras there are 25,000; in Calcutta 8,000; in Bombay about 15,000; in Delhi about 2,000; in Cawnpore 1,800. So that the total number of native Christians in all these great cities, as the result of from fifty to two hundred years of earnest and devoted Mission work, does not amount to more than 50,000, which is considerably less than the number of converts gathered into the Church during the last ten years in the Telugu villages alone. These statistics reveal a startling contrast between the paucity of converts in the cities and among the higher ranks of Hindu society, and the large number of converts from the lowest castes; and the contrast is the more startling when we remember that the Missions in cities and towns have been, on the whole, better manned and better equipped than the Missions among the aborigines and lower castes. I can well remember the time when Missions among the aborigines and lower castes in North India were even looked upon with suspicion, as being rather a hindrance than a help to the progress of Christianity. The success achieved, therefore, among these people in the past is only a

faint indication of what is possible in the immediate future, if the Church were to take up the work in earnest. In the Telugu country there are about two million pariahs. It would be perfectly possible to convert them all to Christianity within the next fifty years.

It will be said, perhaps, that these mass movements are no real gain to the Church, that the pariahs and aborigines come over to Christianity from worldly motives, are not greatly improved by becoming Christians, and are likely to lower fatally the standard of Christian morality in India. It is quite true that social causes do play a very large part in the conversion of these classes. Caste, which is our chief enemy in the higher ranks of Hindu society, is a great ally in our work among the outcastes, driving them into the arms of the Christian Church. But, at the same time, if the motives which impel these mass movements are not purely spiritual, neither on the other hand are they to be condemned as low and unworthy. The pariahs see that for centuries Hinduism has treated them like brute-beasts, and offers them no hope in this world or the next, while the Christian Church treats them like human beings, labours for their well-being, and teaches them that they are the sons of GOD and heirs of eternal life. They judge the two religions by

their fruits, and I do not know that they are to be condemned for doing so. It may not be the highest motive for becoming a Christian, but it is not a bad one. And it is utterly untrue to say that the pariahs and aborigines who come over to the Church in these mass movements are not improved by becoming Christians. Doubtless, where the movements are not followed up, where the staff of the Mission is left hopelessly inadequate for its work, and where, in consequence, the new converts cannot be properly taught and built up in the faith, a spirit of deadness and stagnation often creeps over the Christian community, and old heathen vices and superstitions flourish unchecked. But that is equally true in an English village. If the work of the Church is feeble and half-hearted, vice will flourish and the spiritual life of the people become dull and torpid. On the other hand, I can testify from my own personal experience that these depressed classes, when they are properly cared for on becoming Chrstians, are capable of a truly marvellous progress in education, morality, and spiritual life. They do not at once become angels. There are many faults, imperfections, and gross vices among them which often cause great sadness of heart; but, for all that, there is a vigorous life and progress which is most

hopeful for the future. That is my own experience for the last seven years, during which I have been constantly and carefully watching the progress of our Missions among the Telugu pariahs. And my experience does not stand alone. The Rev. A. F. PAINTER, formerly a missionary in Travancore, writing in the *Church Missionary Review* for last June, pleads just as strongly as I have done for "the Indian outcastes," and bears his testimony not only to the abundance of the harvest, but also to the remarkable change effected in the lives of the converts when they are properly cared for. "Millions," he says, "may be gathered in; many have been already, with the poor efforts put forth. Of course, all are not true Christians. None are perfect; but I know from personal observation the wonderful change that has come into many lives, the tremendous difference that slowly grows even in outward things, the true love of CHRIST that burns in many hearts, so that persecution is borne, time is given to hearing the Word of GOD and prayer, and old habits of sin are overcome."

IV.

