

THE GOSPEL
IN
SOUTH INDIA

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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A NATIVE PASTOR

SAMUEL MATEER F.L.S.



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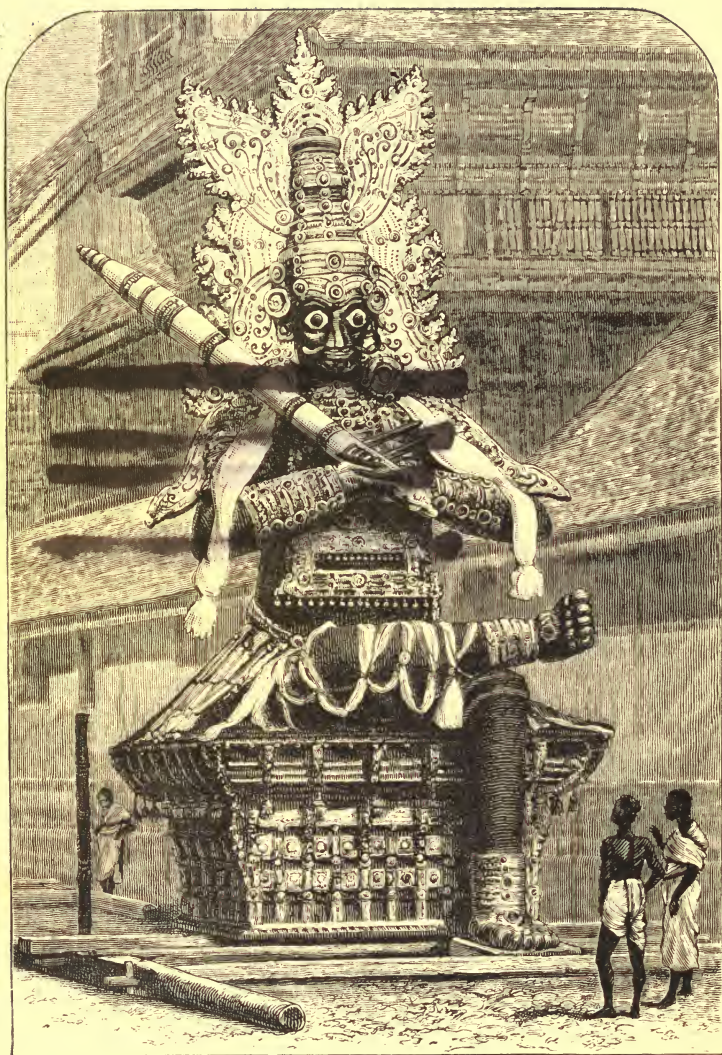


IMAGE OF ONE OF 'THE FIVE PANDIANS' IN THE FORT AT TREVANDRUM.



THE
GOSPEL IN SOUTH INDIA

OR

The Religious Life, Experience, and Character
of the Hindu Christians.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL MATEER, F.L.S.,

Missionary of the London Missionary Society,

AUTHOR OF

'THE LAND OF CHARITY,' 'NATIVE LIFE IN TRAVANCORE,' ETC.

'BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.'

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

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PREFACE.



THE following work has been compiled as the conclusion and complement of two others previously published, viz., *The Land of Charity*, on the general features, superstitions, and mission history of Travancore, and *Native Life in Travancore*, on the social and political condition and ethnography of the people. To the Christian missionary everything ethnological, social, and political, is but subordinate, and leads up to the spiritual features of mission work—to the great end, the salvation of souls and the universal extension of the Church of Christ. Valuable and full reports of the Travancore Mission of the London Missionary Society, prepared by each of the missionaries from year to year, have been locally published for nearly thirty years past, and these contain a vast storehouse of facts and incidents which are in danger of being lost in this fugitive form. My purpose has been to rescue from oblivion, and place on record in a more permanent form, these authenticated and verifiable facts and phenomena of spiritual life and vital Christianity. It seems a pity not to preserve such valuable information, which will be needed a century hence. The incidents are related with but little comment, leaving to others to draw the moral, make fair and reasonable deductions, and

apply the examples to Christian conduct. Incidentally a great deal may also be learnt of the various types of character and modes of thought of the people, Eastern customs and usages, and the manner in which missionary work is now carried on. Much of the work is necessarily a compilation from these reports, and I have not thought it necessary to encumber pages intended for popular reading with marks or references for each separate quotation.

These facts being all drawn from the history of one great typical Mission in South India, and that established in a great stronghold of idolatry and chosen battle-field of Satan, the volume should be of permanent value, serving as material towards a complete history of the Mission. The same plan might with advantage be followed in the case of other missions, thus collecting and classifying facts of Christian experience for the instruction of the people of God.

We shall attempt to show in some detail, by authentic illustrations and instances taken from actual life, the working of Divine grace and Christian principle in the hearts and lives of Hindu Christians, from which it will be seen that their experience does not greatly differ in essential features from that of God's children in other lands. We lay the case before readers interested in missions, or who desire to investigate the subject, and we boldly and unhesitatingly claim for the Gospel of Jesus Christ an *infinite* superiority over all false religions, not only in its direct spiritual result, of subduing rebels to God, regenerating the soul and setting the heart right, but in furthering education, civilisation, refinement and true morality; teaching

each class its respective duties, healing by the gospel of love the caste hatreds, the vile superstitions, the vast moral evils that prevail in India, and welding opposing classes of the population ultimately into one nation, one brotherhood, animated by faith in the true God—the Father of all—and by love to one another.

Christianity alone can do this; it has begun the work, and will complete it. We hope that enough will be found in the following record to give us heart and hope for India. This beneficent influence has only to continue at work, leavening the mass, more especially now to bring in the higher classes (if they do not wilfully reject salvation, as the rich and worldly too often do), till this beautiful country becomes subject to our God and His Christ. Our Omnipotent Saviour will assuredly conquer all to Himself. He will overturn all that opposes, and break down the strongholds of sin and Satan. The idols He shall utterly abolish.

Will our readers, therefore, continue instant and importunate in prayer that that happy time of millennial glory may speedily arrive? Pray that the Holy Spirit may be outpoured upon Travancore; that those who profess and call themselves Christians may be all truly converted to God; that efficient and successful preachers may be raised up from among the children in our schools and the students in our seminary; that the princes and nobles of the land may be subdued by the all-conquering power of the love of Christ; and the door of faith thus opened still more widely to the Gentiles. ‘Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give Him no rest

till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.'

May this simple record of the operations of Divine grace tend to commend the cause of Christ and of true religion to all who may read it. 'For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever!'

S. MATEER.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

They rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.—And they caused great joy unto all the brethren.—Acts xiv. 27 ; xv. 3.

FRIENDLY critics have remarked that missionaries returned from India and other heathen lands are sometimes tempted to dwell with disproportionate fulness on the strange manners and customs of the people amongst whom they have lived and laboured ; on the painful details of the heathenism which they have witnessed ; and to particularise too little respecting the gracious operations of the Spirit of God in the minds and hearts of the converts, and their experience of the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Gospel. There may be some truth in this observation ; yet it is, at times, very difficult to decide as to what part of the wide subject of the missionary enterprise one should take up within the short time usually available for a missionary address. If some clear and definite conception of the immoral character and soul-destroying influence of idolatry and heathenism in its various forms be not impressed upon the minds of

our hearers in Christian lands, they cannot feel such profound sympathy or pray with such earnestness and understanding as the occasion demands. They may even be left with the erroneous notion which some entertain, that because most idolaters believe that there is some divine or supernatural being inhabiting the image and distinct from the material of which it is composed, such adoration is acceptable to God and is not sinful. They may imagine, for instance, that the Hindus are seeking after God and doing their best, though ignorantly and mistakenly, to know, and worship, and serve their Creator and Benefactor.

If missionaries relate merely instances of individual conversion, without first supplying some general information regarding the country referred to and its peculiarities, its inhabitants and their need of the Gospel, no deep or lasting emotion is excited that may lead the hearers to further reading, concern, and inquiry on the subject, and to life-long and intelligent interest in the work of the Lord in foreign lands. Hence some missionaries have thought it preferable, on the whole, to give a comprehensive sketch of their fields of labour, the classes of the population, their superstitions, and the means employed for their evangelisation, with a somewhat general statement of the spiritual results; at the same time, however, strongly urging the careful perusal of the monthly *Missionary Chronicles*, *Annual Reports*, and other

publications of missionary societies, in the hope that the interest awakened by the descriptive account would lead to, or further encourage, the attentive and prayerful perusal of those periodicals, in which detailed and authentic information is given of the progress of the kingdom of Christ in each land, and in which only full particulars can conveniently be supplied. The promise of interesting information respecting a distant country and people also sometimes secures the attendance at missionary meetings of those who otherwise might not take the trouble to come.

When men are once thoroughly interested in a particular sphere of missionary operations, they will eagerly look out for, and peruse, all the accessible intelligence about it, as they would the war news, which is looked for with intense avidity from day to day in times of national conflict or popular commotion. In order both to afford information and stimulate interest in our work, I have put together some of the materials accumulated regarding the *spiritual results* of evangelical labour in the Travancore Mission, and here seek to rehearse *how* 'God has opened the door of faith to the Gentiles' of that strange and beautiful country.

The work of the Christian missionary in modern times does not greatly differ in character and essential features from that of the apostles. In accordance with the great commission of our Divine

Master, His servants have gone to heathen nations in various parts of the world, to preach the Gospel, baptizing those who profess faith in Christ, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them. To those who have gained some knowledge of God's Holy Word, and outwardly embrace the religion of Christ, we proclaim, as did the Saviour and His apostles, the necessity of regeneration and of holiness in heart and life. 'Ye must be born again;' 'Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'

Churches and congregations are established in various cities and villages, wherever men appear to have been influenced by Divine grace to reject their superstitions and to 'turn from idols to the living God.' These churches are superintended, and directed, and cared for, led on in the way of holiness; the sacraments of God's Word and the ordinances of His house are administered for their comfort and edification. Men of God, natives of each country, fitted by knowledge and grace, and called by Providence to His service in the church, are appointed as teachers, or ordained as pastors, of these local churches; and God's written Word is placed in their hands, as the grand subject of their teaching, the rule of life to all men, the great and final standard of appeal. The young are, at the same time, trained up and prepared to occupy

their place, in due time, as members of the Christian Church, or teachers of their fellow-countrymen.

Thus we endeavour to imitate and follow the apostles: and God has been graciously pleased to place the seal of His divine approbation on such labours. While we deeply feel, and often mourn over, our extreme weakness and our insufficiency for the great charge entrusted to us, we are yet, through grace, permitted to rejoice with those early labourers. 'Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifold the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.'



THE ARMS OF TRAVANCORE.

CHAPTER II.

THE MISSION IN SOUTH TRAVANCORE.

In the midst of opposition,
Let them trust, O Lord, in Thee.
When success attends their mission,
Let Thy servants humble be.
Never leave them
Till Thy face in heaven they see.

OF the missions conducted by the London Missionary Society in various parts of the world, one of the most flourishing and well organised is that in South Travancore, a beautiful and picturesque strip of country, occupying the southernmost

part of the western coast of India, and lying between the long range of mountains called the Western Ghauts and the Indian Ocean. A hundred years ago this Hindu kingdom was impervious to the Gospel, and almost inaccessible to European civilising influence, from the bigotry and pride of the Brahman priests, who virtually ruled the government, and from the despotic and exclusive policy of the native Rajahs. The country has been from time immemorial a stronghold of Hindu idolatry, caste variance, and gross superstitions. It is crowded with richly endowed temples, sacred groves, symbols, and shrines, where worship is maintained at great expense, with elaborate ceremonial and intense devotion, and supported by all the pomp and prestige of the State. Caste restrictions were enforced to such an extent that but a third of the population were sufficiently respectable to enter the temples or enjoy full rights of citizenship. Another third were regarded as of low caste, were subject to the rapacious exactions and cruel oppressions of the higher classes, and forced, according to their several gradations of caste-rank, to display in dress, by going naked from the waist upwards, in speech, by the use of degrading idioms, and in their whole deportment, innumerable marks of inferiority. The lowest third of the population—the slave castes—were held in a condition of oppressive slavery, prohibited even from the use of the public roads; from near

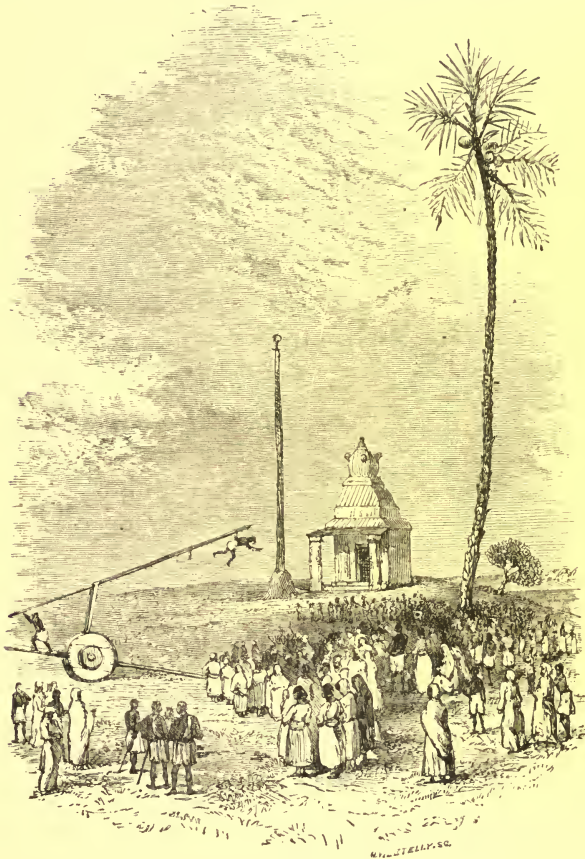
approach to courts of justice or respectable houses, lest they should pollute the higher orders. They were sunk vastly lower than slaves in other lands by the caste notion of their essential and inherent religious pollution.



KALI DESTROYING CHILDREN.

Besides the worship of the ordinary Hindu gods by the Brahmans and other high castes, which has been so fully described in most works on India, Travancore is also a principal seat of the demon worship practised by many aboriginal races in Asia and Africa. This strange and terrible superstition, dishonouring to God and degrading to mankind, varies somewhat in details amongst the different classes of the population. Though not a Brahmanic form of religion, the Sudras of Malabar practise it to a great extent, along with the adoration of the Hindu deities, Vishnu and Shiva, and their subordinate gods. With them it assumes the form of the worship of Kali or

Bhagavathi, queen of the demons, Shástávu, a demon chief, and other local spirits of evil.



HOOK SWINGING.

Amongst the Shanars and other Tamil castes in the South, these malignant spirits, male and female, of various names and antecedents, are

supposed to haunt houses, burial-grounds, and gigantic trees, to produce fever, small-pox and cholera, to possess women and others, and to kill children; indeed, every accident, disease, or misfortune is attributed to this demoniac agency. The worship consists of dancing, drumming, and songs, bloody sacrifices and other offerings to deprecate the wrath or appease the anger of the devils, and to invoke demoniac inspiration.

The corresponding tribe of Havars in Central Travancore worship Kali or Bhagavathi and Shástávu, to whom regular temples are dedicated and annual festivals celebrated, lasting several days at a time, when devil-dancing is practised, hook swinging, piercing the sides, or other tortures in honour of the bloodthirsty goddess, and cocks are sacrificed in large numbers. In former times even human sacrifices were offered.

The spirits of deceased persons are also supposed to become demons, and wander about seeking to do ill, especially the spirits of those who have died of small-pox, or fever, or in child-birth: these also are commonly worshipped with various offerings, to propitiate them and prevent their injuring the survivors.

Amongst the lowest and servile castes, the Pulayars, Vedars, and Kuravars, this superstition assumes still more of the form of the worship of the spirits of deceased ancestors. If not pacified, the kind father and mother, the departed loving

wife, the virgin daughter, become enraged devils and ghosts, injuring and slaying their own children and friends, producing misfortune and disease; while, if duly gratified, these familiars may be set upon the enemies of the family. The pretended magicians and sorcerers (generally of their own caste) are therefore called on occasions of sickness and distress, are well fed and fee'd to discover and remove the assumed cause of the affliction. Fowls are sacrificed, grain and fruit presented to the demons, and dancing, songs, and incantations continued until, as the priest pretends, the demon becomes visible to him, or is seized and subdued, or reveals to him the cause of its wrath, and the mode in which amends may be made.

This revolting superstition is inexorable in its hold upon the minds of the classes from whose ranks our converts are principally drawn; and in the account of the work of God in Travancore on which we are about to enter, reference will often be made to its influence in tempting to apostasy or to distrust of our gracious Father in heaven. The fear of the demons is the last superstition that leaves the native mind.

The seclusion of Travancore was first broken through its invasion by Tippu Saib in 1789, alarming the Rajah of Travancore, and compelling him to appeal for succour to the rising British power at Madras, and to promise, in return for such aid, to pay an annual subsidy, to receive a

British resident (or representative) at his Court, and to accept such advice as this official should give on matters affecting the happiness of the people and the welfare of the State.

The first Political Resident, Col. Macaulay, arrived



RICHARD KNILL.

in 1800, and in 1806 the first missionary of the London Missionary Society, Ringeltaube, obtained, through his friendly intercession, permission to reside in Travancore, where a few poor people had heard of Christianity, and had invited Ringeltaube to settle

amongst them and teach them. Before this solitary and self-denying missionary left in 1816, six or seven chapels had been built, several schools established, and 900 Tamil converts gathered under instruction.

