

The Great Temple of Madura

There are times when special needs drive the Hindu to special worship in the hope that he may get assistance from some god more powerful than the one he usually adores. Some dire calamity threatens him, or a law-suit is pending, or a child hangs between life and death ; so he goes to his village temple and registers a solemn vow that, if the desires of his heart be granted, he will show his gratitude by distributing money or sweets in the name of the god, or by feeding the Brahmins, or by going on pilgrimage to one of the great temples or sacred cities. If he dwells in North India, he may select Benares, or Allahabad, or Hardwar, or Nasik ; if his home is in the south, he may propose Madura, or Tanjore, or Conjeeveram. There are scores of such places in India. Before making a pilgrimage, he will often seek the advice of his priest ; and he will time his journey so that he may fulfil his vow at some great annual ceremony such as a car festival or a bathing *mela* (religious fair).

For people who dwell in South India, a favourite place of pilgrimage is the great shrine of the god Siva and his wife Minakshi at Madura—one of the largest and most impressive temples in the country. It covers a square twenty-five acres in extent and is surrounded by a huge outer wall nearly a mile round. It is said to have taken a hundred and twenty years to complete, and to have cost about £800,000.

As the pilgrim approaches Madura, he sees from the railway train (if he travels in so modern a way !) the cluster of *gopura* (huge temple towers) rising into the blue sky and dwarfing all else around. These towers are of singularly graceful outline, and surmount the gateways of the outer and inner walls ; they are covered

from top to bottom with carved figures of gods and goddesses. At the entrance to the temple, under one of the magnificent towers, nine stories high, the pilgrim's eye falls on a notice forbidding Pariahs, Palliars and all low caste people to enter. This temple is not for such as they! Moslems, lepers, and people suffering from infectious and loathsome diseases, are likewise excluded.

The writer once bribed the priests to allow him to ascend to the summit of a lofty gate-tower. It was an unpleasant climb, for one's shoes had to be taken off and left at the bottom. The narrow steps and dark winding passages were infested with bats, whose wings flapped one in the face as they resented the intrusion. At last we reached the top, and sitting in a sort of trap-door on the topmost ridge of the tower, looked down upon the vast temple below. Wonderful indeed was the view of its many open courts interspersed with palm trees, its covered halls, its labyrinth of colonnades and cloisters of wonderfully carved pillars, its square bathing tanks, and many other buildings. Rising above all were five gigantic gate-towers similar to the one we were standing upon; they vary from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height, and five others are upwards of one hundred feet each. They are all absolutely covered with hundreds of carved figures. Over the two principal shrines—those of the god and goddess—are small ornate domes, overlaid with gold which glitters wondrously in the bright sunlight.

Now descend the tower and walk through the courts and the bewildering colonnades, thronged with worshippers. Mark the Brahmins as they squat cross-legged to perform their devotions or walk round and round the shrine with bowed heads. In some of the arcades are small companies of students studying their

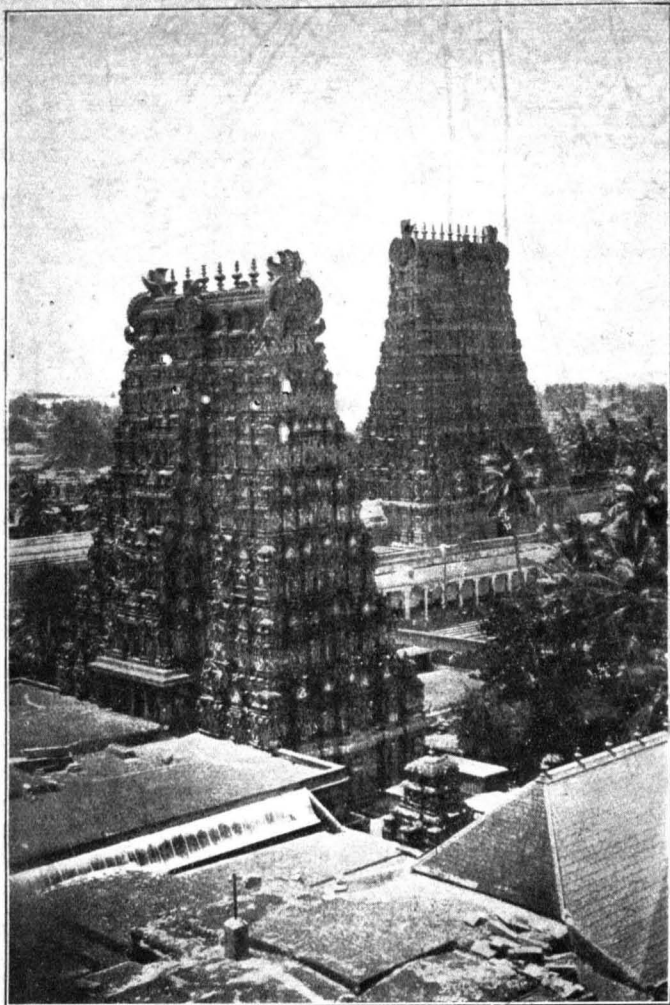


Photo by the Author

TWO OF THE GATE TOWERS, MADURA TEMPLE

"These towers (gopura) surmount the gateways of the outer and inner walls; they are covered from top to bottom with carved figures of gods and goddesses." (See p. 95) Five of them are from 150 to 200 feet in height, and five others are upwards of 100 feet. In the foreground are the flat roofs of some of the cloistered halls of this great Temple.



Photo by the Author

A STREET IN A NORTH INDIAN CITY

The picturesque bazaar of "a real Indian city unspoiled by incongruous mixture with things of the West." (See p. 52)

Sanskrit books or reading sacred texts from the Vedas. There are solemn-faced old pundits (learned Brahmins) explaining the ancient classics or some stories about the gods. Pilgrims are bathing in the grass-green water of the "Tank of the Golden Lily." A plunge in that tank ensures salvation! One sacred book tells how, by bathing there, the great god Indra was cleansed from the sin of slaughtering a Brahmin—one of the five greatest sins. Ash-smeared Sadhus are prostrating themselves and counting their beads. Another remarkable sight is the wonderful "Hall of a Thousand Columns," built in the sixteenth century, and containing 985 pillars, each cut from a single block of stone. The carving of these pillars is extraordinary for its boldness and variety of design; they are marvels of workmanship. In other parts of the temple are the dwellings of the priests and attendants, hundreds of whom live within the walls. Five big elephants also live in the temple and take part in the ceremonies—and beg for money from visitors!

At the entrance to the principal shrine is a tall brass flagstaff—its top rising through a square hole in the stone roof. Near the flagstaff is the inevitable stone bull; the worshippers are sprinkling water as they walk round and round it. None but caste Hindus may pass through that carved doorway into the gloomy chamber in which the idol of Siva dwells. As we stand and peer into the darkness, it is just possible to discern in the far distance the dim outline of the image with a few lamps burning around it. Several priests are moving about before the idol, weird figures in the gloom. A hall of dim mysteries indeed! The idols of this temple have jewels worth tens of thousands of pounds—the gifts of pious worshippers during hundreds of years.

But wonderful as the temple is, there is much to surprise

and even to grieve the visitor from the West. He will see much worship, but very little true reverence. Begging is carried to the point of profanity, and there is a good deal of what to the western mind is downright sacrilege. The temple attendants follow at your heels and garland you with flowers to obtain money, and even the priests do not scruple to receive gifts from worshippers and visitors. In two vast halls there are bazaars; under the great pillars, carved with mythological figures, are stalls at which the pilgrims may buy brass idols and garlands, fruit and photographs, toys for children, and coloured powders for painting the sacred marks on face and arms—anything and everything. Doubtless these bazaars were originally restricted to the sale of things required for the worship and ceremonies of the temple, but now the sacred place is defiled with the unseemly haggings and quarrels of the common bazaar. Perhaps it was a similar scene that our Lord saw in the temple at Jerusalem, when He drove out those who had made His Father's house a den of thieves.

There are other things to mar the impressiveness of this great temple. Many of the wonderful carved pillars are covered with dirty whitewash, and some of the magnificent colonnades are so infested with bats that the stench is nauseating. - It is a place of strange contrasts.

Go when you will, there are always large numbers of worshippers in the temple of Madura. Formal *pūja* is performed officially before the two chief shrines five times daily—at 5 and 8 a.m., noon, 6 p.m., and midnight—but it is not limited to these hours. Every evening the scene is singularly weird and impressive: the temple courts and halls seethe with worshippers, and the great brass arch over the "Door of a Thousand Lights" blazes with innumerable lamps.