THE POLICY OF THE FUTURE

WHAT, then, ought to be the policy of the Church during the next fifty years in the light of this experience? Should we continue to throw our main energies into the work of putting the Gospel before people who for the past fifty years have shown no inclination to accept it, hoping that by spreading a general leaven of Christian truth and morality among them we may be preparing the way for some movement in the future, or ought we to modify the policy of the past and definitely look forward to the building up of the Christian Church from the lowest strata of Hindu society? The conviction has been growing upon me for many years that the latter policy is the right one for the Church to adopt. I do not mean that we should abandon our work in the cities and among the educated classes, but that we should throw less strength into that kind of work, and to some extent alter the distribution of our forces. The reasons which mainly weigh with me are these.

First, it does not seem to me in accordance with the example of our LORD and the Apostles to keep on preaching the Gospel to people who show plainly that they have no wish to accept it. Our LORD Himself never does so; HE turns rapidly from Judæa to Galilee, from Capernaum to the villages, from the Scribes and Pharisees to the common people. HE preaches to those who are eager to listen—we never find HIM pressing the Gospel on unwilling hearers. It is the same with the Apostles. St. PAUL turns from Jew to Gentile with a startling rapidity; he gave the Jews at Rome just one day to make up their minds, and then announced that the salvation of GOD was sent to the Gentiles. Moreover, the gathering in of converts to the Church, and the building them up in faith and character, seems obviously a work that has the first claim upon our resources. What may be the result of devoting our energies to preaching the Gospel to the higher castes we do not know. So far as we can judge by the experience of the past, all we can hope to effect at present is the diffusion among them of Christian ideas and sentiments. It is possible that we are gradually sapping the walls which in future years will suddenly fall, like those of Jericho. But at present the higher castes show no disposition

as a body to accept the Christian Faith. On the other hand, there is a reasonable certainty that if we devote greater efforts during the next fifty years to the parîahs and aborigines, we shall then gather into the Church of CHRIST some ten million souls and gradually build them up in Christian faith and life. And if our resources do not allow us to carry on both kinds of work efficiently the question we shall have to consider is, which is most worth doing? Shall we most effectively advance the Kingdom of GOD in India by working for a diffusion of Christian ideas among the educated classes, or by working for the conversion and elevation of ten millions of the poor and ignorant?

Finally, I fully believe, paradoxical as it may seem, that by far the most effective method of proclaiming the Gospel to the higher castes of India is to convert and elevate the lower castes. Christianity will never make its way in India simply as a philosophy or a system of truth. It must come before the peoples of India as a new life. And in no way can the true nature of the Christian life be better manifested, in vivid contrast to the deadness and corruption of Hinduism, than by the conversion and elevation of those depressed and degraded classes whom Hinduism has kept for over two thousand years

fast bound in misery and iron. I believe that nothing which the Christian Church has done in South India during the last half-century has made a more profound impression upon educated and thoughtful Hindus than its work among the poorest and most degraded classes of Hindu society. If, then, with the experience of the past before us, we should in the future turn from the Brahmin to the pariah and from the University students to the aborigines, I should not regard this as giving up in despair the conversion of the higher castes; on the contrary, I believe that it would prove, in the end, by far the most effective method of bringing home the power of the Christian life to their hearts and consciences. In India, as in Galilee and Judæa, the most cogent proof of the claims of CHRIST will be, that "the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

It is not necessary now to explain in detail how I would propose to carry out the principles I have advocated. If they were accepted as sound, the question as to what work might with advantage be curtailed in the different towns and cities of both North and South India would require a careful consideration of the special circumstances of each place. But it is possible that no great change in the existing work would be necessary. What I hope is

that, when the facts are plainly put before the Church in England, there will be a real awakening of missionary zeal both among the clergy and laity. I feel sure that one reason, at any rate, which has largely tended to damp missionary enthusiasm at home has been the apparent hopelessness and ill success of the work in India. When, however, both clergy and laity can be brought to realize that the work in India, so far from being a failure, has been going forward for the last thirty years by leaps and bounds, and that we have the definite prospect before us of creating and building up a powerful Church of some ten million Christians within the next fifty years, I feel confident that there will be an outburst of missionary zeal that will enable us to maintain, if we desire to do so, all our existing work in towns and cities, and at the same time treble and quadruple our forces in the village districts, where experience shows that great harvests are waiting to be gathered in.