In 1818, Messrs. C. Mead and R. Knill arrived in Travancore, where the former laboured actively for thirty-six years, and the latter for one year, till compelled by ill-health to return to England. Mr. and Mrs. Maull arrived in 1819, and laboured on for thirty-six years. In 1821, Quilon (a few miles north of which is the boundary line mutually agreed on between the work of the Church Missionary Society in North Travancore and the London Mission in the South) was occupied, and the Malayalam Mission formally organized.

Every year from the beginning congregations were established and placed under the care of native teachers or catechists, schools maintained, and the operations of the mission enlarged. In some years, thousands of the natives cast away their images and emblems of idolatry and demon worship, and placed themselves under Christian instruction. In 1827 there were twenty-six chapels, with 2,851 native Christians, 33 catechists, 95 schoolmasters, with 1,916 children under their instruction. In that year a persecution was commenced by the higher caste and government officials, enraged at the spread of Christianity and education among the humbler classes, which continued till 1830, but was so overruled by the good providence of God that it

resulted in the increased liberty of the Christian converts, and the multiplication of their numbers.

In 1838 a new era of extension and progress commenced with the arrival of six new missionaries and their wives, several of whom were spared to labour in the mission with much success for upwards of twenty years. Other valued European labourers were added from time to time, and the mission grew, spite of frequent difficulties and opposition, so that in 1859, when the writer joined the mission, there were seven principal stations, with seven European missionaries, 210 congregations, with 16,939 native professing Christians, of whom 2,195 were baptized, and 980 in full communion with the Church. Amongst these, 394 native catechists and school teachers were at work.

The South Travancore Mission extends over a tract of country about a hundred miles in length by forty in average breadth, comprising a population of about a million and a half. This territory is now divided into six mission districts, five of which are presided over by European missionaries, while another is in charge of the seminary for the higher training of native agents, and the seventh is a medical missionary, having charge of a hospital and seven dispensaries, in which a total of over 25,000 patients are treated every year. The congregations number 252, comprising a total of 43,000 native Christians, who are instructed by

twenty ordained native ministers and 162 mission catechists. Of the whole, 12,360 are baptized, and 4,418 are communicants. Forty Bible women read the Scriptures and exhort, chiefly amongst the heathen; and in 230 schools there are under instruction 11,500 pupils, half of whom are the children of Christian and half of heathen parents. The contributions of the native Christians themselves towards the expense of this great work amount to Rs. 13,000 every year; and it is hoped that, before long, many of the native congregations will become entirely self-supporting, and that ultimately the Travancore churches may be privileged to aid in carrying the Gospel to other parts of India.

CHAPTER III.

VARIOUS CLASSES WHO PROFESS TO BE CHRISTIANS.

Sow, though the rock repel thee,
In its cold and sterile pride ;
Some clift there may be riven,
Where the little seed may hide.
Fear not, for some will flourish,
And though the tares abound,
Like the willows by the waters
Will the scattered grain be found.

IN order to present a full and impartial view of the fruits of missionary enterprise in India it is necessary at the outset, to premise that numbers of people who call themselves Christians are not recognised as such by the pastors and the native churches. Not all who profess the name of Christ and are under instruction are truly and spiritually converted to God. There are merely nominal Christians in India, as elsewhere.

Some, for example, are the children of Christian converts, but have never themselves shown any interest in personal piety. They hang on the outskirts of the Christian Church, and, when it suits them, claim the credit of religion, but have never taken upon themselves its duties and responsibilities. And there are others who may have been, at one

time, more or less promising, but have fallen away through negligence, or been excluded from church fellowship for immorality, intemperance, or dishonest conduct, yet continue to class themselves as Christians, while their claim to be recognised as such is repudiated by us. Hence the complaint sometimes heard from inconsiderate Europeans that 'Christian servants are worse than heathens.' These employers have probably never made inquiries as to whether the names of the nominally Christian servants are found in our lists of church members or even of regular hearers; and were such investigations made in the proper quarter, they would probably receive a warning against the hypocrisy and deceit of such false professors.

I have known a native who called himself a Christian, and doubtless did believe that Christianity is the true religion, yet who scarcely ever was seen in the house of God, his name was not enrolled in any congregational list, and who went about with two concubines, and defrauded several of the coffee-planters. The man was a clever workman, and the employers accepted his services at their own risk, perhaps 'making haste to be rich,' and taking but little interest in the religious condition and welfare of their servants, when they might easily have been enlightened as to his true character and what might be expected of him. Such hardened reprobates are truly worse than the heathen.

The names of mere occasional attendants at

Christian worship, or of any who are known to indulge in immoral practices or heathen ceremonies, are not even entered on our lists, nor are such counted in the total of 'native Christians.' If such sins or evil habits are discovered, the names already on the roll are expunged, and the offenders and the congregation publicly warned. Even those who begin to attend our meetings and express the wish to join a congregation, and thus to place themselves under instruction, are not recorded till after six months' regular attendance and probation.

After this period has expired, the names of these new 'adherents,' or regular hearers, are entered, and thenceforward included in the total of 'native Christians' in India. We gladly receive and teach all who accept the rules of the Christian religion, give up idolatry and superstition, attend the public worship of God, and send their children to school for education. Yet we hesitate to apply the expressive term 'convert' to these, except in a general way when speaking of Christians as a whole, or as distinguished from heathens. They are probably not, in most instances, at first, savingly converted to God and thoroughly in earnest in seeking salvation; therefore we do not baptize them, nor receive them into communion with the church till they are sufficiently taught to know the way of salvation, and to make an intelligent and credible profession of faith, and till some evidence is seen of their sincerity and obedience to Christian obligations.

In the London Mission, hitherto, a much smaller proportion of the adherents are baptized and admitted to church privileges than is usual in the neighbouring missions of North Travancore and Tinnevely; not, I apprehend, because our people are inferior in knowledge or sincerity to those, but because we administer baptism, not to mere professors or learners of Christianity, but only to those who show by their lives and conduct, as far as we can judge of them during a lengthened probation, that they are actuated by love to the Saviour, and are living, not merely in the practice of external morality and obedience to the requirements of Christianity, but in faith and holiness as children of God.

There may be more true piety amongst these adherents than human eye can see, and we quite expect that under such favourable circumstances they will be brought, one after another, into the spiritual fold of the Redeemer; but we consider it well to be cautious, and to 'hasten slowly.' It is our business to warn such of the insufficiency of mere profession or attendance on the means of grace, to remind them of the distinction between 'hearers of the Word' and the 'doers,' and to preach to them, as did our Lord, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Without the conversion of the heart, the personal reception of the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, and the regeneration

of the soul by the Divine Spirit, no mere diligence in hearing or orderly attendance on the means of grace, no outward morality, not even 'the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,' will avail for salvation.

And if men continue, year after year, to attend our worship without profit or showing any earnestness in candidature for further privileges, they must remain without participation in baptism or church communion and continue to be regarded and addressed as merely 'nominal Christians.'

But it is difficult thus to attend the external means of grace with outward propriety and religious demeanour without receiving benefit. It requires actual resistance of the heart to the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, to the calls of the Gospel and the warnings of the Divine Word. And while *towards God* the unsaved and unregenerate in heart are not Christians, *as regards Hinduism* and the progress of the Church of Christ, they are on our side. In this sense, being not against us they are for us. They have rejected idolatry and demon worship and external superstitions, immoral habits and participation in the common vices of the country. They contribute to the support of Christian ordinances, and are considered by their neighbours and treated as Christians. Although the native Christians of Travancore are generally of humble caste and belong to the working classes—for Christianity has a special mission to the poor—it should not be supposed that they have nothing to give up or to suffer on

account of their Christian profession. Some of these converts have been men of considerable property and expectations, and held in high esteem in their own circles on account of their native force of character, or as native doctors, priests, devil-dancers and songsters, ascetics, or astrologers. Some of them suffer much contempt and abuse from their relatives and former associates, or have given up worldly advantages which had been within their reach. Their children also, be it remembered, are under daily and efficient training in our schools, and are thus being prepared to take a position in advance of their parents; and their accession tends, so long as we keep their spiritual conversion distinctly in view, to their own good and the spread of the truth throughout the land.

‘The work in the congregations,’ says the Rev. J. Emlyn, ‘is often very slow. Some people go on year after year making no apparent progress. Having had no education in childhood, and having been sent to the laborious work of drawing palmyra juice when mere boys, their minds are so dull that they cannot take in much. Still, by being patient with such, and taking care to instruct their children, encouraging results often follow. A man in the Parisvakkal congregation embraced Christianity about thirty years ago, but during all this time he has made less progress than one would think he might have done in as many weeks. In fact, he is stated by those who know him well to be in the same position now

that he was when entering on his Christian course. But if *he* has been stationary, his family have moved on. Three of his sons, who have had some education, are now intelligent young men, and have taken wives from good Christian families; and two sons and one daughter-in-law have been received into the church. The household at present is a good Christian household, where the reading of the Scriptures and praise and prayer to God may daily be heard.'

At the same time, we trust and believe that many of the dear children under our care who are not yet of the age to come to the Lord's Supper are subjects of Divine grace, and will be partakers of eternal salvation.

The members of our congregations may in fact, be compared with those belonging to any ordinary Christian congregation. A few persons may occasionally attend who are of evil reputation or bad character; but such generally have no interest or object in attendance at Divine service, and will not long persevere. Many, again, are more or less undecided and half-hearted, weak in faith, or hindered by some bosom sin from thorough union with the people of God. The difficulties and hindrances to religious decision are very much alike both in India and at home—from former companions and friendships and the opposition of relatives, from old habits, worldliness, and injurious customs and employments. Then a certain proportion of our people, as large perhaps as in

England, are earnest and living Christians, but still not free from the imperfections, temptations, infirmities, and errors that continually beset us while we are in the flesh.

Even amongst those Hindu converts who, we are convinced, are true believers, there is often too much vagueness and indefiniteness of Christian experience and of realisation of the saving power of grace. Some show by their changed character that they are actuated by true religion, yet, being wholly uneducated, possessing little knowledge of the letter of Scripture, and unaccustomed to mental introspection, are unable to state their inward feelings or spiritual experience accurately and definitely.

I have often wondered at the rarity on the part of many Hindu converts of that definiteness of experience which is more common amongst European Christians. Many there are of whose piety, prayerfulness, and purity of life we are witnesses, but who are unable to express themselves clearly as to the present experience of pardon and peace with God. This may arise partly from the absence of intellectual cultivation, and partly from the lack of deep and overpowering emotions under any circumstances which may affect them; or it may arise from a deficiency of fulness and clearness in our own teaching which we ought to remedy. The chief outward test of piety, doubtless, is holiness of life, and this we see in greater or less

measure in many. But we long to see also a greater depth of inward experience and a clearer enjoyment of the spiritual blessings of the gospel, a warm, glowing piety and enthusiasm in the service of the Lord.

Many show too few tokens of faith and holiness and ripeness of piety—too little active manifestation of grace—too little rejoicing in the Lord and glorying in the cross of Christ—yet there are some signs of spiritual life and fruit, some struggling to do right and to fight against evil, some following on to know the Lord, and, on the whole, a gradual improvement and growth. We would therefore judge tenderly and encouragingly of all such. We would not ‘quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed.’ We would hope the best of these, and compare them, not with what Christians should be according to the perfect standard, but with what they once were—covetous, worldly, profane, lustful, worshippers of false gods and dumb and lifeless idols, or of malignant spirits, whom they adored and propitiated with offerings of blood, frantic dancing, blasphemous invocations, and fearful midnight orgies.

The various classes of professing Christians have been well described by the late Rev. S. Jones, in the following remarks:—

‘The inner circle of our Christian community we try by all means to keep select. Yet, in spite of all our care, unworthy people creep in. I know some

among us whose example and influence are not good. They often go to law with one another and with the heathen around them. They are constantly causing trouble in the congregations as well as grief, difficulty, and worry to the missionary. I fear also that some are secretly given to drinking and other vicious practices. It is from this class that our expulsions occur from year to year.

‘There is another class, by far the most numerous, which I scarcely know how to describe. I cannot praise them much, and they do not deserve much blame. I cannot say that they are cold-hearted, neither should I like to call them lukewarm; but it would be equally incorrect to give them the appellation of *warm-hearted*. They are decent ordinary Christian people, such as compose the majority of our church members at home. They give cheerfully to the cause of God, but not always, nor even commonly, as God has prospered them. They are devout and prayerful, but might be less worldly-minded. I will not say they do no good, but I do say that they ought to be of much greater service to the church and the world than they are. They appear too satisfied with present attainments—making but slow progress in knowledge and holiness.

‘There are others whose excellence it would be difficult to exaggerate. They are pearls of great price. They live the *true higher life*. They are burning

and shining lights. They have truly put on Christ, and would, rather than deny Him, joyfully submit to torture and death. For sterling character and worth they are perhaps not inferior to the best specimens of our home church life.'

Human nature is the same everywhere, and similar temptations, snares, and stumbling-blocks lie in wait for men in India as in Christendom, and as in all ages of the church's history. Church discipline is, however, decidedly more strict in our missions than in European churches, and incessant care is exercised respecting the spiritual progress of our flock. We endeavour, also, as far as possible, to provide against the rise of serious evils in the future by the circulation and frequent exposition of the Holy Scriptures, by useful books and devoted attention to the education of the people.

The sins for which individuals are, from time to time, excluded from communion are principally caste hatred and quarrels, immorality, breaches of truth and uprightness, intermarriage with the heathen, and continued neglect of the means of grace.

Any attempt at observance of caste is destructive to personal piety. Some would-be defenders of caste among Christians mis-state the case when they ask, 'Is a man bound always to eat with strangers, with people far beneath him in social position, or with people of uncleanly habits?' Common sense says, No. But the caste-man in

the Christian Church is one who has resolved never to intermarry with Christian converts from a different caste, however cleanly, educated, pious, or refined. One can scarcely add, however, *wealthy*, for money will often overcome such wretched scruples. The 'caste Christian' is resolved rather to die than partake of food cooked by one of lower caste, or take a draught of the purest water from his hand; and this solely in order to retain his caste position with the heathen, and avoid the reproach of associating with low-caste Christians. That is the spirit and temper to which we object with all our might. Is it at all possible that such a one can have been born of God, renewed in nature, and filled with love to the brethren (1 John iii. 10-14; ii. 9-11)? The distinctions of caste are of the very essence of Hinduism and diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christ. Were such a case to present itself, we should object to a highly-educated girl of humble caste marrying a stupid, ignorant Brahman: he would not be good enough for her. Nor should we advise a Brahman convert to take any but an educated, pious, and suitable wife, of whatever caste. What we do recommend is, that persons practically equal in social position should intermarry from considerations of mutual affection, suitability, faith, and temporal means. The families of catechists, for example, or of native clergy, or merchants, or farmers, should form such unions as may be con-

venient without regard to their former caste; and former caste distinctions should not be remembered to the reproach and injury of those who have risen by merit, and are worthy of their present more elevated social position.

Again, the loose marriage customs which prevail in Malabar amongst the high-castes, and the gross immorality amongst the low-castes, produce an atmosphere of sensuality which is injurious to pure morals.

The general weakness of moral character amongst the Hindus, and their deficient sense of truth and righteousness, also tend to depress the character of native Christians. Wrongful disputes regarding property arise: some fall into debt; others prove unfaithful or dishonest in business. 'Nothing reveals character more clearly than business affairs, and one great lesson that some Travancore Christians need to learn is, not only to forgive men their debts, but to pay their own.'

Yet there are also numberless instances of probity and honour. Recently a heathen had a lawsuit with some people about a piece of land, and proved his legal right to it in the courts; but after becoming a Christian he called his opponent and said, 'You have a more real claim to the property,' and relinquished it to him.

Intermarriage with the heathen for wealth or respectability is contrary to the Word of God, but sometimes professing Christians are tempted to give

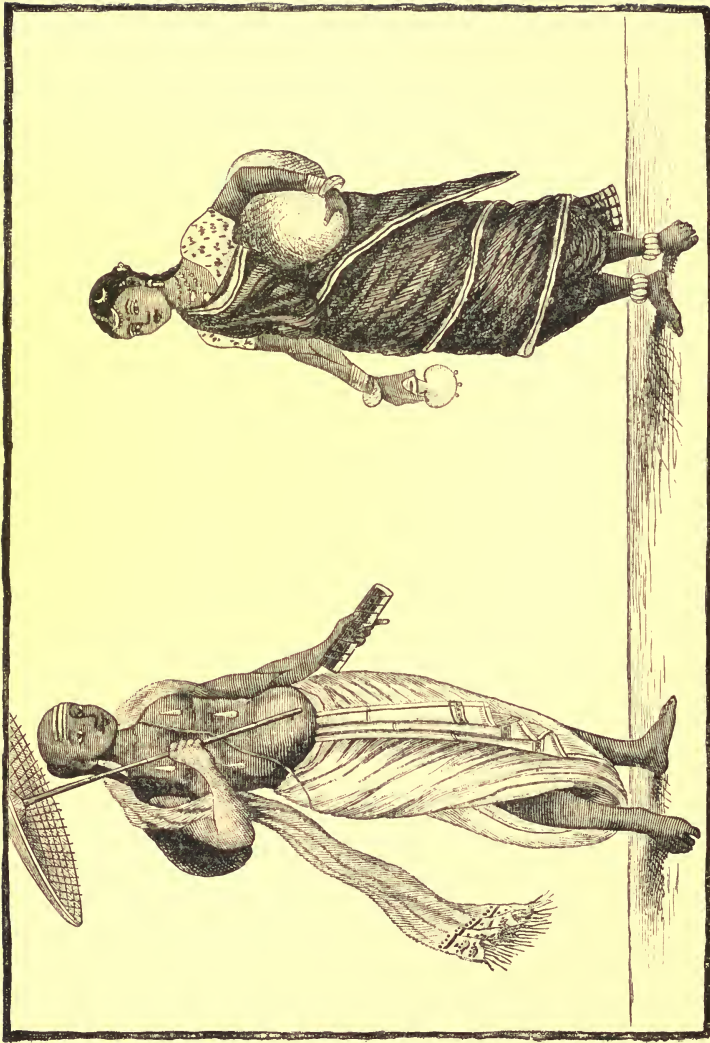
their children in heathen marriage, or to assist at such ceremonies. Lastly, gradual backsliding, falling into a state of slothful negligence of divine worship and ordinances, is not uncommon in every land.