This vast temple is one of the largest and most imposing in the world. South India has at least one larger, but none more impressive in general appearance. There are similar shrines at Tinnevely, Trichinopoli, Ramesvaram, Tanjore, Conjeeveram, and many other places. North India has no temples that can compare with them.

The Great Hindu Festivals

Like all the great temples, Madura is the scene of many festivals. Small ones are held on ten days of every month, and four times a year there are special festivals on a very large scale. On these great occasions pilgrims gather from all parts of South India—their numbers sometimes running into hundreds of thousands—and the idols are drawn round the town on huge decorated cars, hundreds of worshippers pulling the ropes.

One such festival is held at the January full moon. That day the god and goddess are drawn on their cars to a very beautiful sacred tank two miles away. The tank is a large square sheet of water, almost exactly the same area as the Madura temple, surrounded with low granite walls striped red and white, with wide steps leading down to the water. In the middle of the tank is a square islet with a graceful little pavilion at each corner, and a beautiful white temple rising above the green trees in the centre. The scene, with the islet and its shrines reflected in the water, is one of rare beauty. At the festival, in the presence of vast crowds of people, the idols are placed on a decorated barge and rowed three times round the lake. Then they are carried to the temple in the centre of the islet to enjoy a rest from the heat out of the gaze of the worshipping multitudes. The evening is a time of great excitement. The tank is illuminated with myriads of lamps and there is a display

of fireworks, during which the gods are again pulled round the lake on their barge. The whole ceremony, with the reflections of the lights in the placid water of the lovely tank, is picturesque to a degree; but it appears strange in the eyes of Europeans. To the average Hindu it is a natural and necessary part of his religion.

Such ceremonies are continually taking place all over South India. Every large temple and many smaller ones have one or more every year. Each festival is closely associated with some incident in the life of the god, and it serves to keep the sacred stories in the minds of the people. For example: at Madura the most important festival of the year—held about the end of April—celebrates the marriage of Siva and Minakshi, and the whole wedding ceremony is gone through in one of the large halls of the temple, where, on a big platform, the god and goddess are re-married every year!

These festivals delight the people, and the credulous take them very seriously. The temple-priests encourage them as expressive of popular devotion. But to English visitors it seems childish to think of pleasing a god by pulling his image on a car, rowing it on a boat, giving it a swing, or decorating it with jewels.

The Sacred Rivers

The sacred rivers of India form another striking feature in the religious life of the people. The Hindu imagination has placed the home of the gods far up among the eternal snows of the Himalayas, and the great rivers of the north are regarded as flowing directly from the throne of those gods. First holy "Mother Ganges" with its great tributaries the Jumna and the Gogra, then the mighty Brahmaputra with its course

of 1800 miles, and the Indus with its four tributaries, all flow down from the huge glaciers and snow-fields of that stupendous range of mountains. In the South Indian peninsula are the Nerbudda, Tapti, Godaveri, Kistna, and Kavari—all sacred rivers, and believed by the credulous to have a miraculous subterranean connection with "Mother Ganges," which is the most sacred of all.

These rivers are held to be not merely sacred, but actually divine. The Ganges, for example, is a mighty goddess, and one continually hears the cry, "Gunga mai ki jai!" (To Mother Ganges be victory!) One night, as the train in which the writer was travelling crossed the long bridge over the broad waters of the Godaveri, the people rose from their seats and threw small coins through the carriage windows into the river far below. In response to an enquiry as to the reason, they explained that they were returning safely from a journey and the coins were little thank-offerings to the river-goddess for her protecting care.

At certain seasons there are special pilgrimages to the great rivers, the object being, not to worship in the temple of some particular god, but to receive spiritual benefits from the river itself. To bathe in these rivers means cleansing and salvation, and the more sacred the river the more certain the efficacy of the cleansing. For this reason, great bathing *melas* are held every year at certain specially holy places on these sacred rivers. Whether there is a temple at the place or not really does not matter; *it is the river itself* that is all-important. Such a festival is held yearly at Nasik on the Godaveri; and every twelfth year is a season of unusual power, for at that time, by a miracle, all the holy waters of all the holy rivers of India are believed to converge at

Nasik, and pilgrims bathing there at that time secure all the cleansing and merit and blessing they could otherwise only obtain by going on a separate pilgrimage to every one of the holy rivers in turn.

Every year hundreds of thousands of Hindus go from all parts of India to the Ganges itself. Some of them go to its sacred source high up among the snows; others go to Hardwar, where the river bursts through the rocky defiles and enters the plain; others go to Allahabad where the Ganges and Jumna meet; others to Benares—holiest of all—and still others to Sagar where the beloved river empties its muddy waters into the sea. But besides these world-famous cities, there are great annual bathing *melas* at places probably never heard of by our readers—places of no size or importance whatever save for the all-important fact that they are on “Mother Ganges.”

On one occasion the writer attended a great bathing *mela* at the tiny town of Anapshahr—the very name of which is hardly known to Europeans living a hundred miles away. This festival is held every November full moon. For a week before, strings of six or eight lumbering bullock-carts were seen carrying women and children towards Anapshahr, the men walking alongside. The day before the full moon the roads for miles around were choked with the living streams of people, *ekkas*, *tongas*, camel-carts and all manner of vehicles. It was an amazing spectacle. Every little village *en route* contributed its quota of pilgrims, until the roads became a solid mass of humanity moving slowly towards Mother Ganges. From time to time the familiar cry was raised: “Gunga mai ki jai! Gunga mai ki jai!” Anapshahr was packed to its utmost limits, and all around pilgrims were encamped on every little bit of vacant

ground. That night tens of thousands of tired pilgrims slept by the roadside, under carts, inside carts—anywhere where there was room for them to lie down or sit. It was a great medley of bullocks, ponies, camels, and sleeping people. Yet there was no confusion; more orderly crowds could hardly be imagined.

At dawn, the people flocked down to the bathing place at the river side. The Ganges was unusually low—scarcely more than a third its usual breadth—and the dry bed was covered on both sides, as far as the eye could reach, with pilgrims, tents, booths, stalls, swings, roundabouts, and even a “big wheel.” For the *mela* is a fair as well as a religious festival, and pleasure mingles with devotion. Every one of those two hundred thousand pilgrims bathed in the sacred river. Many hours passed before they all got a turn.

For two days the *mela* continued, and then the crowds began to disperse to their distant villages—they were mostly village people. We stayed on for some hours until most of the people had departed. Then, mounted on our *tam-tam* (a sort of pony cart), we started for a ride of twenty-six miles to the nearest mission station. Again the road was crowded. *Not until we had passed the twelfth milestone was there a single break in that long stream of pilgrims*, and for several miles more there was only an occasional gap. All the way the road was strewn with returning pilgrims, and stragglers were passing for a couple of days afterwards. Yet that was only one of the high-roads leading from the place of bathing. All the other roads would be similarly crowded.

The Holy Cities

India has numerous holy cities. Besides those already mentioned, there are Muttra and Brindaban sacred to

Krishna, Ajodhya the city of Rama and Hanuman, Puri beloved of Jagannath, and many another. All these have their festivals and claim their hundreds of thousands of pilgrims every year. If sacred places could make a land holy, India is holy indeed !

But people whose admiration and love for India do not blind them to her faults know only too well that the "holy" cities are often her most unholy. One of the most repulsive places the writer visited was Brindaban, sacred to the popular god Krishna. In Benares itself, he has seen a procession going through the street in broad daylight, led by a male prostitute. In many of the sacred cities dancing girls abound—all women of evil life: they are closely connected with the temples—and it is in this that vice in India differs from that in the West—obtaining their living even within the temples. They are spoken of as "temple girls," or, officially, as *devadasis*—"servants of the gods": their initiation ceremony takes the form of marriage to the gods. Vice sheltering itself under the cloak of religion—oh, the horror of it ! One of the reasons for child-marriage is the desire to save little girls from the corruption around them. The marvel is that social evils are not greater than they are, and that the overwhelming majority of Indian women are models of wifely fidelity and devotion.