It may be objected that it would be fatal to the spirit of our Mission work if our missionaries once came to look for their reward in outward results; that it is our business simply to preach the Gospel and leave results in the hands of GOD; and that often the very best work is the slowest in bearing fruit. All

that is quite true. A great deal of our Mission work is like prospecting for gold. If we are afraid of making experiments that may fail, we are never likely to achieve success. A great deal of our work, too, consists simply in ploughing and sowing, and leaving others to reap the harvest. At the same time, it may fairly be doubted whether it is a duty to go on preaching the Gospel for an indefinite time to people who will not accept it. The lack of converts may be an indication that we should direct our energies elsewhere. I would not for a moment disparage the spirit of heroism which makes the missionary reckless of success, but what I plead for is that those who are responsible for directing the missionary work of the Church at home and abroad should not waste that spirit of heroism by directing our scanty forces against impregnable positions, or by using the few labourers in digging and planting barren places of the vineyard. There is much that is heroic in our Mission work in India, but much also of which it may be truly said, "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre." The general principles I am contending for may be summed up as follows:—That we should not continue preaching the Gospel in India to people who, after a fair trial, show no readiness to accept it; that the gathering in and edification of converts

to the Church should always have the first charge upon the resources of our missionary Societies; that, in the immediate future, we should concentrate our energies mainly, though not exclusively, upon the work of converting and elevating those classes who are willing to accept the Christian faith—the pariahs and aborigines and the lower castes of Hindu ociety. I do not advocate any hasty changes or sudden abandonment of existing work; but, if these principles gained general acceptance, gradually the main stream of missionary effort would be directed to those parts of the Mission field in India where experience shows that there is already a large harvest waiting to be gathered in, or wherever new movements towards the Christian Church were discerned.

But, apart from the question as to the soundness or unsoundness of the particular policy I am advocating for our Missions, I feel strongly that we need a better generalship and organization if we are to make the most of our forces in India and not waste our strength. In the past it has been assumed that when once a Mission has been established in a place it must stay there permanently, whether it succeeds or whether it fails. There has been little or no attempt to survey the whole field in India, to find out where the enemy's line is strong and

where it is weak; and, when great opportunities occur, there has been hardly any effort made to take advantage of them promptly and effectively. One illustration of what I mean will suffice. A great movement has been going on in the Telugu country for the last forty years. Had the S.P.G. realized the opportunity thirty years ago, and concentrated large forces there, they might have increased tenfold the number of converts. The S.P.G. Telugu Mission at the present moment employs six European missionaries and no European ladies at all, and it has 17,000 adherents (including both Christians and catechumens) and five native priests. The American Baptist Telugu Mission, who are working in a neighbouring district, and began operations about the same time, employ thirty-nine Europeans and twenty ladies, and they now have in their Mission 150,000 adherents and sixty-three native pastors. The figures speak for themselves, and they show what we have lost by not being alive to the importance of an open door.

To begin with, then, we need the power of rapidly seizing opportunities. Mission work is like warfare. It is an attack upon a position that is constantly changing. Positions that seem weak to-day may be impregnable twenty years hence, just as positions

that seemed weak fifty years ago are impregnable to-day. On the other hand, the most unexpected openings for attack are constantly presenting themselves; and when such opportunities occur, it is folly to wait, as we have done in the past, for some forty years before we take advantage of them in earnest. Then, in order to secure the power of concentrating force rapidly where it is needed, we want something like a general staff at home, which can devote much time and thought to the careful study of missionary problems and of the varying phases of the battle in different parts of the world. How this can best be formed I must leave it to our friends at home to determine. I do not think that any one who has studied the history of Anglican Missions during the last fifty years would feel any doubt that something of the kind is needed. It has been said that England conquered India in a fit of absent-mindedness, and the history of the past suggests that we are trying to win India for CHRIST in the same way.

PRINTED AT THE S. P. C. K. PRESS, MADRAS—1907.