Having thus given a general description of the various classes of Hindu Christians, a more agreeable part of the subject now presents itself—the selection and narration of cases of CONVERSION, and the circumstances under which they have come about.

Here it is interesting to note the variety of modes and means by which men are brought to God. ‘The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.’ Some, like Lydia, have their hearts gently opened by the Lord, to give heed to the things spoken, and are tenderly led to Christian piety. These may be the grandchildren of our earliest converts—perhaps trained up, like Timothy, in the knowledge of the Scriptures in the home or the school, or gradually transformed by the power of the preached gospel. Others have been like the jailor of Philippi, violent opposers of the gospel, openly wicked, and forced to cry loudly for mercy and salvation. Or, like the young woman at the same place who had a spirit of divination, some have been devil-dancers, priests, and sorcerers, seeking and pretending to divination

and magical powers for their own vile purposes and profit.

The various modes in which conversion to God usually takes place amongst us are chiefly these, viz., the early training of children in Scripture knowledge and piety; inferior motives bringing men under the sound of the gospel and faithful preaching, through which they ultimately become truly earnest and pious; providential circumstances impressing and directing some; disappointment in heathenism and demon worship leading others to consider the claims of Christ and His religion; and the direct influence of prayer and Scripture truth, often blessed to the conversion of individuals.



A HINDU BRAHMAN AND HIS WIFE.

[From a Native Drawing.]

CHAPTER IV.

CONVERSION THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER.

Speak peace to the people who mourn,
 Bowed down with their guilt and their grief ;
The burden's too great to be borne,
 Unknowing the way of relief.
Oh, send them the message benign,
 Which peace through a Saviour displays,
That earth, like a temple divine,
 May echo the shouts of Thy praise.

A PRINCIPAL feature of our mission work is the reverence paid to the Holy Scriptures, by their diligent circulation amongst all classes, and their public reading and exposition on all suitable occasions. One can have great satisfaction that our chief aim and effort are to bring revealed truth to bear on both heathens and Christians, assured that God's Word shall not return unto Him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it. We take our due share in the translation and revision of translations of the Holy Scriptures. Bibles and Scripture portions are offered for sale by colporteurs and readers, and urged upon all. Our most successful pastors are those who most assiduously

teach the Scripture lessons to the people, and thus build them up and establish them in the faith. Persons joining our congregations are usually said, in native idiom, 'to learn Christianity.' God's inspired Word is taught week by week, and committed to memory by young and old. We have few formularies, but the Scriptures and two or three catechisms of Scripture-history and fundamental doctrine are regularly taught in all the schools and congregations. The native preachers draw their illustrations chiefly from Scripture, as, 'The sword of the Spirit,' and 'The oracles of God.' His Word is revered and appealed to as our unerring guide—the standard of all truth, and it proves itself by its operation to be indeed that 'law of the Lord which is perfect, converting the soul,' 'able to make men wise unto salvation.' 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.'

Already, in consequence of the wide dissemination of evangelical truth, there is an impression working in the public mind in favour of Christianity. Scriptures and Christian books are sold, and tracts distributed widely. Christianity is a power in the country. A Brahman of Karamana, who was some time ago baptized at Cottayam, told me that he attributes his first impressions solely to the perusal of the Christian Scriptures sold him by our colporteur. Tracts, especially poetical ones, are generally, in our experience, the first means of introducing Christianity to the notice of

respectable heathens; then they ask for portions of Scripture, and are ready to converse with the mission agents. The Bible certainly is, on its first perusal, difficult to Hindus, the proper names and geography puzzling them. 'What is it all about?' they ask. So much the more need is there for maintaining and extending the sale of the Scriptures and our open-air preaching, were it only to familiarise the people with our technical terms, and the facts on which our doctrines are based.

That our Christian publications are prized by many is often clearly seen. Not long since, at a discussion between a catechist and some people attending a market, a man sneeringly asked, 'Of what use are your tracts?' To which a Brahman in the crowd at once replied, 'They are not of earthly, but spiritual usefulness. Why do the Christians spend so much money if they do not believe they are really useful? Look at that Jack tree' (he pointed to a large tree, under the shade of which they were standing, a tree as large as an oak). 'Years ago a man buried a nut. That sprouted up and grew. Now it is a big tree, laden with plenty of fruit. So are the Christian publications. They are like little seeds, which may in future bear plenty of refreshing fruit.'

Educated Hindus approve of the Bible-teaching still kept up in the Maharajah of Travancore's High School. The deity of Jesus Christ and His atonement are, as ever, the stumbling-block; otherwise they confess that Christianity is worthy of admira-

tion. They profess to care little for caste, and some of them help our preachers in reproving idolatry, They like to talk with us on the subject of religion, and if they do not themselves receive the truth, it is not so much because they dislike the Bible, as through fear of losing public employment and social position in their respective castes and under a heathen Government. 'Cannot we be saved,' they ask, 'although we do not observe your ceremonies of baptism and so forth?'

'It is my impression,' writes Mr. Hacker, 'that many of the most thoughtful of the educated natives go secretly to Christ in the hour of sorrow, and lean upon Him in the hour of death. I experienced this year a striking illustration of this last statement which gave me much courage. Dr. Thomson was called to visit an old man belonging to a high caste, and to his surprise the man asked him if he could be baptized. The doctor came and told me about this, and I said, "By all means let him be baptized if he believes on the Saviour." The next morning early, Dr. Thomson and I went to the house of this man. He was about seventy years of age, and would evidently soon pass from this world. I asked him if he loved Jesus, and if he was trusting Him for his soul's salvation. The old man said, "I am clinging humbly to His feet." I then asked him if I should baptize him, and his face lighted up beautifully as he said, "Yes." All

his family had by this time gathered round, and they brought me the water and a clean cloth, and gladly assisted me in all I asked them to do. We all knelt down and prayed, and when I asked the old man his name, "That is a heathen name," said he; "I want you to give me a Christian one." I mentioned several, and he stopped at one, Yesudian (*i.e.*, a humble servant of Jesus). Accordingly, in the presence of his heathen relatives, in his own house, I baptized him in the name of our glorious Master. It was worth coming to India to see this dying man's peace in the love of his Saviour. The remarkable thing is that he had never been in a Christian church, but years ago he bought a Bible, had been reading it privately, and its truth had fallen into his heart and brought forth this seed in his dying hour. May God hasten the time when our Saviour shall have all the heathen thus as His inheritance!

A Bible woman at Nagercoil writes:—

'I went to see a woman who had just lost her husband. On seeing me, she said, "My husband's last words, and those I have read from the Bible, have comforted me greatly." Her eldest son was standing near his mother while she was speaking to me, and said, "While my father lived he was a Christian, and he died believing in Christ. He used to read the Bible regularly, and prayed to Jesus every day. When dying, he was very calm and peaceful, and told my mother not to mourn

for him as other heathen women, because he was going to a happy home where he would enjoy many blessings. Just before his death, my mother said to him, 'What have you to say to me?' His reply was, 'Believe in Christ, read the Bible, and love the Christians.'"

In the conversion of heathens, the simple reading or hearing of Holy Scripture, with loving exhortations, is sometimes the means, under God, of leading them to the truth.

In this neighbourhood there is a devil-dancer, so fierce and wicked that he may justly be called the terror of all around him. No man, whatever be the amount of his property or authority, ever attempted to utter a single word against him, however persecuted or ill-treated by him. The reason is that every one was sore afraid of him, thinking that he would instantly send his favourite devils against his enemies, and torment them. Moreover, when any one became sick, the sick man or his friends would go to him, fall down prostrate before him, offer him whatever sum of money he would demand, and beg him to have compassion on the invalid. Because he was held in so much honour he was exceedingly haughty, and thought himself superior to every other human being in the world. Being afraid, or rather anticipating, that if the heathen around him heard about Christianity, and embraced it, he would no more be the object of their fear and reverence, he forbade them to hear

the Word of God, and threatened those who listened to it. He was always busy inquiring whether the new converts to Christianity were afflicted with disease, and was glad to hear when they were so, for then he would immediately send his friends to them to threaten them in his name, and persuade them to renounce their faith in Christ, and seek the aid of their former friend, the devil-dancer. There are instances of persons who had but recently come over to Christianity, and whose faith had acquired no strength, renouncing their profession through the persuasion of these enemies of Christ; but I am glad to add that none of those who by a strong faith are founded on Christ, the Rock of Salvation, have ever been moved by such winds of 'vain conceit.' The man seemed to be a representative of the devil, and would, no doubt, put a stop to the progress of Christianity in these parts, if it were in his power to do so. One day, when I was reading the fifth chapter of the Gospel by Mark to a heathen crowd, composed of men and women, this man suddenly made his appearance among us. Though I was sorry to see him there at that time, thinking the hearers would, from fear of him, be discouraged from listening, yet I continued to read on. My hearers, also, were much terrified, like young chickens at the sight of a kite, and the more so as the man looked at them furiously with his fiery eyes, and walked off without uttering a single word except, 'Very well; I shall see to

this.' When the people heard that word, they said, 'Please, sir, depart from us, that cruel man will find out who we are, and do us harm.' Before I could wind up my exhortation they all walked off one by one. Not long after I found this man sitting in the shade of a tree with two others; and, thinking it useless to turn out of my way to speak to him, walked straight on, turning my face away from him. But he accosted me, and requested me to read to him the book which was then in my hand. I was much surprised at hearing his words, and thought that he was only jeering; but he made me sit down at his side, and then said that as to himself his belief was that the devil was utterly powerless for good or evil, and that he was thoroughly convinced of the truth of this, though he made others to believe the contrary. I then embraced the opportunity to teach him the will of God and of Christ, and continued teaching him for the space of two hours. He heard me very attentively, and promised to become a Christian.

A very interesting case, of somewhat similar character to the preceding, is related by a catechist at Neyoor. 'I feel bound to give thanks to God for the change effected in a recent convert. He lives not far from our chapel, and his father was a famous devil-dancer. Whenever he was spoken to about Christ, he would say, "I mean to live and die like my fathers." He became connected with Nathaniel and other Christians in

trade, and they prayerfully put into his heart the seed of life. His pride would not permit him to enter the chapel; but he would come and stand by the door and windows every Sunday and listen eagerly to the sermons preached. He requested me to buy him a Bible, which I did gladly; for nearly three months he read this eagerly in private, coming to me at intervals with notes of difficult portions, to have them explained. In the middle of the year he publicly attended divine service, telling his wife his conviction about Christ and his obligation to become a follower of Him. The woman grew angry, expressing her fear that the demon whom their forefathers worshipped would become enraged; she besought him to kill the big ram, and sacrifice it to the demon; he said, No, he would not sacrifice it to the demon, but he would give it to the poor. Finding her husband so firm, she yielded and came to the chapel. He killed the ram, invited a number of the poor people, and gave them a feast. I also was present and was called upon to ask God for a blessing upon him and his family in their new course of life. When the feast was over, he came and said, "To-day I have shaken off the heavy yoke of Satan, and I am no longer his servant. I want to be baptized in the name of Christ."

A man named Neelan, a heathen songster and teacher, was converted in 1881, with his whole family. He, with his three brothers and their

families, were very zealous in their superstition, possessing a small temple of their own, with images of Kali, Isakki, and other demons. A yearly festival was observed, and offerings made of goats, fowls, plantains, cakes, etc. The catechist often visited Neelan, to speak with him about Jesus Christ and His great salvation; and the man, being intelligent, did not greatly oppose, but, in fact, often promised 'to learn the Vedam.' One evening he repeated this promise, when the catechist solemnly exhorted and warned him against further delay, urging him to yield at once to God. He seemed touched, and promised an early decision, and the Christian teacher left, praying that the Lord might bring his soul to Himself. During the next few hours, he was under great anxiety and perplexity, halting between two opinions; but next morning he sent a message requesting the preacher to come over in the evening and offer prayer with him and his family, and promising to attend divine service on Sunday morning. The catechist, overwhelmed with joy, offered prayer as requested, and the whole family came to the chapel, and remained steadfast in their profession.

Soon after their conversion, the offerings belonging to their temple, such as golden bracelets, golden garlands, etc., were taken out and fairly divided between the brothers. Each received his due portion, and part of the amount coming to the Christian converts was given for a new chapel at

Nellikakuri. They were somewhat puzzled as to how to divide the idols amongst the co-owners. The temple and idols are now left ownerless and disused. The other brothers still remain in heathenism, but astonished and ashamed that their demon goddess did not punish the daring violators of her worship.

The following account of a converted slave is given by Rev. J. Emlyn:—

‘Yakob was of the Pulayar caste, and was born and bred in slavery. Yakob, in addition to labouring for his Sudra master, laboured occasionally on his own account as an highwayman; he was also the head of a band of docoits, and was respected by his comrades for his daring and skill. He first attended a Christian place of worship during the severe famine in 1861, his aim, like that of the four persons who accompanied him, being to place himself in a position to obtain the help of the missionary, in case the lower revenue officers of the Sircar should oppress him, as it seems they had just oppressed some of his neighbours. Attending the services regularly, he soon obtained enough insight into Christianity to make him feel that it must be the religion of the true God, and he valued it accordingly. He gave up robbery, settled down to his work as a small agriculturist, and, exerting his influence among the people of his caste, was of great service in the formation of the congregation at Tevikode.

Like most of his class, he found it extremely difficult to break off his drinking habits, and did not do so till within three years of his death. In November, 1873, on my return from the Neilgherries, where I had been for a time for the benefit of my health, the congregation of Tevikode, like many others, came and paid me a visit of welcome. After receiving their small presents of plantains, fowls, etc., and listening to their speeches and singing, I spoke to them for some time, dwelling particularly on the importance of their giving up drink, and addressing Yakob personally, pointed out his especial responsibility in the matter. Having often spoken in vain to him on this subject before, I had no reason to hope that on this occasion my words would produce much effect. They were, however, the means of his deciding to become a total abstainer, and from that time he drank no more. After this he made greater progress in his Christian life generally, and was soon admitted into the church and appointed deacon. He could not read, and being about fifty years of age, believed it too late for him to learn. He had no great objection to public speaking, and once, at a Sangam at Vengodu, gave an address which was listened to with much interest. His death, which took place rather suddenly, was a great loss to the congregation, as also to his widow and children. His last hours were spent in urging his fellow-Christians to unity and progress.'

The following brief account of a Christian will serve as a type of others :—

Japheth was the son of one Mallen, a clever and strong gymnastic, and a chief man in demon-worship amongst the Shanars of Torukel. This man died as a professing Christian at the age of seventy years. Japheth also imitated his father in devil-worship, and was, till about fifty years of age, quite careless about salvation. As a heathen, he was honest and diligent, but quite illiterate, and somewhat deaf. In 1850, the catechist at Torukel used to exhort him about his soul. Once when he went to his house and spoke seriously about his dangerous condition, he asked, 'Is there any propitiation for all my sins?' The teacher told him of the blessed Saviour and His history. He at once called his wife and urged her to consent to learn Christianity, and attend to God's worship from the very next Sunday. This was done. He attended and paid great attention to what was said, and often seemed to receive into his heart what was preached. He would ask more fully about difficult doctrines. After he was admitted into the church he grew in piety, as is testified by all the catechists who were stationed at Torukel. He esteemed his teachers, and exhorted the people to attend regularly and give contributions. Often he came to the teacher to express his gratitude. He seemed to have some presentiment of his death, went to one of his intimate friends,

whom he took to his house, and, after giving him refreshments, said, 'My friend, I am sure we shall not see each other again in this world; but I am ready to depart.' The same night he was attacked with cholera, and died in peace at the age of eighty years.

No human effort or teaching is of value without earnest, believing, importunate prayer; and the power of prayer is often exemplified. As one has well said, 'Prayer is the secret of all success in the church's work for the world's conversion. Without much prayer, all efforts for this end must ever prove vain and fruitless. God alone can do the work, and His must ever be the exclusive and undivided glory. Prayer is the direct recognition of His immediate agency and paramount claims.'

Another says, 'It is a serious thing to do religious work, to take the power of the world to come to convert the nations, unless we plunge into the presence of the eternal God, and in prayer and close communion with our Master gather out the forces of eternity, that we may use them in the realms of time.'

'At the meeting of candidates for church membership,' writes a native missionary, 'the catechist informed me that P—— should be baptized. "How could I receive such a character as that," said I, "notorious as he is for all kinds of wickedness?" "Wait till you see," replied the catechist; "there is a great change in that man." At the

meeting, I began the service, and after prayer, proposed various questions to the candidates. Coming to the subject of the sufferings and death of our Redeemer, I solemnly urged on them that He died in order to save us and give us eternal life. During the address this man was shedding tears. His sorrow became so great, that we had to stop and offer special prayer for him with tears. After the meeting I had a private conversation with him, and he appeared to be a new creature in Christ Jesus. He was baptized along with others, and is now useful in his congregation.'