India's Holy Men

One of the most striking features of Indian life is the way in which thousands of Hindus devote themselves entirely to religion. Leaving home and everything they possess, they become "holy men"—or women—often called fakirs, Sadhus, Sanyasis, Yogis, or some other less familiar name. These ascetics are constantly seen sitting cross-legged by the roadside or at the door

of a shrine, wearing a scanty saffron cloth, their bodies smeared with sacred ashes and daubed with vermilion or yellow paint, their hair, often longer than themselves, hanging in filthy neglected masses or twisted round the head like a big turban. Some of them spend their time in meditation, trying to concentrate their minds on one idea : " I am THAT ! " (*i.e.* " I am part of the Supreme "). Others may be seen torturing themselves by sitting on spikes, or by difficult and painful contortions of the body, or by going on pilgrimages by prostrations (*i.e.* by measuring their length on the ground). Still others take " the long pilgrimage," visiting the four cardinal points of India—the horrible shrine of Kali in Calcutta (East), the source of the Ganges (North), the shrine of Krishna at Dwarka (West), and the shrine of Rama at Ramesvaram (South). It usually takes about half a dozen years to complete this amazing journey. Behind all this self-sacrifice there is the idea of acquiring merit and so reducing the number of future existences, or of pleasing the gods to secure their favour, and of finding spiritual rest and peace. To some of the better minds it is, in a very real sense, a search for God. These ascetics are estimated to number many millions, but it is to be feared that thousands of them are lazy fellows who impose upon the charity of the pious.

What is Hinduism ?

How shall we estimate the amazing religious zeal of India ? Perhaps it is impossible for mortal man to do so. All kinds of motives tend to make men practise religion in one way or another. Fear and custom, as well as deeper motives, play their part ; and one suspects that nowadays the holiday element and the love of pleasure and excitement are also powerful influences.

At a *mela*, the fair and the roundabouts are as conspicuous as the ceremonial bathing; to the simple villagers it is a glorious picnic, long looked forward to and enjoyed to the full. And people who have known India for many years (both Indians and foreigners) declare that the picnic element is increasing rapidly—that the tendency is to more pleasure and less *puja*. And it is said on every hand that the crowds are smaller than formerly. But when all allowance is made, it remains true that the Hindus are the most religious people on the face of the earth.

And what are the outstanding ideas of this great religion? At the back of all there is a more or less vague conception of an "All-Soul"—a Supreme Being, the great Brahm who has no second; "Brahm is All, All is Brahm." Around this vague, mysterious, impersonal Being profound philosophies are woven, and a pantheistic philosophy is the religion of the deep thinkers of India. There are no idols or pictures of Brahm, and no temples are built for his worship.

Brahm is held to have manifested himself in three forms: as BRAHMA (the Creator), as VISHNU (the Preserver), and as SIVA (the Destroyer and Reproducer). The last two of these are believed to have had different incarnations and manifestations. They had wives—who were goddesses—and children, who in turn became gods and goddesses. The popular idea is that the gods now number 330,000,000.

One great Hindu doctrine is that of the "transmigration of souls"—a belief that the human soul passes through many thousands of existences in this world, dwelling in animals, reptiles, insects, and birds, as well as in human bodies. And this is closely related to a belief in *Karma*

(fate or retribution) : what a man does in one existence determines his life in future existences. Trouble, pain, and loss in the present life are the inevitable retribution for evil deeds in a previous one, and prosperity and happiness are the rewards of good actions. Conduct here affects the hereafter.

Do Hindus "Worship" Their Idols?

But what about the idols? Do the Hindus *really worship the images*? There is every reason to suppose that the ignorant, credulous masses—the multi-millions of India—do actually worship the idols. A little talk with the unsophisticated villagers will convince the enquirer that this is the case. Many converts to Christianity declare that they themselves did so before their conversion. A Brahmin convert, now a Christian minister, well known to the writer, is very explicit on this point. But many millions of Hindus are too thoughtful for such crude notions, and they hold that the idol is not actually the god but *only the representation* of the god; they do not pray to the idol but only *before* the idol. In other words, when they worship, they have the image before them to remind them of the god they cannot see. Beyond question, this is the attitude of all thoughtful Hindus.

To reflective Hindus it is obvious that although there are millions of idols of Krishna or Rama, there is *only one* Krishna and *only one* Rama. Such men will sometimes draw an illustration from the Roman Catholic Church. "Catholics have many thousands of images of Christ and Mary," they say; "do they therefore believe that there are thousands of Christs and thousands of Marys? Certainly not. Even so, we Hindus believe that there is only one Krishna, though there may be

millions of idols to represent him." Some of these men will go further and assert that Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, Krishna and Kali, Rama and Sita, Ganesha and all the other gods are really only different *manifestations of the one supreme Brahm*, and represent him in different aspects.

Such men usually defend the use of idols as aids to worship, on the ground that the common people cannot rise to abstract truth and need the concrete visible image to help them to worship the Unseen. "Idols," they say, "are only object lessons for the ignorant masses." Certain it is that by the idols and the ceremonies the temple-priests have their living!

Yet there remains the great fact that the outstanding characteristic of India is her devotion to the gods she reveres.

CHAPTER VII

INDIA'S BOYS AND GIRLS

BESIDE the lovely sacred tank at Madura¹ stands a small temple to the goddess Parvati. It is a favourite shrine (one of many) for people whose hearts crave for children—especially for sons—and they gather to this sacred spot as earnestly as Hannah visited the temple of the Lord in Shiloh. With the sacrifice of a goat they present to their goddess a little wooden cradle—an *empty* cradle—as a pathetic plea that the goddess will grant their desire. And if, in due time, their hearts are gladdened by the birth of a little one, the joyful parents repair once more to this temple to give thanks, bringing, as a token of their gratitude, a small clay figure of a child. The flat roof of the temple is literally packed with hundreds of these figures.

Let no one imagine for a moment that in India children are unwelcomed and neglected. No gift is more earnestly desired from the gods.

Infancy and Childhood

In the village dwelling one may see the baby in his cradle—a basket suspended by ropes from a rafter in the roof. Such a cradle is convenient, for it is easily rocked—indeed, baby can rock himself as he kicks about—and in it he is comparatively safe from snakes!

Most Indian parents lavish a wealth of affection upon

¹ See p. 99.

their children, and the stranger cannot fail to observe the tenderness with which they are usually treated even by the poorest outcasts. One of the most frequent and pleasing of street sights, especially in the south of India, is a fond father carrying the baby out for an airing—sauntering proudly along the high road or through the bazaar with the little one in his arms, or, if the child is old enough, straddled across one hip. Now pause for a moment and smile at the baby; immediately the father's face becomes radiant! In a crowded third-class railway carriage one has sometimes taken some little notice of a scrap of brown humanity on a mother's lap, and has suddenly become conscious of being on a friendly footing with the entire company in that compartment. The quickest way to the Indian heart is via the children, although it is not wise for a stranger to *touch* a child without the parents' consent.

As the baby grows bigger and stronger, and consciousness dawns, the devoted mother coos over her darling like the mothers of any other country. Tiny hands reach out and seize mother's big nose ring (often a hoop of gold wire two or three inches in diameter) until she is obliged to remove that attractive plaything and substitute a sort of little stud that baby fingers cannot pull. In India it is very noticeable that one seldom hears a little child crying.

The parents' hearts are often possessed with a great fear lest some sickness they are powerless to resist should steal their treasure from them—especially if the child is a boy. Against such evils the Indian mother feels helpless. She is unacquainted with the simplest remedies, and—if there be no Government dispensary or medical mission within reach—is dependent upon the gods and the village barber. The parents vow that if the gods will

spare their child through the sicknesses of infancy they will go on pilgrimage to some holy city or sacred river, and at a great festival will cut his hair for the first time and present it as an offering! A missionary friend told the writer of a little boy, just able to toddle, being brought to the dispensary for treatment. The whole body was covered with dreadful boils, and the head was so bad that it was impossible to put down the tip of a finger without touching one. Would the mother allow the boy's hair to be cut off in order that the boils on the head might be properly treated? Oh, no! *that* could not be thought of; the poor mother had lost six or seven children in infancy, and in despair she had pledged the hair of this one to the sacred Ganges. What hope of help from that mighty river goddess if the child's hair was cut off by the English lady? It was a question of the hair or the child's life, and the missionary pleaded earnestly. It was in vain; the mother took the child home. But in a day or two she returned to the dispensary and yielded, saying pathetically: "You may use the scissors if you must, but give the hair to me." The hair was cut off and carefully wrapped up in paper, and a few months later it was taken to Anapshahr and duly presented to the river goddess.

Many a tiny toddler runs about naked all through the hot day, and then, in the chilly nights of the cold season in North India, takes a chill and pneumonia sets in. What can the agonized mother do? Perhaps a monkey swings itself down from the roof and enters the house, and the child, chasing it, is badly bitten on hand or leg. Or perchance a pot of boiling water on the little fire-place upsets, and the child is scalded. What *can* the mother do? A cow-dung poultice is about the best

remedy she can think of—or maybe the village barber suggests something else, perhaps something worse. We have heard of sore eyes being rubbed with powdered glass . . . and those little eyes were closed for ever. It was not that the parent or the barber meant to be cruel—it was only ignorance, not wickedness. That poor mother's heart was yearning to relieve the little one, and she used the only remedy suggested to her. Would to God there were a mission hospital within reach of every village in the land !

The Play-Age

If the children survive all the sicknesses of infancy—and the “remedies”—they speedily reach the play-age, and no children love play more than the boys and girls of India. In the villages most of them are not troubled with much clothing, and many run about merrily in the warm sunshine dressed in a bracelet or a tiny little lead and glass ornament suspended from a string. Some of them have a small vest that scarcely covers their little brown chests ; others wear a loin-cloth, and a few have more ample clothing. Some little girls wear a short skirt, which, in the South, is exchanged for a *sari* as they grow older. Usually Indian children are sturdy little people, with well-formed limbs, and sparkling eyes and pearly teeth ; they are always ready for fun and as playful as kittens. With soft, wondering eyes these little brown mites stand and gaze at the stranger who enters their village. They are timid at first, but when kindly smiles assure them that we are friends they gather eagerly around with radiant faces. No one can be in India long without learning to love the boys and girls.

The poorest children—like their brothers and sisters



Photo by the Author

HIGH-CASTE GIRLS AT SCHOOL

Photographed in the courtyard of a mission school at Khurja, U.P., North India. The girls were dressed in beautifully coloured silk garmen's bordered with silver-tinsel trimming and wore a good deal of jewellery. Notice their ink-pots and wooden slates.

of an English slum—have little enough in the way of toys; but mud and leaves and sticks are plentiful, and soon little fingers learn to make clay figures and all sorts of things as children will. And it does not matter how dirty they make themselves—the dust and mud will soon wash off. Quite early even outcaste children learn to plait dry grass and make little toys for themselves. With dry straw and a few seeds or little stones the older children make capital rattles for the babies, of whom they are very fond. Nothing can exceed the tenderness of girls for their little brothers; they look after them and play with them with greatest devotion, calling them by endearing names and generally acting as little mothers.

Most Indian children have a few simple toys. Parents, or older brothers and sisters, returning from a journey or from a festival, will not fail to bring home some little thing for the children. Playthings can always be seen on the stalls in the bazaar: curious rag dolls, clay or wood balls, pretty little toys of painted wood, crude drums—just clay bowls covered over with parchment—and little jumping figures. These simple toys delight the heart of an Indian child, and even English children do not despise them. Or perhaps the gift consists of a small bracelet, made of green or blue glass or of composition covered with tinsel; or it may be a handful of monkey-nuts or sweets.

The sweetmeat stall has just the same attraction for Indian children that the toffee shop has for little people at home, and when someone has given them a *pice* (a farthing)—or perchance even an *anna* (a penny)—they run happy and breathless to the bazaar, holding tightly the treasured coin, to buy some of the sticky luxuries on the sweet-stall. The writer remembers

lingering sometimes about such stalls to see the childish glee with which the little ones rushed up and almost climbed on the stall in their eagerness. And it was noticeable that the kind-faced dealer did not drive very hard bargains with his youthful customers.

Swinging is a familiar pastime, especially in the month of *Sawan* (the end of June and early July), when practically every house in some parts of the country has a swing fitted up under the veranda or under a tree—just a single rope with a board for a seat. The women and older girls join the little ones in the frolic, sitting two on a swing (facing one another), and singing as they swing to and fro.

There are times when the children are naughty. If the offence be not very serious the little offender will be made to put his hands together and beg pardon. Then very often the parent will say, "*Kān ko pakarlo!*" (Take hold of your ears!) and then, while the frightened youngster is doing so, the command comes, "Now say you won't do it again!"—a promise readily given and, we fear, as speedily forgotten. Sometimes the parent, usually in a fit of temper, spansks the child, and then, when the youngster cries, gives it a *pice* to go and buy some sweets! In this way the whole idea of discipline and training is destroyed. There is no thought of controlling the child and insisting on obedience. The punishment over, the indulgent parents' chief thought is to stop the crying—they cannot bear to see their little ones crying. Thus between spanking and spoiling the boys and girls grow up self-willed and passionate, sadly lacking that self-discipline so necessary for the duties of life.

Indeed, for Indian children there is little or nothing of what we in England regard as character-training.

Most parents simply do not understand it; it is entirely beyond their horizon. Girls are taught the duty of obedience and faithfulness to their husbands, and, particularly in the United Provinces, the beautiful and noble goddess Sita is held up before them as an example to be followed. The boys are taught the importance of loyalty to their caste and caste-rules, but this hardly reaches to the level of character-training as we understand it. Too often the moral atmosphere of the village is unwholesome, and even in the home the ordinary conversation is very coarse. At a very early age there is a lack of innocence, and a precocity which is distressing to those brought up in a Christian home in the West. There is, of course, a measure of religious instruction. While quite young the children are taught to worship the idols—both at home and in the temples. Between the ages of eight and twelve the high caste boy is initiated into the Hindu faith, and with solemn ceremony the sacred thread of the "twice born" is put on. But this religious teaching does not amount to character-training, for in Hinduism religion has far too little relation to morals.

At Work

At quite an early age Indian children take some part in the simple duties of the home. In the courtyard the tiny girls polish with red earth the brass vessels that are the pride of the Indian household, and soon learn to husk the grain, to roll the spices for the curry, and to make the *chapatties*. When the women take their big water-pots to the village well, two or three little girls with their smaller vessels may be seen tripping beside them, and, when the vessels have been filled, they enjoy the fun of learning to balance them upon

their heads as their mothers do. Indian children are very imitative; they walk behind their elders in single file and copy their actions—often with an air of business-like seriousness that is very amusing. Many of them soon become more like miniature men and women than children. They are given responsibility at quite an early age, and accept it as a matter of course.

The boys help their fathers in various ways, and in the country both boys and girls work in the fields, or take the goats out to the jungle in the morning and drive them back to the village through clouds of dust at sunset. It is no unusual thing for a little boy of nine or ten to be in charge of a herd of buffaloes.¹ This sounds romantic, but it is no light responsibility for one so young, and not infrequently the boys have to defend their herds from wild animals—a task that calls for no little courage and wit. An English resident tells of seeing a boy about eight or nine years old lead his buffaloes down to drink at the Nerbudda River. As they approached it, the boy's sharp eyes detected three little black spots on the surface of the water; they were only like pin-points, but they indicated the presence of a crocodile. Without fuss or excitement the little fellow quickly drove his herd back to a safe distance, and then sat down to watch while the crocodile came out of the water at the very spot where he and the buffaloes had been only a few moments before. When the disappointed crocodile departed, the boy coolly brought his charges

¹ The Indian domestic "buffalo," often called the "water buffalo" because of its habit of standing in a pond with only its nose visible above the surface. It is a dark grey animal with powerful horns; it is about the size of a cow, and very ugly. There is a common story that when God had made the world and everything therein, He said to man, "Now you make something." Man tried to do so, and the result was a water buffalo!

back to the water. What boy of nine years old in this country would be able to do such a thing? It is truly marvellous what wise little old men and women these Indian children are!

As the children grow, responsibilities increase and childhood, with its playfulness and sweet innocence, passes away all too quickly.

Red-letter Days

Birthdays are unknown to Indian children—very few people in India know precisely when they were born—and, of course, there is nothing quite corresponding to the Western Christmas. But there are numerous festivals that provide interest and amusement, and the boys and girls find life by no means dull. Occasionally, for instance, some great Indian prince will have a torchlight procession, with richly-decorated elephants and camels and soldiers. How the children's eyes sparkle at such sights!

Most of the festivals are connected with the worship of the gods. Sometimes it is a big procession in which the huge decorated idol cars are pulled round the town by hundreds of men, while the children squeeze through the crowds or crawl under someone's legs to get a better view. Sometimes there are illuminations and fireworks and Bengal lights, as at the *Dewali*¹ (the Feast of Lights) when all the houses are newly whitewashed and lit up with tiny lamps placed in earthenware jars with coloured papers over them. At the stalls in the market people buy little model houses of clay or paper, and place them in their windows, or on the front veranda, with lights inside. A stroll through the streets on the night of that festival is full of interest, and naturally enough

¹ Called the *Deepavali* in South India.

the youngsters have a great time. Unfortunately this feast is closely connected with gambling, which Government permits for two nights, and not a few children first learn to gamble on this occasion.