'A new convert to us was the slave of a Sudra. After he embraced Christianity his master and all his relatives persecuted him. He had a daughter given in marriage to a heathen. The daughter's husband, angry that his father-in-law had become a Christian, beat his wife unmercifully, and sent her back to her father's house. The father received her heartily, and taught her what he himself had learned about the love of Christ. He brought her to the chapel, and through his prayers and efforts his daughter became a Christian. This being reported to the husband, he was much enraged, and determined to fetch her back and force her to give up Christianity. When he reached the house where his wife was staying it was evening. The outer door was shut, and all the inmates of the house were engaged in prayer. He stood at the door and overheard the words of prayer, and his heart was

so much touched that all his anger vanished. When he entered the house his father-in-law spoke to him so affectionately that he determined to honour Christianity and take his wife back again and live kindly with her. The man and his wife were baptized at the close of the year.'

CHAPTER V.

DISAPPOINTMENT IN IDOLATRY AND DEVIL-WORSHIP.

Souls are famishing with hunger all around us every day,
We have bread with which to feed them; let them have it
while they may.

Souls are bound in Satan's prison, under sentence of the King,
But we hold for them His pardon; let us haste the news to
bring.

Souls are wanderers from the Father, they are prodigals from
home,

But He sends by us the message, He will have them back to
come.

Shall we keep the bread and starve them?—hide the pardon?—
let them die?

Never give the Father's message? Let them stay in misery?
Nay. But in and out of season, give again what He has given.
Let us live to tell of Jesus, as the way for all to heaven.

MEN are often forced to see, by bitter disappointment
in their ancestral idolatry and demon-worship, the
folly and uselessness of these superstitions, and to
seek help from God and from union with His people.
The Scriptures often refer to the unprofitable
character of idolatry as 'lies, vanity, and things
wherein there is no profit.' 'What profiteth the
graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it?
the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the

maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! (Hab. ii. 18, 19.)

Continually the heathen are compelled to realise the fruitlessness of their sacrifices and appeals. Weary and heavy laden, 'restless wanderers after rest,' they run in their distress from one god to another, and try ceremony after ceremony. Hence the openings which have always existed in India for imposture. Every pretender can secure a trial from hungry and thirsty souls, who have found their false religions to be 'broken cisterns that can hold no water,' but whom only Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, can ever really satisfy.

Far and wide, though all unknowing,
Pants for Thee each mortal breast;
Human tears for Thee are flowing;
Human hearts in Thee would rest.

The idols are not worshipped for spiritual blessings, as pardon, holiness, and aids to moral culture; but to obtain exemption from the physical evils of life, relief from sickness, victory over enemies, healthy offspring, wealth, good luck, worldly gain, temporal prosperity. According to the philosophical system of Hinduism, only temporal benefits are to be obtained from worshipping idols, and it is not the highest form of religion. The test, therefore, of answers received to petitions for such blessing, is a fair one in this case, whereas

it is not applicable to Christianity, which does not profess in this way to remove temporal evils and suffering. The Hindus are dissatisfied and angry—and justly so—if the deities, after having been paid for it, as it were, by offerings, prayers, and praises, do not answer petitions and reward their votaries for their expenditure and trouble. A man was seen, one day, worshipping a brass idol earnestly, ringing a bell in its presence, and at the same time reproaching the god for not having heard his prayer, ‘I am wasting my time on you, praying and waiting so long.’

A Sudra woman one day said to a Bible-woman, ‘Just as I was about to pay a visit to the great temple at Vaikkam, my child took seriously ill. I therefore thought it useless to travel so far for nothing. I perceive that the Vaikkam goddess cannot save her votaries: if she were mighty, my child would not have fallen sick at that time.’

Another Sudra lady, wife of an official, being without children, made a vow to the god Supramanian, that if she obtained offspring she would present a silver peacock to the god; that bird being the vehicle on which he is supposed to ride. She also bathed every Friday in the tank at the temple of that deity. Some time after, fancying she was with child, according to her vow she presented the silver peacock, costing about a hundred rupees. The same day, meeting a Bible-woman, she boasted of her god. ‘Now,’ said she, ‘through the blessing

of our god Supramanian, I have expectation of a child. So powerful is Supramanian, but your Christ is not so. Could I have obtained such a blessing by presenting an offering to Him?' She afterwards discovered that it was merely ill-health that affected her; then she began to abuse and curse her false god.

Idolatry is unprofitable for this life as well as for that which is to come.

Nor is demon-worship any more satisfying or substantial; and when the attention of the unfortunate devotees is directed to its failure, it is easy for them to see how infinitely preferable are the sweet, reasonable teachings and the helpful institutions of Christianity to the silly and wicked ceremonies of devil-worship. 'How sweet,' said a heathen woman, hearing the Holy Scriptures read, 'are the words of your Guru, Jesus Christ; whereas we get no instruction whatever from our devil-dancers.' Tired of the cruel bondage of Satan and of these dark superstitions, they naturally resolve to shake it off, and seek the liberty and privileges of the children of God. Here are several illustrative cases.

One day, when the Bible-woman was reading as usual to some women at Mankully, where more than seven families attentively hear the Word of God, a certain widow called Neelu, remarked as follows:—'We had a pagoda on the bank of yonder tank. It was a splendid building,

highly valued. We had a priest to offer sacrifices and perform other ceremonies, two songsters and a devil-dancer. The fear we then had of these men, and especially of our temple, was unspeakable. We annually performed our vows with great splendour and at great cost. When everything was going on regularly, the priest, songsters, and devil-dancer died unexpectedly; my husband also, who took a lead amongst them, died at the same time. These sudden deaths put a stop to the annual ceremonies in our pagoda. It is more than two years since it was trod by human foot, and consequently it is now in a ruinous state. If a god dwelt in that temple, I do not doubt our beloved men's lives would have been spared. This teaches me there is nothing to be expected from Hindu gods, and they are unable to render any help to their devotees. I believe it is not beyond the power of Jesus Christ to do good. He quickened the dead, healed the sick, and worked very many miracles. I hear you reading that He is ready to accept any sinner. I do pray to Him to give me both spiritual and bodily good. Our ignorant caste people often come and trouble me to give my portion of money to repair the dilapidated temple, but I will never do it. I intend to come to your church to worship that Saviour who does not forsake sinners. I do not care if they refuse to bury me when I die, on account of my embracing Christianity.'

A Bible-woman gives the following incident:—

‘In the village where I teach, there is a very rich man who has built a large pagoda at his own expense. He had no children, and for twelve years made offerings to the god, thinking that by so doing the idol would grant him a son. At last his wish was gratified. Both the man and his wife disliked Christians, and were very averse to learn anything about God or His Word. A short time ago I went to see this woman, and found her in great grief. She told me that her child had become ill a few days before. Special offerings were made to the god for the recovery of the child, but he gradually became worse. As a last resource, the father went into the temple and lay on the ground in front of the god for a whole day and night. While there, the child died. After the funeral ceremonies were over, the father and grandfather pulled down the temple and destroyed the idol. From that time their faith in their own gods has been completely shaken. The woman is now learning with me, and I have had many opportunities of speaking of Christ to the whole family.’

An evangelist at Nagercoil describes the following cases of conversion:—‘A woman of Irulappapuram has been suffering from hysteria for the last three years. Every paroxysm was considered by her husband and neighbours as a special attack of the demon, and every means were tried to expel it. Her husband expended over thirty rupees in making offerings to four several demons. Vows requiring

an outlay of fifty rupees more were also made, but all in vain. In November she had a fit, by which she suddenly lost all motion, speech, and feeling. Devil-dancers were called in to attend upon her. They sang songs, danced, and daubed her with sacred ashes, but to no effect. One of them, an old man, became so irritated at what he considered the wilful silence of the spirit, that he ran to the woman with a large knife uplifted, saying, "Demon, I will cut you to pieces if you do not at once reveal your name!" Another, a woman, stood by the patient with a firepot, saying, "I shall burn you now if you do not tell your name." As the poor woman was lying down speechless, they thought that if the demon that had seized her was forced to tell its name, offerings suited to propitiate it might be made, at whatever expense. This scene continued till midnight, when the husband, who had made arrangements to set out for the hills the next morning, lost his temper, rose up and said, "How can you, who are unable to discover the *name* of the demon, be able to exorcise it? Begone! with your worthless dancings." Then he removed his wife to the care of a Christian who lived close by, saying, "I have heard much of your God. Henceforth I am a Christian. Should my wife die before my return from the hills, you are at liberty to bury her in Christian form. I will have nothing more to do with demons." The Christian and his sister offered prayer on behalf

of the patient, and I also was called for this purpose. The woman recovered, and the whole family are regular in attendance on divine service. Ever since her entrance into the chapel the woman has been free from hysterical fits.'

'In Pernvilei, there lives a Christian family, consisting of a pious woman called Martha, educated in the boarding school at Santhapuram. The very next house belongs to a devil-dancer, an ignorant but bigoted worshipper of the demon called Palaveshakaran—a demon sprung from the perspiration of Siva, and sent by him to destroy a giant who robbed one of his servants of his nectar. He owned a small pagoda at the back of his house, which he built at his own cost, amounting to upwards of fifty rupees. In the centre of this building stood Palaveshakaran on horseback, with a crown on his head, large rings in his ears, and a sword in his hand. On his left stood Sudalamadan and his brother, and on his right stood Guru Swamy, the Brahman priest who kindled the sacrificial fire from which Sudalamadan sprung forth. Owing to the drought, which told very much on the resources of the people, Palaveshakaran and his companions were reduced to want, and the roof-work of his pagoda was broken up and removed—the gods standing within an enclosure of walls under a tree, exposed to the weather. The time at last came for the uprooting of the gods themselves. Our Abraham, for that is now his

Christian name, had an only son about twelve years of age, who fell ill of fever. Vows requiring an expenditure of fifty rupees were made, but in vain. On a Monday night the boy became insensible, and they set up a loud cry. This caused a large crowd to assemble, and Martha was one of the spectators. Abraham, who had often abused her, and had been angry with us for preaching the Gospel, and who once did not allow me even to sit in his verandah, was so far softened by this affliction that he asked her of his own accord to pray, saying, "I have nothing to do with these worthless things." Martha prayed, and sent us a message to do the same. The Lord heard our prayers, and the boy became better. Just at this time, a slight quarrel arose between Abraham and one of his heathen neighbours. He expressed his grievance to the headman of the village, but was sorry that no justice was meted out to him. This strengthened his convictions to have nothing to do with demons and their worshippers, and he was quite willing to give up all the articles in his possession connected with demonism, and even to break his idols to pieces, in proof of his sincerity in attending Christian services openly. A thick club, a large knife, breeches hung with beads, and a cap were accordingly delivered into the hands of the Rev. S. Jones; and one Sunday in December was fixed for breaking his idols to pieces. On the day appointed a considerable number of people assembled to

enjoy the sight. Mr. Jones, after speaking to them about the folly of demon-worship, asked Abraham, "What do you want me to do?" He replied, "I have nothing to do with these images. I want them all to be broken down." "Why do you want them broken down?" "I was formerly in darkness, but now I am in the light. I do not want darkness again." So saying he kicked one of the altars and broke it to pieces. The pot-horse which bore Palaveshakaran was then broken to pieces, and Palaveshakaran himself would have met with the same fate, were it not for the desire of Mr. Jones to preserve his head and arms as a curiosity. A week after, Abraham's wife was attacked with fever, and every one of the village attributed this to the anger of the demon, and tried hard to bring them back to heathenism, but in vain. The mission dresser gave her some medicine, and prayers were offered on her behalf. To our great joy, she recovered, and stands firm in her profession.'

The Rev. C. Yesudian also tells of one who was 'resolved to serve none but Jesus.'

'Yesudian was a devil-dancer till he passed his sixtieth year, when he was attacked with rheumatism, which made him unable to dance. His gods failing to answer his repeated earnest prayers, he resolved to pray to Jesus for relief, and was, through God's help, restored to health by the medical aid of the dresser at Neyoor. The old man then decided for Christ; but his wife and children forsook him,

so that he was obliged to beg for his rice. His former adherents promised to take proper care of him if he would become their priest again; but he solemnly refused, observing, "I held a cat's tail before, but now I hold the tail of an elephant for my protection and safety. I can no more serve devils. I am resolved to serve none but Jesus. Come ye also to Jesus for your salvation." His consistent life and earnestness induced us to admit him into church fellowship. His wife and two other families that were devil-worshippers have been brought over to Christianity through his instrumentality. His frequent prayerful Tamil rhyme may be put into English, thus:—

I come to Thee, O Lord, I come,
A sinner depraved and base;
I'll cling to Thee till I become
Partaker of Thy grace.

With a little help from the poor-fund he is now trying to support himself. Though old, he is learning to read. Though yet unable to read, he distributes handbills, asking others to read them.'

'An old demon-worshipper in Neyoor district was converted some three years ago, and requested the missionary and the catechist to come and destroy the little devil shrine at which he had worshipped. With terror and awe, he saw the missionary begin to pull off the thatch from the place where he had bowed in worship for fifty years, and when it was over he said, "Now Christ has made me free

from slavery to Satan. Had I remained a heathen, how miserable would my condition have been!"'

Are not these good tidings, well worth hearing—Christ proclaiming liberty to the captives of Satan, the opening of the prison to them that are bound? 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will toward men.'

CHAPTER VI.

CONVERSION THROUGH REMARKABLE PROVIDENCES.

Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.—Job xxxiii. 29, 30.¹

WE are often led to mark, with wonder and adoring gratitude, the marvellous operations of an all-wise Providence in saving souls from death, and leading men to God. Indeed, the whole history of the Travancore Mission illustrates the co-operation and agency of Divine Providence ; just as in the early ages of the Christian Church it was God that wrought among the Gentiles by the ministry of His servants.

The providence of God has often been remarkable, for instance, in opening the way for the establishment of Christian congregations. Many years ago, in returning from a preaching tour, I saw the burning of a corpse at a village near Pareychaley. The mourning relatives then assembled were addressed and urged to become Christians. Prepared by their sorrow to listen to our exhortations, they agreed ; a catechist was sent to instruct them in the way of the Lord ; within a year or so several were truly converted and baptized ; and the congregation still exists and flourishes.

Again, a few years ago, two of our church

members in a country congregation in the Nevandum district were going out on a Sunday afternoon to speak to the heathen, when they heard the death-wail in the house of a respectable man, on account of the death of his wife. Entering the house, they spoke kind and sympathising words to the mourners, and told of the Lord Jesus. They found that the people had been thinking of becoming Christians, having conversed with some Roman Catholics. They had learnt that their offerings of fowls and sheep to the demons were of no avail. They promised to receive the mission catechist and to call their neighbours to hear. A work was immediately commenced at Karivur, where there is now a little congregation of sixty-eight souls, and a flourishing day school.

Personal and domestic affliction also has often been blessed by the Lord to the salvation of those who have been exercised thereby. 'Before I was afflicted, I went astray : but now have I kept Thy word.' Such cases are very numerous, and are brought into prominent notice, more especially in connection with the medical mission here, under loving Christian teaching and benevolent medical and surgical care, many having been led to serious reflection, and brought to God. Scarcely a month passes without some being influenced to decide for Christ or place themselves under Christian instruction in the churches. High-caste men, who otherwise might not have come under the influence of the Gospel, have, in their affliction, turned to the Lord, been converted

and baptized. One young man of respectable and wealthy family said, 'I have been taught of Jesus here, and have a firm grasp of Him.' A young man stabbed by a drunken father in a dispute about a chuckram (a penny), said, 'My sin has been forgiven through the precious blood of Christ shed for me.'

An aged man, a Sudra, called Murum Pillay, was taken ill with dysentery and brought to the hospital. He had been in the habit of perusing Christian tracts and conversing with mission agents. After being further taught of Jesus, he said, 'I love the Lord Jesus, and I wish to be baptized, that when I die I may go to heaven.' We pointed out that there must be a change of heart, a baptism of the Holy Spirit, before he could go there. And he was earnestly pointed to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, and told that if he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ with his whole heart he would be saved. Frequent visits were paid to him. On one occasion he was asked, 'Have you sought forgiveness of your sins through Jesus?' He replied, 'Yes, I am a great sinner, and Jesus is my good Saviour. I am holding on to His feet, and will not leave Him.' When asked, 'Why do you love Him?' He said, 'Because He suffered and died for me on the cross, and saved me from hell. I fully depend upon His promises, and I have peace of mind by so doing.' The Rev. I. H. Hacker, having called and talked with him on the grounds of his faith in Jesus, agreed to baptize him ;

and at his earnest request did so on the following day. Murum Pillay desired his heathen name to be changed to Yesudian, meaning 'servant of Jesus.' He lingered on a few days, desiring much to go to be with Jesus; and when his hour came, his friends said that they wished 'to have such joy and die like him.'

A devoted native missionary writes of another patient:—'The higher classes are far more attentive to the glad tidings of salvation than formerly, and a good work is going on among them. I have to make special mention of a Sudra belonging to a very rich family, who was visited with continued illness, and went to Neyoor Hospital to seek relief. While in the hospital, he was taught in the truths of the Bible, but his disease being fatal, he was removed home. The doctor visited him one day, and taking me with him, asked me to visit him daily. The doctor spent a great portion of that day with him, and then left him under my charge. I had regular conversations with him, and one day when I went near him I found him very low, and his bed surrounded by his friends. As his last moment was to all appearance drawing near, I asked him whether he had any fear of death. The man looked in my face, and with a beaming countenance replied, "I have some sorrow on account of these my friends. But my heart rejoices now in the hope of going to heaven. On my sick bed I was taught of Jesus, and I trust I have a firm grasp of Him. He gives me great comfort and joy in these my last moments, and

though I have been a vile sinner, I trust that He has pardoned all my sins, and will receive me into heaven."