Another festival, the *Navaratri*, or Ninth Night, is, in South India, to some extent a children's festival. All available dolls and toys are displayed, the women, as well as the children, taking great pride in making an imposing show. Some families carefully keep the collection of dolls for display year after year, just as we put our Christmas lanterns away for future use.

Often the bigger children are taken to a *mela* like the one described in the preceding chapter.¹ As they ride along the great high roads (sometimes for several days), they laugh and joke and wave their sticks and sing like Lancashire Sunday-school children at a Whit-week outing. And at the *mela* there are swings and roundabouts and big wheels, not to mention the bangle sellers and fruit stalls and the sugar canes! It is the nearest approach to a summer holiday these children know, and they thoroughly enjoy it. At such a *mela* many a boy has used one of his *pice* to buy a little book, which he carefully takes home to read. That little book is a "one pice Gospel." Possibly it is the first time he learns anything about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Weddings and What They Mean

But perhaps the greatest excitement of all is a wedding. Sometimes the ceremonies and the feasting last for several days and are carried on on a scale that throws the families concerned into debt that requires years of toil to wipe out. Even if they are only spectators, the children enjoy it—for the procession at the taking

¹ See pp. 102-3.

of the bride to her new home is picturesque to a degree. She is carried in a decorated palanquin—covered up, of course—while the bridegroom rides upon a horse or even an elephant. The guests are dressed in their gayest clothing; and there are flaming torches and bands and dancing as the procession moves forward at a snail's pace.

Of course the children revel in it, and especially if it happens to be in their own family—or even, perchance, their own wedding! What can be more exciting for an Indian boy or girl than to be married—to be dressed in wonderful silks and embroidery, and covered with jewels, to be feasted and made the centre of the ceremony? To their childish minds marriage means little more than a great entertainment.

The wedding, outwardly so full of display and happiness, often brings the greatest shadow upon the child-life of India. The general rule is for Hindu girls to be married before they are twelve years old. In many cases the marriage ceremony takes place much earlier—not infrequently, even in infancy. The last published Government figures—those for the 1911 Census¹—show the following startling condition:—

302,000	little wives	under 5 years old
2,219,000	„ „	between 5 and 10
6,555,000	„ „	„ 10 and 15

In many parts of India one sees in the streets little girls—sometimes *very* little—with a circular red mark on the forehead, or a red line running up the parting of the hair. This means that the little one is married. Whatever the age of the girl, the marriage—or even the betrothal—is *absolutely irrevocable* for her. The boy

¹ The complete analysed figures for the 1921 census are not yet available.

may die, or develop some disease, or he may go blind, before the marriage is consummated. It makes no difference: the little girl is bound to him for good or evil; the betrothal cannot be broken, nor the marriage set aside, and there is no divorce in Hinduism. If the boy dies, the little "wife" becomes a *widow for life*, although she may be only four or five years old! The Census returns on the subject of child-widowhood are truly terrible:—

17,703	widows	under 5 years old
94,270	"	between 5 and 10
223,042	"	" 10 " 15

Many high-minded Hindu reformers view this state of things with concern.

The child wife usually continues to live with her parents until she is about ten or twelve years of age. Then she is taken to her husband's home and lives with him as his wife. The trying conditions of the joint family system mean that the newcomer is placed—perhaps with several sisters-in-law of varying age—under the control of her husband's mother. To a little girl of such tender years this is a great hardship. She naturally feels keenly the separation from her own fond parents, and cries pitifully in the loneliness of her new surroundings. And it must be confessed that in only too many cases she does not receive from her mother-in-law the love and affection she has been accustomed to in her own home. She cries for her mother, and then is scolded and beaten.

Frequently child-marriage means child-motherhood—and perhaps an early death in consequence. All who truly love India must be deeply pained by this threefold shadow that rests upon the girlhood of the land—child-marriage, child-motherhood, and child-widowhood—a

triple problem which Indian reformers will have to deal with very seriously. To this dark list of evils, yet another must be added—the practice of a middle-aged or even an old widower being re-married to a *child wife*!

School Life

From very early ages India has had schools carried on in accordance with Indian ideas. To-day most villages have a school of sorts, in which the village schoolmaster imparts some little knowledge to a few boys. If they are Brahmin boys they study Sanskrit, and learn to read and write the sacred characters. A great deal of time is given to memorizing sections of the Vedas or other sacred books. But these schools are of the old order, and are passing away before the steady advance of education on Western lines.

In thousands of villages there are now little mission schools in which Indian teachers give elementary instruction. In some cases the tiny children learn to write their letters in the dust on the ground, writing with a bit of stick or with the fingers. In other schools wooden slates are used, on which the boys and girls write in a black pigment with a reed pen. It must be confessed that many of these elementary village schools are not as efficient as we could wish, and often the children are taken away from school and put to work before they have made much headway.

Much more satisfactory work is done in the scores of secondary and High Schools now sprinkled over the land. Some of these are Government schools, and others are the result of private or municipal enterprise. Sometimes a wealthy Indian gentleman will build a handsome school and place it under the direction of a local committee or under the Municipal Board. But very many

of these schools are Mission institutions, organized and superintended by Christian missionaries and their helpers. It has been the writer's privilege to visit many such schools, and in almost every case he has been delighted with the efficiency with which they are carried on. Many of his happiest hours in India were spent in visiting these splendid institutions.

In many mission schools there are now Scout Companies—a feature of school life as dear to the heart of the Indian boy as to his British brothers. The Scout Movement is unquestionably doing a fine work in India, and its spirit of comradeship and service is making a very deep impression. The Girl Guide Movement is only in its infancy in India, but this, too, has unquestionably a great future. But in spite of all that is being done the schools of India are wholly insufficient for the needs of so vast a country, and are only touching the fringe of the problem.

Of the myriad interests of India nothing fascinated the writer so much as the boys and girls. To join happy Indian school children at play-time, to have them crowding around, playfully pulling one's coat or slipping their hands over one's eyes, to have little brown hands ransacking one's pockets and pulling out a penknife, a bunch of keys or a watch (the small children love to "see the wheels go round"—these are happy memories that can never be forgotten by one who loves the boys and girls of India.

CHAPTER VIII

INDIA IN TRANSITION

The Island City

STAND on the top of far-famed Malabar Hill and look down upon the island city of Bombay with its population of nearly a million souls. The scene has none of the true Indian fascination. Northward, as far as the eye can reach, the great city stretches for something like twenty-eight square miles, bristling with factory chimneys instead of graceful minarets, and having more cotton mills than temples. There is little here to suggest the India described in the previous chapters of this book.

Let us drive along a few roads in the fashionable suburb on and around the Malabar Hill. Here are the residences of numerous Europeans and the mansions and villas of wealthy Indian gentlemen—lit with electric light and fitted with electric fans and telephones.

Now jump on the electric car and travel for a short distance along broad well-kept roads, past splendid public buildings, to the port. Bombay harbour is the largest and finest in India. Its busy docks, offices, and Custom-house give the immediate impression of a great port. Out on the calm waters, the ships of many nations lie at anchor, and, if it is Saturday, there is sure to be a big P. & O. liner at the landing-stage.

But beside being the chief port, Bombay is an industrial city, with great factories and cotton mills and railway works. It is the Manchester as well as the

Liverpool of India. One day I stood upon the topmost rampart of an old fortification and looked out upon a wide panorama of workshops, interspersed with a few surviving palm trees that stand like relics of a bygone age. Twenty-four hours earlier I had been in a little village, far away in the Maratha country, watching the village folk weaving cloth on their primitive hand-loom arranged down the old-world street! Centuries seemed to lie between that quiet scene and the whirling machinery of the Bombay mills. Truly, India is in transition.

Many of the mills and engineering workshops of Bombay are well equipped with the latest machines, and appear to be as airy and as sanitary as those of the British Isles; though, in the hot season, the heat is necessarily intense. Bare-footed Indian toilers—both men and women, and, alas, sadly too many children—go about their varied duties quietly and diligently. The women maintain a dignified reserve in the presence of the male workers, and more than one manager told the writer that not the slightest trouble accrues from the mixing of the sexes.