In 1879, the conversion and peaceful death of a man in a congregation in Trevandrum district were worthy of notice to the praise of God's grace. He was a shepherd by occupation, born and brought up in heathenism, uneducated, and leading a vicious life in his youthful days, stealing sheep, and practising other sins. Somehow he became an occasional attendant on Christian worship, but irregularly and without spiritual concern for many years, though often exhorted and rebuked. His strength, however, began to fail, and he was occasionally laid up through illness, when the catechist visited him for instruction and prayer. After a few visits, a sudden change appeared in his conversation and temper. The Lord had been pleased to work on his heart. He expressed deep compunction for his sins, and an earnest desire to be baptized. He delighted in prayer and in speaking or hearing of Christ's suffering for our sins. Appearing truly penitent and surprisingly changed, he was baptized in his own house, being unable to attend the chapel, and was received into the church in the midst of a number of members who visited the house for the purpose. It was a joyful day to his family, who said, 'The Lord has done great things for us: salvation has come to our house.' He displayed a peaceful and grateful spirit during the week, and on the next Lord's day entered into his eternal rest.

In the same congregation a very remarkable conversion of a devil-dancer and sorcerer occurred in 1881. This dancer was named Kāli, after the Queen of the Demons. He performed the ceremonies at the annual festival, singing heathen songs, and exciting the assembled multitude and the devil-dancers. He was also accustomed to play on the musical bow, much used in this worship, hung with



DEVIL MUSIC.

bells, and placed upon a narrow-mouthed earthen pot. Being of a respectable family, and greatly esteemed by the people, as well as their cleverest songster and dancer, he made much money by this work, and became rich. It was the general belief that the dancers obtained the demoniacal possession through the influence of his exciting songs.

This man used to persecute the Christians by words and deeds, and showed much hatred to the

servants of God; and in this dreadful state he continued up to his eightieth year. But three of his fellow-priests were suddenly cut off within a year by insufferable and incurable diseases. Now Kāli was left alone, bent with age and infirmity, when it pleased our gracious God to change his mind by His converting grace, and turn his precious soul from sin and Satan before his departure from this world.

At first he was not willing to listen to our words about the Saviour, nor to have prayer offered with him. But we continued visiting his house till the Holy Spirit touched his heart, and he himself began to think of spiritual things. Then he wished to know something of the principles of Christianity, and to hear our lyrics sung, and to call upon the name of the one living and true God.

He remarked that our Christian lyrics were very interesting, and conveyed good lessons, while the heathen songs are merely for the amusement of the hearers. Henceforward he asked us to go daily to his house to sing and read and pray with him. The village preachers and elders of the congregation and myself did so, and we sometimes took with us the school children, who can sing beautifully about the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of our Lord, and other Scripture subjects. While they sang, I explained the meaning, and now he rejoiced to hear the Gospel.

One Tuesday morning the old man came to our chapel in a bullock cart, being unable to walk, and expressed his desire to worship the true God in the

chapel, as he had never attended it before. He asked me to pray for his spiritual welfare, and to commit his soul to Jesus the Saviour. Perceiving his earnest desire, I opened the chapel, and he was carried into it, and seated on the floor. He said, 'I have been sunk in the darkness of heathenism during my past life; the devil and lifeless idols have been the objects of my worship. Though I have been so devoted a servant of Satan, I am perishing, and have no peace in my soul. I now give myself to Jesus Christ, confessing my past most dreadful sins.' He seemed to think that his sins were unpardonable, but asked me to pray for forgiveness for him through the holy blood of Jesus Christ, through whom alone men can come to God. I called together some of the nearest Christians, and we prayed with him and gave him advice suitable to his anxiety and fears. I reminded him that the most cruel and terrible sins may be blotted out through the precious blood of Christ, if we repent and believe in Him. Our sins are laid on Jesus. Then he said, 'As Jesus Christ gave His life for my sins, I need not fear. I believe I shall be saved through Him.' Henceforward he determined to walk according to the Word of God steadfastly, and to reject the heathen custom of wearing the *kudumi*, or top-knot of hair, by which heathens are distinguished from others in this country, and he himself, whilst speaking with me, tried to pull off some of his grey hairs with his hands,

He was now earnestly desirous of baptism, and next morning I visited the old man, to instruct and encourage him, as I had witnessed his deep sorrow for sin and agitation of mind. As soon as he saw me he rose from his bed and made salam with much pleasure. Then he called one of his sons to bring a pair of scissors and cut off the top-knot of hair, as he had promised on the previous day. This was done, and he requested me to pray for him, and to assure him again of pardon through Jesus Christ. I talked with him, and prayed at his bedside. Some other Christians also went to comfort and pray with him.

On the next Sunday morning he came to the chapel for worship in a cart, out of which he was carried and seated in the chapel, to the great admiration of all. I preached a sermon purposely for his instruction and encouragement, on the repentance and salvation of the thief on the cross. He listened attentively, and, after the service, expressed much joy, and went to his house again cheerfully. Within a few days his strength began to fail. One day he said, 'When I was a heathen, I ordered my sons to perform my funeral ceremonial according to the heathen custom, and to gather the ashes and bones and cast them into the sea, with the usual rites and display. Now, as I have become a Christian, I beg you to see my funeral conducted in a Christian manner, burying me in a coffin, with the tolling of the chapel bell, and with prayer and reading of the Scriptures.' I promised to attend to this in an honourable manner.

As his desire for baptism daily increased, and had not yet been accomplished, a cart was sent to Trevandrum to bring Mr. Devalam, the native missionary, who came at once, and baptized the old man in his house in the presence of some Christians and heathens, as he was unable to come to chapel. Three days after he was baptized he slept in Jesus, and entered into eternal joy in the presence of Him in whom he had found refuge at the last moment of his life. Mr. Vethamanikkam, evangelist, the members of the church, and myself assembled together, and conducted the funeral, according to our usual custom, in the presence of a multitude of heathens who assembled to witness the scene, with which they were greatly struck. The sudden conversion and happy death of this man created much awakening in the minds of the surrounding heathen, and all expressed approval of the Christian customs and worship.

The eldest and another of this man's sons were displeased at his conversion, and opposed it very much, speaking most insultingly of their father. The eldest son has a demon temple for his own family. They boldly declared in public that their father will not depart this life without at least once again being possessed by their ancestral demon, and without also transferring the charge of the familiar and its weapon, a sword, to the eldest son for future veneration, as was usually done when their forefathers died. With such

expectations they watched the death-bed, telling us that, 'though you baptize our father, and take him to the chapel many times, offer thousands of prayers for him, yet it will assuredly happen as we say.' We told him, to the contrary, that 'We have committed your father to the charge of the true and living and Almighty God; and now he is the Lord's, and not the devil's, as before. The demons cannot approach him. Your father will die peacefully and enter into the kingdom of God.' The Lord, who graciously works with us for His own glory, made all things happen according to our hopes.

On the day of his death I had been to see the aged convert, and found him rather better, apparently, and taking some refreshment. After spending some hours with him, and thinking that he would yet live a few days, I left him and returned home. Half an hour after I arrived a Christian came and told me that the old man had died peacefully without speaking a single word to any of his children, who were waiting at his death-bed. All this was a great marvel to the heathens, and they confessed that the Christian religion is more powerful, and the Christian's God is mightier, than the demons.

Domestic affliction and bereavement also lead men to think of God and to seek Him. At Santhapuram, in 1878, one family was brought under Christian teaching by the marked operation of Providence. The catechist often spoke to them about the folly of

dolatry and the excellence of Christianity, but they treated his words with contempt, and showed great attachment to demon-worship. One day, on his way to visit some Christians, he passed the husband and wife engaged at work, and told them of the history of our Saviour from His birth to His resurrection. They only laughed at this, and he left them with grief, and prayer that their hearts might be moved by the Spirit of God.

Not long afterwards, while the husband and wife and eldest son were watching their garden by night, the son was bitten by a deadly serpent. Unable to endure the violent pain, the boy begged his parents to make earnest vows to their gods. This they did, promising sheep and goats and other gifts, but in vain, the boy speedily died. From this time they began to attend Divine service on the Sabbath. One day when the teacher went to their house to teach the catechism and Scripture lessons, the mother requested him to change the surviving son's name. Asking her what was his heathen name, she replied, 'I am not willing again to utter the name of the demon after whom my son was called, and whom we have now entirely renounced.' The catechist gave the lad the name of Manuel. Another instance:—

Kuttikan of Peyankuli, now called Devadasan, is a wealthy, influential and intelligent headman of his village, and is held in great respect by all. The demon Kali, whose worship is celebrated with the most horrible rites, was his family god. Since the

death of his only child, a daughter, which happened three years ago, his thoughts have been turned towards Christ. He has constantly read the Bible and other Christian books. With this began prayer to the true God, observance of the Sabbath, and a discontinuance of the grosser forms of idolatry. For example, he has not, for three years, allowed sacrifices to be offered at the village pagoda. This pagoda is now in ruins and will soon wholly disappear from the face of the earth.

When his maid-servant died, he sent for our catechist to bury her according to Christian usage. Although he would not then attend the public services in the chapel, he often went to the Friday evening prayer-meetings, which were held in the houses of the Christians. He also desired us, at last, to have prayer-meetings in his own house. Finally yielding to a strong sense of duty, he boldly began to attend public worship, on the Lord's day, in the mission chapel.

Veluperumal, who at his baptism received the name of Stephen, is an interesting convert. His ancestors were rich, in great favour with the king, built temples to Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Patrakaly, and celebrated pompous and costly festivals. From his youth he knew the heathen Manthrams, and early in life became a priest—having several minor priests to assist him. On the fifth day of a grand festival, which he was celebrating in his twenty-ninth year, his eldest son was seized

with cholera and died in spite of the special offerings that were made for his recovery. He and his wife were most disconsolate. At this time he was told of Muttukutti, and made up his mind, after some consideration, to join that sect. He dressed as a Pandaram, sold his property, and built a Muttukutti pagoda. On the dedication day, he gave a great feast, and his name was changed to Ponniperumal. To preserve the life of his second son, he was directed by the priest to beg in the villages and to feed some Pandarams daily. Various other burdensome rites were also imposed on him. This son, in his ninth year, became an assistant priest, under the name of Vadivel, but shortly after died from the effects of a snake-bite, although sacred water and other supposed infallible remedies, prescribed by the priest, had been given. Nor was this all. Another calamity must fall on him ere his eyes are fully open to the new imposture. His second wife was attacked by a dreadful disease, which soon carried her to the grave, although jewels, cattle, etc., were sold to bribe the swamy to save her life. Poor Stephen was now in despair. Gods and priests had played him false—had shown their utter helplessness to render aid in times of need. What should he do? To whom should he pray for succour and help with any certainty of being heard? A Roman priest visited him and tried to convert him. No, that would not do. He had had quite enough of image worship. He would go to the Mission Chapel. He

had heard our catechists preach, and was not wholly ignorant of our books. His mind and heart opened to the truth. He saw in Christianity the only religion sent from God—the only way by which sinners can be saved. He became a very zealous disciple of Christ as he had been a very zealous heathen.

The practice of making special vows is common amongst heathen nations, as it was also amongst the Jews, and is still occasionally retained amongst the native Christians of India. ‘The following instance will show,’ writes Rev. W. Lee, ‘the kind of religious feeling which exists amongst many of our people. A man made a vow in secret that if he obtained profitable employment he would give fifty fanams, about fourteen shillings. He succeeded in getting it, but forgot to fulfil his vow. He was afterwards seized with fever; and when very ill the catechist and schoolmaster and some other Christians went to see him and to pray with him. When they got up from prayer, he told them of his vow, but again, after he got well, he was slow to perform it. After this, a heathen man preferred an unjust complaint against him in the Court, for two hundred fanams, about two pounds sixteen shillings. Upon this, he said, ‘Ah! the reason of this is, that I did not perform my vow to the Lord.’ Afterwards he sent for the catechist and some of the people, and said, ‘I have no money in hand just now, but I will give it soon,’ and wrote a document binding himself to give the money with interest within a certain time.

This will serve to show, what we have often occasion to remark, that conviction of sin takes the form of regret for one special act, or that calamity is regarded as sent by God as punishment for some specific act of disobedience, and that often service is rendered to God with the idea of averting some special evil, or of securing some desired temporal prosperity.

Singular and impressive dreams, too, are sometimes related as having induced individuals to hearken to the preaching of the gospel. And whether these are really gracious communications vouchsafed from on high, or are but the natural product of the excited mind, we cannot but rejoice when they lead men to that which is right.

A priest of Muttukutti was a great nuisance to the small congregation near whom he lived. He hated the chief member of the congregation, and raised a persecution against him, because he had not only himself forsaken the worship of Narayana, but also had persuaded two of the most devoted dancing maidens of the god to embrace Christianity. Neethindian, the object of his hatred, together with the little congregation, laid the case before the throne of mercy, most earnestly begging God to convert the wicked priest. This was done for over six months. The Hearer of prayer at length granted the petition. One night the priest saw, in a dream, a bright and glorious personage of extraordinary

appearance, who warned him of his impious opposition against the Almighty. Upon this the man shedding tears of penitence, was directed to go to the missionary for instruction and counsel. On doing so, he was shown the will of the Lord concerning perishing sinners; and the missionary, after kneeling down with him in prayer, and commending him to God and His grace, presented him with a copy of the Gospel by John, and a pair of spectacles. On returning home he told his friends that the treatment he met with in the missionary's house was exactly what had been represented to him in the dream; and he soon joined the prayer-meeting at Neethindian's house. He now, to the astonishment of his former disciples, preaches the very faith which he once thought to destroy.

A similar case is reported by a Bible-woman at Neyoor, as follows:—

‘As I was going through a street at Talakulam, a woman from one of the houses called me, saying, “Come here, teach me and my children. Moreover, I have something particular to tell to you.” I went and asked her what it was. She said, “A few days ago, I had a dream. While I was fast asleep a man came and said, ‘Rise up, a house of prayer will soon be established in this place; you and your husband must not be a hindrance to it. You are a great sinner; you must obtain pardon of your sins through Jesus Christ, who was crucified

for you. Keep away from all your heathen deities ; learn about Christianity, and embrace it.' From the very day I had this dream, I have been very anxious to know something of your religion. Although I often tried to shut out the idea of learning about the Christian faith, I cannot do it, so please come in and teach me and my children whenever you come to this place, and as often as opportunity occurs." I was struck with astonishment when I heard this, and asked her husband, who was standing by her, if it were true. He said, "It is true; when she related this dream to me, I had much anxiety about your religion; we will therefore soon become Christians. As this is the season of palmyra juice, we are busily engaged in making pots; when this is over, we will come to worship." I was glad to hear this, and taught them a short prayer. They said decidedly that they would embrace Christianity.'

Another Bible-woman relates a remarkable vision.

'When conversing with a man at Mankulay, he said, "In order to find out which is the true religion, I shut myself in a room and prayed to God for three days together that He would reveal it to me. For three days my prayers were not answered, but on the fourth, while I was sleeping, a man suddenly came and stood before me whose face shone like the sun. Then I was frightened, and said, 'Sir, I am a great sinner.'" I read to this man from the first chapter of Revelation. He

said he would come to my house to hear more of our Bible. He came one morning, and I asked him if he was persevering in his determination. He answered, "I am fully resolved to become the follower of the only true God." I told him the gods mentioned in their Vedas were not true gods, and he said, "I have no wish to worship them. Now I search the Scriptures only. As I promised, I have read all the tracts you gave me. The whole village mock me. I am not afraid of them, but as I am anxious to know more and more about Christianity, I wish to have some more tracts."'

Very remarkable cases certainly do sometimes occur of healing and relief in sickness, always with the use of suitable means, but accompanied by fervent prayer and expectant faith. The medicine is openly declared to be used in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The late Dr. Thomson writes:—

'A heathen named Supramanian had been suffering from inflammation of the lungs, and when brought to the hospital the disease had reached the third stage. His friends had tried all they could with the native physicians, but no good was done. I despaired of his life when he was brought here. But it was the Lord's pleasure to bring the patient and his large family within the Gospel net by this sickness. He stayed here one month. One night it was proposed to his wife

and other near relatives who were attending him that they should confess their sin of idolatry and pray to the only true God for the recovery of the man and the conversion of his large family. Earnest prayers were then offered to God in the name of Jesus, vowing that henceforth they would worship Jesus only. God, who is the Hearer and Answerer of prayers, heard our cries. The following morning he had wonderfully improved, and from that day he dated his recovery. During the night he lay so quiet that his friends thought his life had departed. On his recovery, he told the following dream, which he related with tears and sobbing:—"I was taken in spirit to some higher region, which is immeasurably great. It seemed as if there were no end to it or to its beauties. After showing to me this blessed place, the Great One expressed his intention of showing me heaven and hell. But His attention was arrested by the cries that were going up to Him on my behalf, and He ordered me to return. When about to return, the Great One asked me if I would like a palace to dwell in. I said I did not ask so much. He asked me if I would like to have immense wealth, to which I said, 'No.' He then asked me, 'What is your request?' I replied, 'Lord, grant for my people and myself that we may have grace to behold Thee in heaven for ever,' at which the Great One nodded assent with a smile, and I

awoke." This dream has much affected him, and he says, "Nothing in the world can sever me from Christ hereafter, for He has certainly taken hold of me." When speaking with him about Christ, the emotions of his heart gush out in tears.'