Nor is Bombay the only industrial centre. In the beautiful city of Madras—that queen city of the South, whose wide avenues and tropical gardens give one a sense of spaciousness—even there great mills and industrial undertakings are multiplying.

Industrial Bengal

At Serampore, near Calcutta, there is a half-ruined temple in which, more than a century ago, William Carey and Henry Martyn were wont to meet for converse and prayer. Standing on that spot to-day one may look across the wide yellow waters of the Hoogli, and see at sight these noble pioneers never dreamed of—a

long line of factories and jute mills stretching away city-wards for miles. Calcutta itself, which, with its suburbs, has a population of some 1,230,000, has extensive industrial quarters and a growing industrial population.

Two hundred miles away is Raniganj—a little country town—Indian enough in itself, but surrounded with a ring of paper mills, potteries, and coal mines whose tall shafts and wheels, and huge tips of earth and black rubbish, make one rub one's eyes with amazement. Surely this is Wigan, not the picturesque Orient! That coal-field stretches out to the west for an area of not less than 500 square miles. In 1887 the Bengal coal-fields yielded 900,000 tons; in 1911 the output was nearly 11,500,000 tons. The miners are, of course, Indians, but most mines have a little colony of about a dozen European overseers with their wives.

Of Cawnpore, Ahmedabad, and many another manufacturing centre, there is no need to speak. Beyond doubt industrialism, with all it implies, has come to stay. In 1918 there were in India 3318 factories registered under the Factory Act—an increase of 1100 in ten years! Some of them are owned by Indian and others by European firms. They employ 897,000 men, 161,000 women, and 64,000 children. These factories are under Government inspection, and much has been done to secure improved sanitary and moral conditions and to safeguard the interests of the workers. In most of them there is a weekly day of rest—Sunday, Friday, or some other day.

The Perils of Industrialism

One of the chief dangers of industrial development is the overcrowding that so often accompanies it.⁴ In

Bombay the conditions are terrible. All is very different from the picturesque bazaars of the true Indian cities one sees up country. There are narrow, evil-smelling streets and squalid courts, with ramshackle tenement houses, three or four stories high, shutting out light and air. In 1918 there were, in Bombay alone, 166,337 occupied one-room tenements, with an average of 4.47 persons per room. No less than 76 per cent of the population were living in one-room tenements! The *Times of India* declared that it was "no unusual thing to find fifteen or twenty people, of both sexes, huddled together on the floor of a single room in a stifling atmosphere and a vile stench." The infant mortality was 454 per thousand. Plague and influenza take heavy toll in these densely-crowded quarters. Unhappily the city population is constantly increasing, for from time to time famine drives the wretched people of the country districts to seek refuge, and perchance work, in the great towns. Away up country the writer has seen trains so crammed with hungry people making for Bombay that it was impossible to squeeze more in, and a dozen or two were left behind on every wayside station to wait for the next train—next day! A guard told me that some had to wait three or four days before they managed to get in. Thus simple country folk are gathered into the slums of the great city.

Industrialism brings other perils. Already there is strife between capital and labour—intensified in many instances because the one is white and the other brown, and labour problems are embittered by the prejudice of race and colour. The day of trade unionism has dawned, and already strikes are a familiar experience. There were nearly two hundred strikes up and down India during 1920—some of them being of considerable

importance. While the writer was in Bombay a great strike of post-office employees was in progress, and it completely dislocated the postal system for some weeks. In these difficult days certain politicians are constantly striving to work labour disputes to serve their own ends.

This is New India, or—to be more accurate—one aspect of it. Happily there are more pleasing aspects.

Among India's Students

Elementary education throughout India is in a very undeveloped state, but higher education has made great progress in recent years. Already India has nine Universities,¹ and every large city has at least one College. There are more students in India than there are in England and Wales, and even more striking is the fact that, per thousand of the population, more people are receiving College education in India than in the homeland.

To visit some of the great educational centres is a revelation. The Universities and most of the Colleges are splendid institutions. The teaching staffs include European, American, and Indian professors and lecturers, but all the instruction is given in the English language, so that educated Indians may have full access to all the literature and scholarship of the English-speaking races. The subjects taught in these Colleges include arts, science, literature, law, medicine, engineering, commerce, teaching, agriculture, and forestry, according to the special purpose of the particular College. The scene in the light airy lecture-rooms strikes the Western visitor as singularly picturesque. Many of the students—especially in Bengal—wear Indian garments; on many a face is the gleaming

¹ Viz. Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Allahabad, Punjab (Lahore), Patna, Mysore, Benares (Hindu University), and Aligarh (Moslem University). Others are projected.

white or red mark of a Hindu god, and here and there among the hundreds of round cloth skull-caps and turbans a red fez is noticeable—a sure sign of a Mohammedan. In some classes the lecturer himself may be wearing the flowing garments and bulky turban still dear to the average Brahmin.

The largest College in India is a missionary institution—the great Christian College, Madras, in which six different missionary societies unite in giving a sound University education to Indian youths. This splendid pile of buildings, with stately towers and turrets rising above its halls and pillared façades and hostels, stands on the Esplanade, beside the High Court of Madras. It is an institution of which the whole city has cause to be proud. In addition to a number of Indian tutors and lecturers, it has about a dozen European professors, and there are usually from eight hundred to nine hundred students, all of whom are working for the degrees of the Madras University—the course of study being closely modelled on those of the British Universities. Walk round the corridors and see the men grinding at mathematics, or political economy, or physics; visit the well-equipped biological or chemical laboratories and watch the students working out their experiments. In one room a professor is lecturing on the Renaissance in Europe, and in another the students are poring over the Sermon on the Mount, or listening to an exposition of the message of Isaiah or Amos and its application to the present age. In the evening there are many activities; the whole College is ablaze with electric light, and electric fans keep the rooms reasonably cool. Some men may be seen studying in the library, where seven thousand volumes are at their disposal. In one room, the Debating Club is discussing “The Relationship of Caste to Social

Service," and in another the Christian Union is in session. Visit the six college hostels, and look into a few of the small bedroom-studies: in some, the occupants are lying on the simple beds reading Shakespeare or Milton, Green's *Short History* or Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. In another room a student is sitting at the little table "swotting" for his inter-science exam.

In all missionary Colleges the Bible is a regular class book; but Government educational institutions are strictly secular and give no religious instruction—for the Government of India is pledged to religious neutrality. In Benares, the most important College is a Hindu institution, and the Mohammedans have now a large University of their own at Aligarh near Agra: both of these are run on practically the same educational lines as the other Universities.

In all, India has about two hundred and ten colleges giving University education, and more than sixty-four thousand men are studying in them. In addition, many thousands of young Indians (at the risk of breaking caste by crossing "the black water") visit foreign lands to continue their studies in the great Universities of the West. The majority of these come to England, and at the present time there are something like fifteen hundred in this country. Unfortunately their coming to the West is not an unmixed good, for they see a great deal of the darker side of a civilization that is far from Christian, and often have little or no opportunity of seeing the quiet beauty of the true home life of Britain.

But the educational system of India has several very serious defects. It is decidedly top-heavy, for the higher education is out of all proportion to the elementary work. The lower classes and many of the middle class are largely illiterate. Of the 160 million males only

about 17 millions can read and write, and of the 153 millions of females less than 2 millions reach this standard of literacy.

Another weakness of the higher educational system is that very large numbers of the men who go to college take the literary course in the belief that it will lead to Government service or to the legal profession. The result is that the number of Arts students vastly exceeds the possibilities of employment, and many have difficulty in finding a sphere of work. There is urgent need for developing technical and vocational education such as will fit the students for the practical purposes of life.

Colleges for Indian Women

But what of higher education for Indian women? In this direction, it must be confessed, very little progress has been made. It is true that there are now sixteen Colleges for women, but these have only about twelve hundred students all told, a terribly low figure when we remember that there are 153 millions of women in the country. Already there are a number of Indian women graduates, and in 1921 Miss Satyapriya Ghosh, M.B., of Calcutta, passed the final examination for the Diploma of Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (F.R.C.S.)—the first Indian woman to attain this distinction.