On the other hand, alarming dreams may be seen to hinder men from Christian instruction, in which case they should be disregarded and opposed.

'Neethindian, aged forty-three, from Zionpuram, admitted 7th August with mortification of the index finger, causing death of the bone, inflammation, and sinuses in the hand, extending to the wrist. The finger was removed and sinuses opened and treated antiseptically. Result, cured. He is a new Christian. When he was under treatment here, some of his heathen relatives who came to see him advised him to renounce Christianity, lest he should die by the curse of their family gods. The same night he dreamed that a devil-dancer who died a year ago came with great fury, and grasping his inflamed hand firmly, said, "If you dare to remain here any longer, you will certainly die. Therefore make a vow to sacrifice to me a black goat, and I will relieve you." Neethindian, being much frightened, came to me in the morning weeping, and telling me all very sadly. I told him how Jesus cured the man with the withered hand, and prayed with him. He became courageous,

and remained here till cured. Now I hear from others that he urges his heathen relatives and friends to become true followers of Christ; and the pastor and neighbours bear witness to a saving change in his own heart.'

CHAPTER VII.

EXAMPLES OF INFERIOR MOTIVES LEADING TO ULTIMATE CONVERSION.

Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow,
That a time could ever be
When I proudly said to Jesus,
'All of self, and none of Thee.'

Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered:
'None of self, and all of Thee!'

A DISTINCTIVE feature of the South Travancore Mission, arising, in the providence of God, in large measure, from the oppressions practised on the lower castes, and from the beneficent dominance of the British power, is the coming over of the people in masses, influenced at first, and, to some extent, still, by inferior and selfish considerations. They do not come, of course, for temporal support, which is not given, but for sympathy, protection, and aid in their distresses.

An illustration of this is given by Rev. J. Knowles as follows:—

'A new congregation has been formed at a place called Vembayam under rather interesting

circumstances. The people there had heard of the Christians at Paruttipalli, and went to that place to the meetings to see them. Perceiving that Christianity was conducive to their bodily as well as spiritual well-being, they determined to adopt it. On their return they built a shed for a school, gathered the children, and presented themselves one day at the bungalow with a request for a schoolmaster. On the principle of helping those who help themselves, I at once sent a catechist. A boy and a girl were taken into the boarding-school, and are both doing very well. I have been much pleased with the people when visiting them.'

A similar movement took place in the Pareychaley district. 'For some time in the earlier months of 1875,' writes Rev. T. Emlyn, 'a large number of persons in the employ of the Sirkar were busy taking a census of all buildings and people in the kingdom. Ignorant of the value of a census, and their ancestors having been oppressed by their rulers for perhaps thousands of years, multitudes of the lower and many of the middle classes watched the proceedings of the enumerators with a good deal of alarm. The care taken and the expense incurred to secure accuracy could not, it was believed, presage any good, and the least evil supposed likely to follow was an increase of taxes.

'While the people were in this state, a report was spread that fowls would be taxed a quarter of a rupee each, and sheep and goats half a rupee each.

This report was doubtless got up by the small merchants—generally Mahomedans, and wise in their generation—who, as the reward of their labours, purchased immense numbers of fowls and goats—sheep we have few of—at half their usual prices.

‘Soon after, another cause of alarm appeared: a schooner was noticed remaining for some time near the coast. She was there to survey the port of Colachel, but the people knew nothing of this: to them her continued presence was a mystery. After a while an explanation was invented and diligently propagated, to the effect that a far-distant country, a possession of the British crown, was to be colonized; or, according to some, a distant British colony had become depopulated by disease, and was to be re-peopled, and the ship was here to carry thither the required inhabitants, the chief capturers being, it was said, the missionaries who were erecting on the coast large sheds to receive the captured.

‘The inventors and propagators of this explanation were the Sudra farmers, who, by means of some such tales, often endeavour to keep their Christian labourers from attending our services. Never were they so disappointed, however. Not only did their Christian labourers attend regularly, multitudes of their heathen labourers, with Shanars and others, began to do the same. Our chapels generally became crowded, some of them had to be enlarged; and, notwithstanding our difficulty in supplying

catechists, six new congregations had to be formed. Such a scene had not been witnessed in this district before. It is evident that the lowest of the demonists have seen enough to convince them that missionaries, so far from taking part with their oppressors, are their sincere friends, seeking their highest good both for time and eternity.

‘Of the four thousand souls that have joined our congregations this year, a large proportion had long since believed in the truth of Christianity, and were more or less desirous of casting in their lot publicly with us; but the dissuasions of relatives and friends, as well as a natural shrinking from breaking up old connections and forming new ones, succeeded in keeping them back. The general movement this year towards Christianity helped them over their difficulty.’

Such cases still occur to some extent. ‘Men often come to us,’ writes Mr. Hacker, ‘for the purpose of gaining some worldly advantage, and having obtained it, they are satisfied and come no further; or, if they do not obtain it, they go away again and disgrace us in the eyes of the people by bearing a Christian name. A case came before me only a short time ago. Some of our Christian girls are becoming educated and very respectable; and as a result, many of the heathen young men want them as wives. A heathen man who wanted a wife from a Christian family attended the chapel for six months, professed to have renounced the devil

and all his works, and pleaded to have his name entered as one who had left idolatry and was anxious to become a true Christian. Under these professions he married a girl, with the Christian service, and all went merry as a marriage bell. After the marriage he never attended the church, but beat his wife because she would not join him in his offerings to the demons. I visited the man, and tried to put the fear of death in him, but he has not yet come back, although he permits his wife now to come to the church.'

A similar case is related by a catechist, but with more cheering results. 'There was a notorious devil-dancer living within the limits of my congregation. He contrived, by deceitfully attending Divine service for some months together, to marry a Christian woman. No sooner had he gained his object than he relapsed into his old course of life. One day he had been performing some devil ceremonies for a family, and he brought home the offerings given him, such as plantains, cocoa-nuts, and rice, and offered them to his wife. The wife with tears of sorrow told him how his deceit had pained her, and that now his deceitful nature was before the world. The words of his wife, by the blessing of God, reached the man's heart, and he has left off his dancing, is regular in his attendance at services on Sundays and prayer-meetings in the week.'

Incidents like the above show some of the low motives which move men to join our community.

On the other hand, there are many who come to us, and place themselves under instruction, because they truly believe that Christianity has a message of life to them. It is one of a missionary's joys to see men come to a church and begin to grow in grace. While I write, there comes to my mind the memory of many who have thus come, and whose changed life proves the truth of their profession. During my first tour in the district some six years ago, I met two young men who had just come to the church for the first time. I saw them a month ago. They were Church members, and they were not alone, for their wives and children and other members of the family were there, all rejoicing in the light of God's love through Jesus Christ. There are no happier experiences in life anywhere than seeing men come from heathen darkness into the light and beauty of Christian truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

STEADFASTNESS, FAITH AND ZEAL OF HINDU CHRISTIANS.

To Him the Brahman proud shall bend the knee,
And outcast Pulayan from his chains be free:
The differing castes shall cease ignoble strife,
And poor Chandálas eat the Bread of Life.

With Him 'no high, no low, no great, no small,'
His mercy and His love extend to all
Who, meekly humble, hear the Shepherd's voice,
And wisely make His heavenly fold their choice.

INNUMERABLE instances might be adduced of the operation of Divine grace in the lives of Indian Christians, evidencing itself in steadfastness under temptation, strong, unswerving faith, patience, holiness of life, and resistance to former superstitions and fears.

To begin with the last. The dread of the demons commonly worshipped in South India as impersonations and agents of evil, to be pacified with offerings of blood and other gifts, is, in most cases, well-nigh unconquerable. After a family have placed themselves under Christian instruction, should any sickness or accident befall them, it is attributed to the wrath of these malignant beings.

Times of sickness are therefore times of peculiar trial amongst our people as, on these occasions, their heathen friends strive to draw them away from Christianity. But in many cases we have noble displays of steadfastness in the faith.

A respectable carpenter who often made inquiries about the Christian religion, asked with some anxiety, 'Is God mightier than the devil? Can he afflict men against God's will?' This matter was explained to him, and he seemed very thoughtful about it. Not long afterwards, his wife was attacked with small-pox. He was advised to offer fowls to the goddess, and not to leave the house, but he paid no attention to this advice. Afterwards the nurses who watched his wife asked for fowls to offer, that his wife might have a speedy recovery, and they might have flesh to eat. He told them that they should not kill fowls to offer in sacrifice *at his house*, but he would give them flesh *to eat*. Then they urged that the goddess would be offended if nothing were offered to her, and would kill his wife, but he boldly said, 'You need not fear this. I will give you enough to eat.' So he himself killed several fowls, and gave them afterwards to the nurses. His wife happily recovered.

On removing to a new house, the same man was again urged to make offerings and perform the usual ceremonies to insure a safe residence there, but he refused to do so. People said he

would soon be seized by disease, and waited to see what would happen to him, but he continued to live there courageously and happily. 'Now,' said he, 'I know by experience that God in whom I trust is mightier than the devil, and He only should be worshipped and feared.' This man is a secret Christian, prays daily to the Lord, and never goes to heathen temples.

At Chani a convert owned half of an idol grove: eight other families owned the other half. When he became a Christian he was so bold as to cut down his half of the grove, burn the trees, and cultivate the ground. The others heaped curses upon him in the name of their gods.

Soon afterwards a great affliction befell him in his family. His only and beloved child was taken by the Lord. Then his enemies mocked, saying, 'This is the result of cutting down the grove. But he took courage, and said, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' He is steadfast in his profession, and the Lord has blessed him with another child.

There was a nominal Christian who was long indifferent about spiritual things. He had not a foot of land of his own, and was therefore obliged to put up a hut in a plot belonging to a heathen. One day the proprietor asked Peter to climb a palm tree and bring down a few cocoa-nuts and young fronds, to be offered to his demon. Peter

replied, 'I cannot help you in the least thing connected with devil sacrifices. Please ask some one else to do this. I cannot offend my Saviour Christ.' The heathen proprietor, in a great rage, compelled him to remove his hut from his ground, and he was obliged to accept a temporary shelter in a Christian's house. Though he has not much knowledge, he has a simple trust in the Lord.

Mr. Hacker quotes the following instance of how a Christian's faith was tried:—

'Gurupatham is a Christian of about twelve years' standing. By trade he is a woodcutter. A short time since, a Hindu met him, and, knowing that he was a Christian, said, "With all your faith in Jesus Christ, will you go to a certain wood and cut down a tree in the demon-grove?" (These demons, according to native notions, have their dwellings in groves.) The Christian man said he would, as he was challenged, and taking his axe went to the supposed sacred spot. A crowd of demon-worshippers had gathered round to witness the scene—evidently expecting some evil would happen to him. The man knelt down and prayed, then rose and began to chop. When he was about half way through the tree, he fell from exhaustion. The demon devotees set up a shout, and, running to a pagoda, asked a Brahman priest what they should do. The priest gave them sacred ashes, and told them quickly to smear him with the ashes, and make him say he was quite



SACRED TREE, SERPENT GODS, AND BATHING TANKS, TREVANDRUM.

defeated by the demon. But the man recovered, and seeing these ashes upon him, went to a river and bathed. Then he came back and completely cut down the tree.'

With this poor Christian man, who had only a few years emerged from demon-worship into the light of the Gospel, this was a real trial of faith, a real fight with the devil.

Vethakan, whose brother-in-law was sick, had him removed to his own house. Finding there was no hope of recovery, the patient's heathen relatives came to Vethakan and said, 'We intend to make a sacrifice to the devil to-night. It must be performed in your house, but you need not take any part in the ceremony.' Vethakan sat silent for a while, then said, 'Why can't you perform it in the daytime? Why choose the night?' The reply was, 'To guard you against the displeasure of your teachers.' Vethakan said, 'The Vetham (Bible), which I believe in, is neither of the pastor nor the catechist, but it is of Jesus Christ, to whom day and night are the same. I will not have the sacrifice in my home.' With great anger they removed the patient, and made the sacrifice the same night. The next morning the patient died, and Vethakan's faith has done great good.

The grace of God, happily, is sufficient even for those who are young and in other respects weak.

'Pakkiam was a pious girl, about fifteen years of

age, but it pleased God to try her in the furnace of affliction. She suddenly lost her eyesight and the use of her arms and legs. The dresser in charge of the mission dispensary treated her very carefully, but without any success during the first two months. During this time she suffered from excessive pain, and laboured under the miseries resulting from blindness. Most earnest prayers for her recovery, from many a Christian, ascended to "the Hearer of prayer." She herself would often pray to God to rescue her from her wretched condition. Whenever I visited her, she earnestly requested me to read and explain to her the sufferings of our Lord, as well as the miraculous cures effected by Him. Once, on reading to her the cure of the man blind from his birth, she fell into an ecstasy, and asked me most earnestly, "Will Jesus open my eyes also?" I assured her that if she would believe on Him, He would do even greater things than that. From that time forward she (together with ourselves) prayed with full belief in her recovery. After two months she began to make decided improvement, at which the dresser and myself were stimulated to treat her with increased care and assiduity. Some attributed her illness to the anger of a demon, when she was out in the field with her mother to fetch water; and her mother was most strongly advised by the heathen neighbours to appease the anger of the demon by making sacrifices to it without delay. The timid mother began to talk, as

if inclined to do so. The daughter, however, being informed of it, felt exceedingly sorry, and addressing her mother, told her that the suggestion, the carrying out of which was enough to cast the whole family and herself into hell, was much more agonizing to her than her illness. Afterwards, at the request of the patient, I spoke to the mother about giving way to such wicked thoughts. While on her sick-bed the girl called to memory a certain vow of her father, and she strongly advised him to buy a globe for the chapel in fulfilment of his vow, made when doing some contract work on the hills. By her repeatedly reminding him of it, he was forced to furnish the chapel with a lamp. The girl is now almost recovered, and is strong enough to attend the services on Sundays. God has overruled her illness for the edification of all the people of the family, who, since her recovery, have led a consistent Christian life.'

A noteworthy illustration of Christian steadfastness and zeal for the furtherance of the Saviour's kingdom is found in Visuvasam, a man of faith and prayer, of whose history several incidents are supplied by Rev. C. Yesudian as follows:—

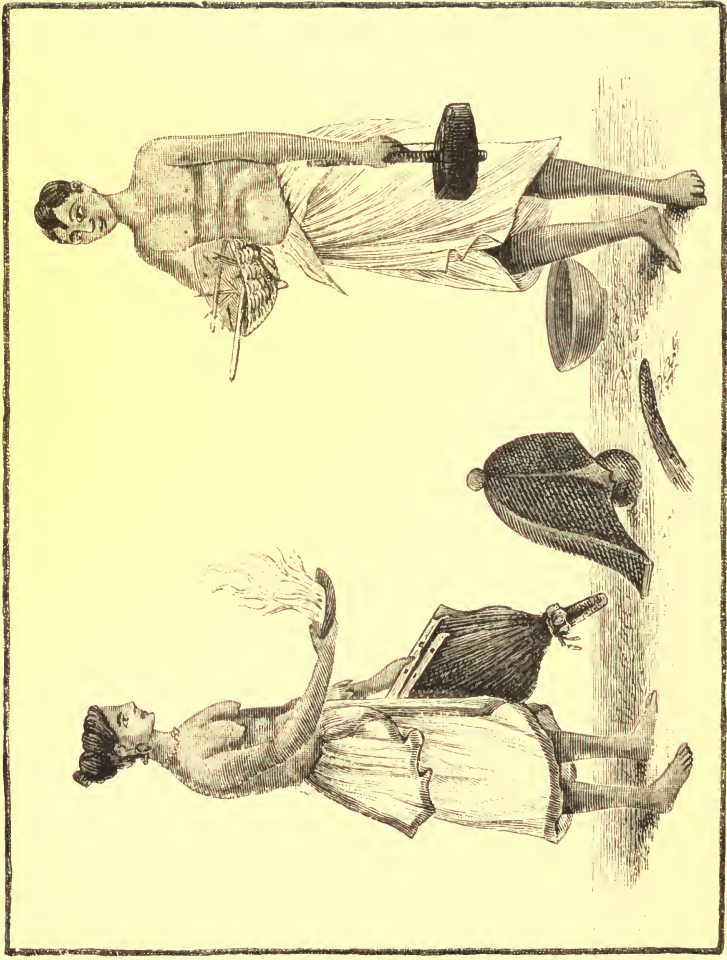
'Visuvasam, seeing one day some of his Sudra and other neighbours coming to sacrifice to the idols worshipped by his grandfather, expostulated with them and said, "These idols are mine by right of possession. I cannot allow you to worship them, seeing that I am a Christian." But they positively

refused to comply with his advice, which forced Visuvasam to take steps to frustrate their object. He, like another Gideon, inspired with zeal for Jehovah, demolished the idols, Poothatthan and his wife Kattisaki, and cut down the sacred grove. The sight of the desolation enraged the bigoted devotees when they returned next morning, and after a long and fierce disputation with him they went away with a threat that "if their ancestors' swamies were real gods, they would send a speedy retribution for his gross impiety and sacrilege." Some months after, the Sudras observing his buffaloes attacked by cattle disease, said to him in exultation, "Don't you now see what the wrath of Kattisaki can do to you? Do one thing. Listen to our advice. Build her altar again. Set up the images and restore their worship. Why should you ruin yourself so foolishly?" But, nothing daunted by their threats, or moved by their enticing words, Visuvasam entered his cattle-shed, shut his door after him, knelt down and prayed, saying, "Gracious God! It is Thou that hast given me all I have; I pray Thee that Thou wouldest heal my cattle, if it be Thy good pleasure: if not, not my will but Thine be done." The Lord heard his prayer, and saved him from loss and anxiety, while disease, together with wild beasts, visited the cattle of his opponents, and committed very great destruction. This unexpected calamity wrung from them the following confession: "Visuvasam's God is the only true

God, and Poothatthan and Kattisaki are utterly powerless, and are no gods!"