Of the Colleges for women, perhaps the most interesting and best-known is the United Christian College for Women in Madras, established in 1915. Twelve missionary societies of Britain and America unite in maintaining this really splendid institution, which is housed in first-class buildings, situated in a large and beautiful compound. The College staff consists of ten women graduates (British, American, and Indian) and

five Indian tutors. It is one of the most efficiently staffed missionary institutions in all India. The subjects include mathematics, physics, logic, natural science, chemistry, botany, history (ancient and modern), philosophy, economics, English, Latin, French, and all the four great South Indian languages. The College has separate laboratories for botany, zoology, chemistry, and physics. It is affiliated to the University of Madras, and provides a complete course for the Intermediate and B.A. examinations, so that no student need leave the compound for any part of her instruction. During the last three years twenty students have graduated. It is an inspiration to see the bright-faced students of this College sitting at the latest-pattern American desks in the lecture rooms, taking copious notes of the lectures, or to see them tripping gracefully along the pillared verandas to their private studies, kept as daintily as those at Girton or Newnham. Nearly all the students in this College are the daughters of Indian Christians—a fact full of promise for the future of the Church.

Missionaries and Education

It will be seen that Christian missionaries are taking no mean part in the education of India. In truth, they were the pioneers, and education has ever been a leading feature of their programme. So early as 1787 the noble German missionary, Schwartz, had a group of schools in South India, and in 1818 William Carey and his colleagues founded their great college at Serampore, near Calcutta. Then came three Scottish educational missionaries—Alexander Duff of Calcutta (1830), Wilson of Bombay, and Anderson of Madras—each of whom founded a great educational institution. From that time missionaries of all Churches have recognized the importance of

education on Christian lines, and a recent Government of India Blue Book (1921) says concerning elementary education : " The work of the various Christian Missionary Societies in giving education to Panchamas (the outcastes) is beyond praise."

The Changes Resulting from Education

One of the pioneers of Western education in India was the Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was greatly influenced by Carey. Though remaining a Hindu, he was impressed with the teaching of the New Testament, and in 1820 he wrote a book entitled, *The Principles of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*. Gathering around him a company of men who could no longer assent to all the doctrines of Hinduism, he founded a new sect called the Brahmo Samaj, which was a reformed Hinduism strongly impregnated with Christian ideas. Idolatry with all its attendant superstition, the sacrifice of animals, child-marriage, and the burning of widows, were denounced. Ram Mohan Roy's great successor, Keshab Chandra Sen, came even nearer to Christianity, and his lectures to his followers contained not a few exhortations to follow and revere Christ. One of these lectures concluded with the notable words : " None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus ever deserved the glorious diadem of India's crown : and He shall have it."

Other men, driven from the old positions by education, found refuge in a different direction. Sweeping away all idolatry as unworthy of educated men, they sought to return to the purer faith of Vedic times.¹ Taking the name of the Arya Samaj, they utterly rejected the teaching of Christ, and to-day they are characterized by a most bitter hatred of Christianity.

¹ See pp. 23-5.

Towards the close of last century another great movement manifested itself among educated Hindus—a tendency to revive orthodox Hinduism and to reject all modern reform movements. A learned young Bengali of this school of thought, Swami Vivekananda by name, went to Chicago in 1893 to represent India at the Parliament of Religions, and he attracted a good deal of attention by his enthusiastic eulogies of Hinduism. He defended Hinduism as a deeply spiritual faith, of immense value, and of the highest possibilities for development—a faith that must in no wise be surrendered to the materialism of the West. But his Hinduism was not that of the masses of his fellow-countrymen. He took a modern view, for example, of idols, but he urged that idols should be retained for the edification of the ordinary people—suggesting, however, more artistic images in place of the crude and often repulsive figures in common use. Thus Neo-Hinduism has become a real force with thousands of educated men, and the majority of India's students are more or less attracted to this position.

In Mohammedan circles also, education has wrought its silent but important changes. Indian Moslems who have studied in the great Universities and Colleges remain true Moslems, but have a wider horizon and a fresher outlook than their less enlightened compatriots. Such men as Sir Amir Ali and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan exerted a powerful influence, and the great Mohammedan college at Aligarh (now the Aligarh University), became the centre of a Mohammedan forward movement known as the Aligarh Movement. There is a tendency on the part of conservative and reactionary Moslems to blame the "Moslem Modernists" for the evils that shadow the "House of Islam," as the Mohammedan world is termed.

The Modernists have not been slow to retort that it is not themselves, but the conservatives, who, by their narrowness and bigotry, are clogging the wheels of progress and making Islam weak.

New Ideals of Social Service

Besides its influence on religious thought, education has powerfully affected social ideals and has set in operation movements that indicate new life pulsating through the community. Educated men have their eyes opened to many evils and abuses around them, and they loudly demand reforms. There is a firm insistence on the urgent necessity for developing educational institutions from the elementary village school to the University. The education of girls is urged as a pressing and imperative necessity. The evils of the seclusion of women, child-marriage, perpetual widowhood, and the presence of prostitutes in the temples are condemned with more or less earnestness.

There is also a marked weakening of the more rigid and irksome rules of caste. In the schools and colleges the boys and young men of different castes intermingle. Where boarding accommodation is provided it is usual for them to live in separate hostels, to have their food cooked separately and in accordance with the rules of their various castes, and to eat separately. But in the class-room, the common room, and on the sports' field they mix freely together; and in missionary institutions they meet together in the large Hall for the opening and closing of school with the accompanying acts of Christian worship. In one High School in Madras the writer took a photograph of twenty-five boys of as many different castes sitting together. In North India he came across a case in which the students

still met caste rules by having separate cook-houses, *but they had the dividing walls only a foot high!*

• Equally important are the signs of a change of attitude towards the outcastes. Undoubtedly, during the last few years, there have been political motives to account largely for this; but it cannot be denied that not a few enlightened Indians have qualms of conscience about the age-long treatment of these unfortunate people, and there is a tendency to regard them as humble brethren in need of assistance. In not a few High Schools and Colleges the students, on their own initiative, have formed Social Service Guilds to study the problems of outcaste life—housing, sanitation, and education—and examples are not wanting of young caste students, and in some cases even Brahmins, going among the “untouchables” and rendering really noble service. It is an undeniable fact that there is more such service organized from Christian schools than from any others. The careful study of the Gospels as class books is not without effect on the lives of the youth of India. “I am not a Christian,” wrote a gifted Hindu, “but this I say: the more Christ-like we become, the better for us and for our land; and towards securing this happy end nothing can be more effective than the practice of placing before the minds of our students daily the ideal of love, self-abnegation, and suffering for others’ sake that is presented to us in the pages of the Gospels. . . . Half an hour’s study of the Bible will do more to remodel a man than a whole day spent in the study of the Puranas.”

The Rise of Nationalism

Another result of higher education in India has been the rise and development of Nationalism. . . . When Schwartz and Carey, Duff and Ram Mohan Roy, began their

evangelistic and educational work, they were introducing forces that were bound to effect mighty changes in the ancient civilizations of India. The more enlightened Governor-Generals in the days of "the Company," and statesmen like Lord Macaulay, sympathized with and assisted in the task of giving education and Christianity to the Indian people; and when Company rule ended, and the British Government assumed responsibility for that great land, it was laid down as a guiding principle that the Indian people were to be educated and prepared and encouraged gradually to take their proper part in the government of their country. For many years the whole policy has led slowly—perhaps too slowly—in this direction. Indian gentlemen have come more and more into prominent positions as magistrates, judges, or district officials: Municipal Boards have been formed—composed largely of Indians—and Indians were appointed to the Viceroy's Council, to the Government of India, and to the India Office in London; and in 1920 Lord Sinha was appointed Governor of Behar—the first Indian to become chief administrator of an important province.

But to many Indians the wheels of state seemed to move too slowly along the road of progress. And this feeling was strengthened by Japan's victory over Russia in 1904. All Asia was shaken out of slumber by that momentous event. If little Japan could become so strong, why not great China—and India? The Swadesi (Own Country) Movement was born, and such slogans as "India a Nation" and "India for the Indian" were heard. Some talked about turning the British out—bag and baggage—but more thoughtful Indians asked for Home Rule within the Empire.

Then came the great European War of 1914-18. It

created a new relationship between India and Great Britain; hopes ran high that the war services rendered by India would receive immediate recognition. Everything pointed to the speedy granting of a very large measure of self-government to India, and this was strengthened by the fact that she was specially represented at the great Peace Conference at Versailles, and on the League of Nations. President Wilson's new international ideal of "Self-determination" was readily accepted by the British Government, and it naturally created large expectations in India. All the great peoples of Asia and Africa, as well as the smaller states of Europe, tingled with new life and expectation; a tidal wave of Nationalism swept round the world, and hardly a country escaped its force. Indians, like other people, demanded the right of "self-expression"; their feelings were accentuated by such grievances as the treatment of Indians in South and East Africa, and they grew impatient at the inevitable delays in carrying out Britain's clearly expressed intention.