'This Visuvasam being known among his neighbours as an upright character, a Sudra farmer voluntarily offered to give him his paddy-lands on lease. But Visuvasam refused to accept it, pleading that he was poor and weak, having neither seed to sow nor money to procure manure and enrich the soil, nor friends to watch the farm lying amongst the jungle infested by wild boars. But the Sudra, however, succeeded in getting from him a chit (writing), acknowledging the receipt of the land, enticing him by words such as the following: "I cannot entrust anyone else with my land. I know that your God will bless you with all timely help, and therefore please cultivate my land." The time of sowing approached. And the leaseholder, feeling greatly his inability to cultivate his new farm, committed his care to God in earnest prayer. Late at night, in a dream he saw the figure of a great person addressing him: "Visuvasam! Do not fear. You will receive help. You need not manure nor care to watch the field. I will give you this season an income to the amount of three hundred rupees." In the morning, while his mind was deeply engaged in thoughts as to the meaning of the dream, a Sudra who passed by came to him, saying, "Visuvasam! You seem to be much perplexed. I know you have got a paddy-land on lease; if you would like, I should be glad to provide you

with seed and money at no interest, and you may go on with the cultivation." Visuvasam did as he was advised by this heathen friend. He had no reason to be anxious about manuring and watching the fields, for the productiveness of the lands had not been exhausted, in consequence of frequent failure of previous crops, and the incursions of wild hogs had been prevented by the clearing of the adjacent hills for coffee cultivation. But now his anxiety arose from another source. His heathen neighbours, fearing a drought for want of timely rains, set about to make offerings to Varuna-Bhagavan, the god of rain, and called upon him to contribute for the object. On his refusal to comply with their impious demand they were greatly enraged, and threatened and cursed him in the name of their gods. But he calmly replied, "Do not vainly trust on your gods, who have no power to grant our earnest petitions for rain. It is the Christians' God alone who is able to give rain or to withhold it." This bold protest made, however, no impression on the hearts of the superstitious idolators, who remarked that Visuvasam would have to suffer a serious loss for his continued opposition to the worship of Kattisaki as well as other deities. But, by the grace of God, his fields gave their full increase, so that his income was by no means less than three hundred rupees, the sum specified in the dream. The neighbours that have witnessed this,



A HINDU BLACKSMITH AND HIS WIFE. [From a Native Drawing.]

feeling greatly astonished at it, said: "This is a bad omen; this good-for-nothing fellow will soon die, or his fields would not have yielded such a good crop while ours have failed." But Visuvasam, in no way disheartened by this superstitious remark, replied: "Sirs! God has pitied and blessed me, and He may do the same to you, if you will but renounce your faith in idols, and put your sole trust upon Him. Think no more that idols can save or kill. The time of my death is in my God's hand; idols have nothing whatever to do with it."'

Missionaries are also often privileged to be witnesses of happy instances of the adherence to duty of these Christians, and their faith under trial or persecution.

'A man of the blacksmith caste in Pareychaley district was converted to Christianity, and became an earnest believer. When he first embraced Christianity, he had to undergo from his relatives much annoyance and petty persecution on the occasion of domestic festivities, etc. But he stood firm, and would say to his persecutors that, though all forsook him, the living God alone, whom he worshipped, would never desert him. In process of time their rage against him was mitigated. Afterwards he had a severe attack of fever, which did not yield to any medicine for more than four or five months together. Persons of different castes who visited him ascribed the illness to the anger of

family demons. But he contradicted their statements with great abhorrence. At last he recovered under the good treatment of the catechist. In the meantime I visited him as often as my duties would permit. Two months afterwards he had a severe attack of dysentery, which put an end to his life. Whenever he saw me he was used to say he had no hope of recovery. I asked him in return, "Where will you go after your death?" "To heaven," replied he. "Are you not a sinner? can a sinner go to heaven?" I added. "The Lord Jesus Christ, who died for sinners, died for me also; I believe in the same Jesus who, I am confident, will grant me admission into heaven," replied he. He was constantly heard to say, "Jesus, save me! Jesus, save me!" On a Saturday evening he called together his brothers, and asked them to get him buried according to the Christian mode, the evangelist of the place conducting the funeral service. A little after this he breathed his last. According to his wish, he was buried after the Christian rule. We have every reason to conclude that he was among those that "die in the Lord."

'Zephaniah, deacon of the congregation at Kottumulei, was, before his conversion, an officiating priest in a temple which belonged to some Sudras, numbering about one hundred families. A wooden idol, which they called the crown of Kali, was the object of worship. An annual festival, which lasted ten days, was observed in honour of this idol. A

few days before the festival, Neelan, as he was at that time called, would prepare himself for his services by fasting and incantations. During the first nine days he would appear in gorgeous attire, and once every day would circumambulate the village with the idol on his head. The procession was attended by a great concourse of people and the beating of the tomtom, with other musical instruments. On the tenth day, all the people of the district would assemble. They occupied temporary sheds erected for the occasion. Zephaniah (or Neelan) was, on this day, believed to be inspired by Kali, and his predictions were received with veneration, not only by the common people but also by the rich and even by officials. By this he got much money, besides a good deal of honour amongst the people. But the Christian instruction which he received, and the fact that some of his people had embraced Christianity, led him to give up this lucrative post, and to become, not in name merely, but in reality, a believer in Christ. He counted all his worldly gain and honour as of no value in comparison with the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and shortly afterwards made an open profession of Christianity. The Sudras said he would be sure to return to them, and for five years appointed no successor. Zephaniah was taught to read the Bible when he was sixty-five years old. His children and some of his relatives have, through his instrumentality, been drawn to Christ. As a

deacon, he was very useful to the congregation. He stirred up the people to attend Divine service regularly, persuaded them to thatch their place of worship, and visited the sick and prayed with them. He often used to say that the privileges which he formerly enjoyed were not equal to the consolation which he felt at present. Once the Sudras, who were formerly afraid of him, lodged a false complaint against him. He was in great trouble about this, and came to my house once at midnight to tell me of the matter. I knelt down with him and prayed to God on his behalf. When leaving the house he fully assured me that he would in no wise relapse. By the grace of God, he escaped the dreaded punishment, and two of his adversaries were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. Often, when listening to the Scriptures, tears would run down his cheeks. When ill, he professed his faith in Christ, and died peacefully trusting in the Lord.'

The Christian patience of these humble believers, and their resignation under suffering, are characteristic and exemplary. Cases of this kind are very numerous. For example:—

A catechist in Tittuvilei reports that his congregation attended to Christian duties one year better than in some previous years. 'The deacons rendered me much help in the Divine ministry, in conducting prayer-meetings, in rousing up the careless, and in visiting the sick. The interest evinced by our

women to raise contributions is encouraging. Besides their ordinary subscriptions, they have started a fund for the poor, by saving a little from the rice allotted for their daily food. This is owing to their better attendance on Divine worship. They have shown real pleasure and interest in night prayer-meetings, for which they supplied oil at their own expense. The progress they make in their Bible lessons is also pleasing. Family worship has been better attended to by them. When they were afflicted by any dreadful pestilence, such as fever, or dysentery, which swept away several, *they uttered no words of murmur, but calmly looked up to heaven, repeating the words, "God is our refuge and strength."* And when they found that their prayers were heard, they praised God, who gave them strength to bear the trial.'

Cochumani was a God-fearing woman, descended from a Roman Catholic family, and educated in the boarding school at Neyoor. Her daughter Rachel having been married to a station-master at Shoranoor, she was accustomed to visit her now and then. On one of her visits, she became a member of the church under the care of a German missionary, the Rev. E. Diez, and on her return to Neyoor, with a certificate from him, became a member of the church here. When on another visit to her son-in-law, he was transferred to Tadputri in the Cuddapah district, and she removed there

with the rest of the family. In the fearful outbreak of cholera there in the month of August, the family met with a severe visitation of Providence. The station-master himself, his eldest boy, his nephew, and Cochumani, were suddenly snatched away by cholera in the space of a single week. The survivors were also taken seriously ill, but recovered. We believe that Cochumani has left her place in the church militant for one in the church triumphant. Her daughter, who has since been brought back to Neyoor by her father, and who attended her mother when dying, gives the following account of her last days:—‘My dear mother died on the 22nd August, 1875. After the death of my husband, she was constantly engaged in comforting us and praying for us. In all the calamities that befell us at this time, she consoled herself by saying that the Lord does all things for our good. The day my husband died, we were sunk in great sorrow, but my mother comforted me, saying, “My dear daughter, be not disheartened. Our Heavenly Father overrules everything for our good. No one can fathom the depths of His all-wise dispensations. It will grieve Him to find us unbelievably sorrowing at His providential dealings.” That night we were greatly exhausted with weeping and want of food. My mother, though in the same state, roused us all up for family prayer. She said that as long as my husband was alive he never once failed to have prayers in the family,

and that it would be for our benefit to follow his example and cry to our Heavenly Father for help and grace. We felt the force of her exhortation and sat down for prayers. She made her nephew, a boy then alive, read the first chapter of Job and the 22nd Psalm, and herself offered the prayer. She had no sooner finished than she fell down senseless. The heathens who were present were struck with wonder, remarking the great eagerness she had for prayer even under such fatigue. The next morning, when she was a little better, and came to know that my eldest son also was attacked with cholera, she prayed, saying, "O Lord, Thou hast found it wise to chasten us on account of our manifold iniquities. Give me strength to assist my grandson." The Lord answered her prayer, and in a short time she was able to help the dying boy. Then my cousin, my younger sister, and myself were attacked. Quite calm, however, she exhorted us to find courage by trusting in the Lord Jesus. Seeing her nephew's death approaching, she exhorted him to commit his spirit to his Redeemer, and fervently prayed for him. Then her niece was taken ill. This filled my dear mother with great alarm, and made her pray for the recovery of the girl with tears. The Lord answered her prayers, and the girl got better in a few days. On the 21st August, my mother was taken ill. She told me nothing about it, fearing that I should get worse, but at night she was very

weak, and could not take care of my child, as she had done. Then I came to know the truth, and gave her some medicine. Though suffering greatly all night, she continued giving me valuable advice about domestic management, training the children, family prayer, etc. My eldest boy dying at 4 A.M. of the 22nd, overwhelmed with sorrow, I went aside to a room and sought relief in tears. Coming back to attend to my mother, she, with tears in her eyes, tried to comfort me, saying, "Daughter, be not dismayed. Call to mind the patient suffering of Job. The Lord tries you by these calamities because you are dear to Him. You need not be troubled for your son, he is in the bosom of his Heavenly Father." At noon the same day, the train came in. She eagerly asked me whether my father was come. On being answered in the negative, she was cast down, and said, "Lord, Thy will be done. I obey Thy summons. I commend my poor daughter and my little one to Thy gracious care." She could not speak further, but breathed her last at two o'clock that day with great calmness.'

Serious accidents sometimes occur.

Paripooranam accidentally fell from the verandah of her house, and her leg being seriously injured, she was confined to the house for four years. While well, she habitually attended the prayer-meetings, and was now grieved that her illness prevented her. At first she murmured a little, but was visited by the catechist from time to time, and comforted

and instructed. One day she said she had nothing in her mind now but heavenly thoughts, and that if it were not so her condition would be sad indeed. That night she calmly fell asleep in the Lord.

A Christian woman was left a widow some years ago, with three young children unprovided for. Her heathen relatives advised her to return to her father's house, and he would support her. 'No,' she replied; 'my father is still a heathen, and I will not forsake my God and Saviour. I will live amongst the Christians, and God will not forget me.' When her children sometimes cried for food, she would kneel down and pray with them; and God heard the cry of the widow and the fatherless. Her children are now growing up and getting able to help her, so that much of her trouble is alleviated. She gives regularly her small mite to the cause of God, and is in all respects an example to others.

In a heathen land, and in the employment of unbelieving masters, difficulties are sure to arise with reference to Christian servants keeping holy the Lord's Day, which is so needful for health and rest and for spiritual exercises. Some time ago a remarkable testimony was borne by a heathen to the consistency of a Christian's conduct in this respect.

'This rich Sudra was rather bigoted in the worship of Thanumalayan, but when told of the

shameful conduct of the god towards the wife of a Rishi at Susindram, he jumped from this topic, and said that the restrictions which Sunday imposes upon the Christians are highly injurious to their welfare. I asked, "How?" He replied, "I know of a Christian called Swaminathan, who cultivates a paddy-land close to mine. He is one of my servants, and I trust him implicitly. As he has a large family, I also assist him in various ways. Last season, when sowing commenced, the paddy-lands were all in a fit state for sowing on a Sunday. The whole of the ryots were seen in their lands, but Swaminathan was absent. I went to his house and asked him the reason. He said that he could not work on Sundays. I rebuked him for his foolishness in losing the best opportunity for sowing, and, finding him too superstitious to yield to my counsel, I asked him for a loan of his bullocks and plough. He replied that it is the commandment of God that a man's beast also must not work on the holy day. I was astonished at his words, and was unable to gain my point. But see the result. All but this foolish man had a very good crop. He is now suffering for his folly." I told him that I could not believe as to the failure of crop, and that even if that was true, Swaminathan would feel that the loss he sustained could not equal his pleasure in having obeyed the law of God.'

A man named Yesudian, with some heathen, was

hired to reap the fields of a rich Sudra. On the Sunday all the reapers were there as usual, but this man was absent. The owner of the fields saw him on this day and said, 'Why do you not work to-day with the others?' 'Sir,' said the man, 'I am a Christian, and our Lord has commanded to keep holy the Sabbath day.' The Sudra went away saying, 'You need not work to-day.' The next evening when all the reapers were gathered together their employer said to Yesudian, 'You call yourself a Christian, but what do you know about Christ?' The man briefly related the life of Christ, and told his master that it was only through Jesus Christ that sinners can be saved. The heathen laughed him to scorn. But their master rebuked them and said, 'You shall not revile this man. What he says is true. We are all sinners, and it is only those who believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ that can be saved. He gave His life for us. *I am relying upon Jesus Christ for the salvation of my soul.*' He then took Yesudian aside, and master and servant knelt down and prayed. Every subsequent evening they were both engaged in offering prayer to God. The Sudra entrusted Yesudian with the distribution of wages and the inspection of the harvest, and treated him kindly till the work was finished.

Still greater difficulties with reference to Sabbath observance have those converts to contend with who come from the the low castes; once enslaved, but

now free by law, though not yet in a position fully to avail themselves of their liberty, they greatly prize the holy day of rest. The following incidents, related in a conversation with a native missionary, will give some idea of the moral courage manifested by a Christian convert of the lowest caste, who is quite dependent on his master.

‘My master is an officer in the palace. He is a well-to-do man, having many servants under him. I and my household embraced Christianity, and after that I did not consent to work on Sundays, though all of my fellow-servants did so as usual. When the matter was reported to my master, he became angry, and for the sake of amusement asked me to tell him if I knew anything about the new religion. On repeating the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer, and singing a few lyrics, he seemed to be rather interested. He declared that he had no objection to my being a Christian, if I would attend to his work on Sundays as usual. I humbly pleaded for him to exempt me from working on Sundays, promising to attend to my business with increased diligence and industry on other days. He then asked me why it was that I could not work on Sundays. I replied to him that though my miserable condition would not allow me for a single day to be without work, yet the conviction that the violation of the Sabbath would result in great misery prevented me from doing so. He was greatly provoked at this, and threatened me with

dismissal, but was afraid to flog me as in former times was the custom. He again sent for me and ordered me to supply him with a bundle of grass at least on Sundays. When he saw that I would not do even this, he was enraged to such a degree that he dismissed me from his service, and sent me away from his compound in which I had been living. This was indeed a great trial to me. However, by the unspeakable mercy of God, I found favour in the sight of another master to whom I offered my services. But as he was not a man of much property, I could not get enough for my living, and in consequence I had to suffer a good deal. However, the passages of Scripture which I had committed to memory, the prayer-meetings in which I had the privilege of taking part, and other means of grace were more than enough to comfort and console me in such a condition. At the expiration of a few years, however, my former master unexpectedly sent for me, and asked me again to tell him all I knew about Christianity. Then I repeated a number of passages of Scripture and sang a few lyrics; on hearing which he asked me to serve him again, saying that I should not be compelled to work on Sundays. I went back to him, and continue to be his servant until the present day.'

I have often felt deeply grieved at the custom, which is generally considered unavoidable, of climbing the palms and preparing, or partially preparing, the sap, from which the country sugar

is made, on the Lord's Day, as well as on weekdays. This very much reduces the attendance at public worship during the climbing season, and is a great hindrance to the improvement of the people in several respects. In order, therefore, to test the practicability of dropping this Sunday work, I once made an experiment with thirteen trees in the mission compound, ordering them to be left wholly untouched on Sundays, and the daily produce of sap to be carefully measured. This was found to be, on the average, about two pints from each tree daily, while ordinary trees climbed twice a day, including Sundays, produce from five to fifteen pints. I felt obliged, therefore, with deep regret to come to the conclusion that this is really a work of necessity, and as such must be suffered, so long as many of our people are engaged in this employment.