Happily, plans for a larger measure of self-government than the Indian people had ever known were well in hand: in December 1919 an Act passed through the British Parliament establishing elective Provincial Councils and Assemblies, and, in December 1920, India held the first General Election in her long history. A new era was inaugurated.

Unfortunately, while the arrangements for this constitution were being made, events conspired to wound India's self-esteem and stir up feeling to a flame of passion. High prices, food scarcity, recurring famines and epidemics, produced serious unrest among the masses. Indian Moslems were disturbed over the Allied peace terms to Turkey and the curtailment of the power of

the Sultan—the supreme spiritual head of Islam. Even more serious were the most lamentable disturbances at Amritsar, in the Punjab (April 1919). After several days of rioting, during which excesses had been committed, a crowd of some ten thousand Indians, who had gathered in a place where a meeting had been prohibited, were, without warning to disperse, fired upon for ten minutes by a small company of troops. About 380 people were killed, and probably three times that number wounded. The action was condemned by Lord Hunter's Committee of Investigation as being "inhuman and un-British" and as causing "great disservice to British rule in India." The continuing to fire after the crowd had begun to disperse was described by the Government of India as "indefensible" and "greatly exceeding the necessity of the occasion," and as having "undoubtedly left behind bitterness of feeling which will take long to pass away." These unhappy events united both Hindus and Moslems in common cause against the Government.

Mr Gandhi and Non-Co-operation

The situation now brought to the forefront a very remarkable Nationalist leader—Mr M. K. Gandhi, a Hindu lawyer, educated in England and called to the Bar at the Inner Temple. A man of irreproachable character and ascetic habits, he at once captivated the imagination of India. Intensely earnest and very sincere, he is an idealist, a visionary, with an extraordinary tendency to overlook the realities of life. By the more extreme Nationalists, he was hailed as the deliverer of the land and regarded as almost more than mortal. He has steadily increased in power until he occupies a position unique in India. To understand Mr Gandhi's influence, it

is necessary to remember that it rests primarily, not on his position as a statesman or as a political leader, but upon the veneration which has sprung up around his person in the minds of all classes of Indians.

The main instrument of Mr Gandhi's policy is what has come to be known as "Non-Co-operation." Its aim is to make government impossible. Convinced that force would be futile and wicked, he has urged passive resistance: "Do not resort to violence. Simply refuse to co-operate with the Government. Have nothing to do with the British." He called upon lawyers to refuse to plead, upon all classes to take no cases to the courts, and upon students to come out of the colleges. All British goods were to be boycotted, and Indians possessing British titles and decorations were to return them to Government. At the General Election, the people were to refrain from voting and have nothing to do with the new constitution. Another of Mr Gandhi's instruments has been the proclamation of *Hartals* (Days of Mourning)—as, for example, on the occasion of the visits of the Duke of Connaught and the Prince of Wales—the people being ordered to close their shops and refrain from joining in the welcome and the festivities.

Mr Gandhi's true aims and methods were not understood by the ignorant and superstitious lower classes and the villagers; to them, opposition to Government meant violence. As a result, riots, outrages, and murders occurred in many parts of the country. Political capital was made out of the economic and industrial distress, and the situation became increasingly serious. Then, in March 1922, Mr Gandhi was arrested, and sentenced to six years' penal servitude without hard labour.

What the ultimate outcome will be, it is beyond the power of mortal man to predict. It remains for all

Christian people to seek to reach a sympathetic understanding of the aspirations of India, and to recognize that India must herself make a full contribution to the solution of her own problems.

That India has a great future before her cannot be doubted by those who know anything of her past achievements and her present possibilities. But probably her greatest contribution to the general life of mankind will be in the realm of religion. Indians are the most religious people in the world; they supremely believe that "the things that are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal." Her greatest men have been not monarchs or military leaders, but religious thinkers, and her most important achievements have been in the realm of religion. Bishop Westcott used to say that India is the St John of the nations, and that we shall never have a satisfactory commentary on St John's Gospel until an Indian Christian writes one. We look forward to the day when India will find in Christ the fulfilment of all her aspirations. When she focuses upon Jesus all her hereditary religious instincts she will be able to give to the world such an interpretation of the Gospel as it has never yet had, thereby enriching the spiritual experience of all nations.

BOOKS ON INDIA

A FOR FURTHER READING

B TEACHING MATERIAL

NOTE.—Where [•]U.C.M.E. (United Council for Missionary Education) is given as the publisher, the books can be obtained from any of the Missionary Societies (see addresses facing p. 7).

A

Those who desire to read more about some phase of Indian life may consult the following books:

Indian History, etc.

A Brief History of the Indian Peoples. Sir W. W. Hunter (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 4/-).

The Ancient Church and Modern India. Godfrey Phillips (Student Christian Movement. 2/6).

Social Conditions

Social Ideals in India. William Paton (U.C.M.E. 1/3).

Social Problems and the East. Frank Lenwood (U.C.M.E. 2/6).

Women Workers of the Orient. Margaret E. Burton (U.C.M.E. 2/6).

The Indian Child's Mother. By A. D. (Church Missionary Society. 3/6).

Outcastes

The Outcastes' Hope. Godfrey E. Phillips (U.C.M.E. 2/-).

Education

The Renaissance in India. C. F. Andrews (U.C.M.E. 1/6).

Village Education in India. (All Missionary Societies. 2/6).

Hinduism

The Crown of Hinduism. J. N. Farquhar (Oxford Univ. Press. 6/-).

The Renaissance in India (Ch. III). C. F. Andrews (U.C.M.E. 1/6).

The Goal of India (Chs. II and III). W. E. S. Holland (U.C.M.E. 2/6).

Jesus Christ and the World's Religions (Ch. III). William Paton (U.C.M.E. 1/-).

Mohammedanism

The Rebuks of Islam. W. H. T. Gairdner (U.C.M.E. 3/-).

The Story of Islam. T. R. W. Lunt (U.C.M.E. 3/-).

Jesus Christ and the World's Religions (Ch. II). William Paton (U.C.M.E. 1/-).

Missionary Work and Problems

The Goal of India. W. E. S. Holland (U.C.M.E. 2/6).

The Renaissance in India (Chs. VI & VIII). C. F. Andrews (U.C.M.E. 1/6).

Also the Reports, Magazines, and books published by the various Missionary Societies.

Nationalism

The Highway of God (Ch. I). K. Harnett and W. Paton (U.C.M.E. 2/6).
Indian Nationalism. Edwyn Bevan (Macmillan & Co. O.P.).

B

The following is a list of graded missionary textbooks on India for Sunday School teachers and other workers among young people. The books will also be found useful by teachers in day schools as supplementary material for geography and history lessons, etc.

For Workers among Boys and Girls, aged 9-13

Talks on India's Girls and Boys. Dorothy Ackland (U.C.M.E. 1/-).
Talks on Medical Work in India and China. Lilian Cox (U.C.M.E. 1/-).

For Workers among Boys, aged from 12-16

Yarns on Heroes of India. J. Claverdon Wood (U.C.M.E. 1/-).
Yarns on Brothers of all the World (Yarns 6 and 7). A. P. Shepherd (U.C.M.E. 1/-).
Yarns on Heroes of the Lone Trail (Yarns 3 and 5). A. P. Shepherd (U.C.M.E. 1/-).

For Workers among Girls, aged from 14-18

Heroines of India. Edith A. Williams (U.C.M.E. 9d.).
Heroines of Healing (Ramabai and Mary Reed). Constance E. Padwick (U.C.M.E. 1/-).

For Teachers of Girls and Boys from 12-15 years of age

Four Lessons on Dr Pennell of Bannu. May Ollis Pelton (All Missionary Societies. 2d.).

For Children, aged 6-8

The Book of an Indian Baby. Mary Entwistle (U.C.M.E. 1/6).
 With illustrations in two colours.

A Gift Book for Children, aged 4-8

The Birthday Book of Balu. Amy Steedman (U.C.M.E. 2/-).
 With illustrations in two colours.

For Boys and Girls, aged 8-12

Post-card Painting Book—*Children of India*. Elsie Anna Wood (U.C.M.E. 1/6).

Outline Map of India

On stout brown paper; size 26 x 19 ins. (U.C.M.E. 6d.).

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