In a recent report of Neyoor district, the native teacher, speaking of a convert, observes that 'he is very regular at Divine service, and by his influence his brother, who was a heathen, has come to the church with his family. He finishes his palmyra climbing earlier on the Sunday, and delights to come to the house of prayer.'

'This last sentence,' remarks Mr. Hacker, 'is to me a great test of a man's sincerity. Palmyra climbing is the principal occupation of hundreds of people, during six months of the year. The palmyra tree is a tall palm, growing from sixty to

ninety feet high. It is one of God's greatest gifts to the poor people, affording them leaves for the covering of their houses, food and drink, and



A PALMYRA CLIMBER.

almost all a man requires. It flourishes in dry and barren soil where scarcely anything else can grow. At the beginning of what is called the palmyra season, which commenced in August and ends in

March, the palmyra climber ascends the tree, and cuts off the flower and fruit stems, under which he ties a small earthenware pot for the sap to flow into. This sap is called the pathaneer, or sweet water, which is very sweet and wholesome. This juice is either drunk as soon as collected, or boiled down into a coarse brown sugar. The tree has to be climbed twice every day, in order that the flower or fruit stems may be trimmed, for the sap to exude freely. Consequently these trees have to be climbed on Sundays, or the tree suffers injury; and this, in the palmyra season, is a great hindrance to attendance at our services, and to the keeping of the Sabbath-day holy. Therefore for a man to get up before it is quite light on a Sunday morning, to climb forty or fifty trees, which is a very laborious work, and to be ready for the service at seven o'clock, means some self-denial and a fair amount of earnestness of purpose.'

CHAPTER IX.

DEATHS OF BELIEVERS.

Yes, the Christian's course is run,
Ended is the glorious strife;
Fought the fight, the work is done,
Death is swallowed up of life!

Borne by angels on their wings,
Far from earth the spirit flies,
Finds his God, and sits and sings,
Triumphing in paradise.

DARK and dismal are the prospects of the expiring devil-worshipper, utterly ignorant of any future life; or of the Hindu idolater, anticipating an endless series of transmigrations, or faintly hoping that the costly and elaborate ceremonies which have been or are to be performed, will save him from a miserable hell of mere physical torture, and help him on towards entire release from all conscious existence. The Christian believer, on the contrary, meets death with calm resignation and a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life and glory. Christ has conquered death for him; its sting is taken away. To the true disciple, it is a sleep in Jesus—it is infinite gain—it is to be 'absent from the body, and present with the Lord.' The Church in South India is rich in blessed examples of this truth.

‘Samuel, of Puliade,’ writes the Rev. C. Yesudian, ‘was one of the slaves redeemed long ago by the kind efforts of the late Rev. C. Mault. The old man called himself a Christian for some thirty years, probably without being benefited by the truths that were presented to him either in his hamlet or in the places of Divine worship. While in this condition, on hearing a sermon, the Spirit of Christ graciously opened his heart and eyes to see the truth, and in it himself and the Saviour. From that time a real change was wrought upon his soul. He committed to memory with eagerness the Scripture contained in our catechism, applied for baptism, and in due course joined the church. He was found a man of prayer. He not only prayed for himself, but incessantly prayed for the conversion of his son, Shadrach, who was a wicked, unpromising character, and he witnessed with uncommon joy that the lad was converted, and began to love and serve the Saviour by a life consistent with his profession. Two years ago, Samuel, then seventy-three years of age, got a fall while going to church, and became a cripple. This deprived him of the privilege of worshipping God with His people freely. Yet, so full of thirst was he for the Word of God, that often, as soon as Divine service began, he endeavoured to come to the chapel by creeping. But he could not do it, as there is a brook between his hut and the chapel, which was crossed by a piece of timber

too narrow for him to crawl along, so that he was often, for want of help, obliged to remain on the bank of the streamlet, so as to be able to overhear the preacher, as the distance was very short, measuring but a few yards. His attention was so keen that he was able to catch and repeat to the catechist several things mentioned in the sermon. About a week before his death, the catechist visited him and inquired, "Friend, what do you now find the Saviour to be?" The old man replied, "Sir, I find Him to be my present help." "What leads you to feel that He is such a help?" "Because I entreat Him to be my help for ever." "What is your pledge for this belief?" "The Scriptures, that tell us that 'those who seek the Lord shall not be confounded.'" "What do you think of yourself as a sinner?" "I feel, sir, I am a great sinner, but I know that the blood of Christ has washed me from my sins." Hereupon he begged the catechist to offer a farewell prayer, and followed it in a gentle whisper. He lingered for a week, and calmly fell asleep in Jesus.'

Perinbanayagam embraced Christianity in middle life. In youth he was a bigoted heathen. He had a fair knowledge of the stories about the Hindu gods and demons. But at the time of his death he had been for twenty-five years a Christian. He was at first much opposed by heathen relatives and friends. He was a man of influence, and was

spoken of as being like a right eye to the catechist of his congregation. He would accompany him when preaching to the heathen, and was often able to silence objections by his knowledge of Hinduism. He was strict in the observance of the Sabbath, and regular in reading the Bible. Fear of men did not prevent him from discharging his duties to God. He took a deep interest in the building of the new chapel. He was very ill for four months before his death.

He did not murmur, but would ask people who visited him to read to him the Word of God. Upon being asked whether he believed in Jesus, he replied, 'Yes, I believe that He has forgiven my sins and will save me.' When asked whether he did not wish to remain on earth a little longer, he replied, 'Yes ; but I am prepared to quit this world and join the victorious church above.' Some of his heathen relatives tried to induce his wife to make offerings to a demon for his recovery from sickness. He would not hear of it. His death was a great loss to the congregation, but it was blessed to the spiritual awakening of his wife, who had before been quite indifferent. She has since been baptized, and seems an earnest Christian.

The following brief memoirs of two pious youths are given by the pastor of Nagercoil :—

'Swaminathan was born of heathen parents, but was brought up from boyhood in the house of one of the deacons of Nagercoil Church. The good

instructions which he received at home, in the school, and in the church were, we have no doubt, the means of his conversion. He was a member of a party of singers, and it was his habit at the close of the singing exercise to read a few verses of the Scriptures, to say a few words of exhortation, and to offer prayer. He was regular in his attendance on the Divine service and the Bible class on Sundays. Towards the close of his life, he was long laid up of fever. His Christian teachers and friends used often to visit him and to pray for him. Many a time he expressed his consciousness of his sins being forgiven through Jesus Christ, and that he had no fear of death. One day he asked his mother and brother to recite the 23rd Psalm, and when they were not able to do this without mistakes, he reproved them, and taught them the same himself. Also, he earnestly enjoined upon his mother that after his death she should not return to her heathen relatives, but should stand steadfast in the faith. A few days before his death, some of his companions, hearing that he was getting worse, paid him a visit. He asked them to sing a Christian lyric. When questioned what lyric they were to sing, he answered, "Sing a sweet song in praise of God." Then they sang the one beginning, "Sweeter than honey is the name of Jesus, seek for it, long after it and hasten to it, ye His saints." As each verse was sung he beckoned with his hand to stop, and asked a number of questions, so as to

impress upon their mind the meaning of the verse forbidding grown-up persons to answer those questions, and earnestly entreated them to put their trust in Jesus. During that time the bystanders were struck with the extraordinary brightness that shone in his face. Next he asked them to sing an English hymn. One on the vanity of human life was sung, and one of the company offered prayer. Then he said, "I am very happy, and I give salam to you all." Five days after this he departed in peace. He was then about twenty years of age.'

'Equally interesting is the account of the life and death of G. David Selliah, a boy about seventeen. He was born of Christian parents, and was baptized when an infant. He availed himself of the advantages of the school and of the church, and bore traits of good Christian character. He never associated with wicked boys, but was very regular in attending the weekly prayer-meetings, held at night in the houses of the village for stirring up non-communicants to Christian faith and activity. He was foremost to pay respect to those who deserved it. Whenever he came in contact with such as propagated spurious doctrines, he inquired of his religious teachers concerning the correctness of those doctrines and their consistency with the Word of God; and when he could command time he used to go to a public reading-room, which was not far from his home, and read the books and periodicals he could find there. Once on his

way to his father's field, he found a beautiful pencil-holder of ivory, and, contrary to the custom of most boys, did not rest until he searched out the owner of the lost article and delivered it to him. He was always ready to render service in the church in leading the singing when necessary. He attended the Bible-class on Sundays, and paid good attention to what was said. In the seminary he twice obtained a certificate of honour. Even when learning in the matriculation class, he cheerfully obeyed his parents, and helped them by doing every menial service. If rebuked by his parents, he never said a word against them, but withdrew until their anger abated. He attended very regularly the meetings of the Young Men's Christian Association, and at times read essays before the same.

'At the time of his death, he had written about half of an essay on precious stones, to be read to the association at his next turn. He selected the choicest books of his father's and read them one after another. When his parents had difficulty in paying his school fees, he took off his earrings to find money for the same.

'As he was rather dull of hearing, it was not convenient to converse with him freely in his sick bed. About half an hour before his death, the evangelist of the church wrote the following words on a slate, and showed it to him: "Put your trust in Jesus, He loves you, don't be afraid," and again he wrote, "Jesus died for you, He will save you."

“Say, Lord be merciful unto me a sinner.” He looked sharply into these words, and nodded as if he meant that he did so. He calmly slept in Jesus, full of faith and hope.’

‘The death of Sebatthian is worth notice. Six months after his marriage he fell from a tamarind tree, and although he had much care from Dr. Thomson he lingered on for some time in great agony, and then died. I visited him daily and was grieved to see the suffering of his young wife, but surprised at his calmness. Upon one occasion he said, “It is my body alone that suffers pain, my inward man is strong. If I am disturbed now, where can I be comforted on earth? If I forget my Lord and Saviour at such a time, what other refuge is there for me?” Seeing the comfort this young man had even at the point of death, those sitting by his bedside praised and glorified God. He died rejoicing in his Saviour.’

‘Adam was more than sixty years of age at his death. He was very regular in attending divine worship. Although not able to read, he could repeat from memory many of the Scripture lessons. He used to teach his heathen neighbours the Bible knowledge which he had committed to memory. He had been formerly a most degraded heathen and a drunkard, but about sixteen years ago he renounced the worship of his demon gods, and became a true convert to Christianity. Ever since he was baptized and admitted to the church, he lived as a sincere

Christian and peaceably amidst his heathen neighbours. I frequently visited him in his last hours. When I spoke to him of Christ, the very sound of the name Jesus seemed to him very sweet. A few minutes before his death, he said, "Though I am a sinner, I am not now afraid of my enormous sins, which are, I believe, propitiated by the death of Jesus, and when I die I will go to the presence of God." Anticipating that his heathen relatives would not allow the Christians to bury him according to Christian rites, he, two days before his death, called some of his near relatives, and said, "You know that I have lived for a long time as a Christian, and now I am going to die also as a Christian; if you have any love towards me, you must now promise to give me the honour of a Christian burial, by the Christians, without beating of drums and performing other heathen ceremonies."

'Porumeiyudian became partaker of faith in 1867. When he died he was eighty-five years of age, so he well knew the various kinds of oppressions which the lower classes of Travancore experienced from Sirkar authorities and Sudras in former times, and being naturally intelligent and of good disposition, would speak thankfully of the great good brought to this poor people through the British Government. He was a zealous worshipper of the goddess Pattira Kali, but when he knew the truths of the Gospel he eagerly laid hold on them, and proved a devoted follower of Jesus. Nothing pleased him more than

to hear of the crucified Saviour, and the prospect of heaven comforted him every day. He could not walk well, neither was his sight good, yet he attended services very punctually. All God's servants who saw him had real pleasure in him. He committed to memory the Tamil hymn, "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah," and would be often repeating it. But it pleased God to remove him from this frail tabernacle by a butt from a bull when out walking. He was on his bed two days before he died, so that we had good opportunities for visiting him. Till he was quite unable he would repeat the words of the hymn he had learnt. The replies he gave to questions we proposed as to his feelings were in substance as follows: "I am a great sinner; I served Muttukutti for some years, and made offerings to devils. These are great sins. My sins are pardoned by my Saviour Jesus. *Jesus is sweet to me.* He will give me a happy place in His presence. I do not fear to die. My children, we shall meet each other in heaven. Do not be sorry on account of my death, for I am going to my dear Father." Thus he died happy in Christ, and we all believe that he is enjoying eternal bliss.'

Sudden death is not always unprepared death. A young communicant, about twenty-two years of age, was bitten by a cobra in attempting to prevent the snake from biting another man who was working along with him in the same field. The heathen doctors tried their remedies, but unsuccessfully.

The catechist asked him, 'Have you any fear of death?' He replied, 'No; my sins are forgiven by my Saviour, who suffered on the cross. I shall soon be with Him in heaven.' He also asked that his heathen relatives should be prevented from repeating the incantations they are accustomed to use on such occasions. The catechist prayed, and gave him such medicines as were available, remaining with him all that night, but he died in the morning.

Just before the death of an old man who had been a member of the church for thirteen years, the pastor went to see him. In the conversation which ensued the old man said, 'Sir, I have no doubt of being with the Lord after my death; but I am much concerned about one thing.' 'What is that?' He answered, 'For some time I have not been on good terms with a relative. I wish to see him and speak with him before my death, but am unable to walk so far. Will you please to call him, and make peace between us?' Though this man was the one who suffered injury from the other, he himself thus desired reconciliation.

Pakkianathan, deacon of the church at Pulipanam, and a Christian of many years' standing, died in 1878. When he first became a Christian, his heathen relatives burnt down his house, and put him to much grief and loss. Trials not unlike those of Job fell upon him, but his faith remained firm. A few years ago, he lost two of his daughters and an only son by fever; but he calmly bore his

troubles, resting upon his Saviour. In his last illness I had many opportunities of seeing him and praying with him, but he did not wish to see any of his heathen relatives. At the time of his death, neither I nor the evangelist were present, for we did not think his end was so near. He inquired for us, but when he found we were not present, he called his daughter-in-law with his grandchildren to come to him. He counselled her to train up her children in Christian truth and faith. He exhorted her to see that the native minister buried him with all Christian rites, and not to allow his friends to perform any heathen ceremonies. He died trusting in that love which guided him, and which has now placed him in the heavenly paradise.

‘Gunamudian, of Senamvilei, lived amongst a number of Roman Catholics and heathens, and his Christian behaviour showed him to be altogether different from men of the world, and had also been a means of shutting up the mouths of those who spoke against Christians. The time when he was suffering from the disease which ended with his death was very remarkable. He suffered fully four months from dysentery. I frequently visited him and prayed with him. Whatever conversation he began, it was something connected with him and his Saviour. A great part of his life he had been often visited with days of affliction, so that he was well taught in the stern school of adversity. He uttered no words of murmuring, and would always

praise the name of his God, who gave him strength to bear the trial. His words were full of comfort. He would say that he was ready to depart and be with Christ, and not unfrequently requested us to pray that he might be taken without any long delay to God's presence. When the hour of his death came, he called his wife and children to him, and having spoken to them about his confidence and courage to meet death, earnestly entreated them to have faith in his God as their God, in his Saviour as their Saviour, and to live as he had lived, putting their trust in Jesus in days of trial and want. He ended with a short prayer that they might be kept steadfast in Him to the end, and that none of his family might be lost. Then, in silent prayer and with great calmness, he breathed his last. All who witnessed his death said, "This is the end of a true Christian."

Nor are the Christian women of India behind in courage and hope, and joy, in the prospect of eternal bliss.

Paripooranam sustained a great loss in the death of her only child, Dorcal, who left a little son a few months old. Dorcal for a short time taught the lower classes in one of the mission schools. Her greatest pleasure was to speak of Jesus to others, and her mother said that she never missed an opportunity for doing so. She was attacked with inflammation of the lungs; and, though all was done for her that could be thought of, she sank

rapidly under it. At one period of the illness she was in great darkness, and said, 'I try to find out my Jesus; I think He hides Himself.' The whole of next day she was repeating Scripture texts and singing hymns. That same night she was wearied and slept soundly. Suddenly she, with great joy, said, 'Mother, I have seen my Saviour. He calls me home. The door is wide open. I need not care for anything now.' Later on she could not speak clearly, but was trying to repeat some hymns. She had a good voice, and could sing well. In the night she heard sweet heavenly music, and said, 'Children are playing on the harp, and they sing, "When He cometh." How sweet it is! Do you hear it, do you hear it?' Two days after, feeling better, she had more desire to live. She told her father to take her husband regularly to chapel, and to give the little money she had been collecting to the church. It amounted to two shillings. At three o'clock, she calmly slept in her Saviour's arms.

The catechist of Arambuli writes:—

'I had the privilege of attending the sick-bed of our old friend, Sarah, who died lately of cholera. Her faith was firmly fixed on her Redeemer. It was she who, once being asked whether she was not afraid of the demons, replied, "Can an iron post, sir, be eaten up by white ants? I am a child of the Almighty Jesus. What can devils do to me?"

‘ Her aged husband, perceiving her end to be near, asked whether she was prepared to go to the Saviour. She answered, “ Yes,” and summoning her strength to raise her hands up prayed, “ Lord Jesus, take me by the way that leads to Thy dwelling-place!” and gave up her spirit in peace. Her face appeared as if lit up by the gracious presence of the Good Shepherd condescending to comfort her in the valley of the shadow of death.

‘ “ *They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, when I make up My jewels.*” ’

Another writes:—‘ I have to communicate to you the sad news of the death by cholera of our beloved Maria, who was a precious pearl of this congregation. But, in the midst of our grief and sorrow, we have cause to rejoice and be thankful. Maria suffered sorely for a whole week, but sought consolation in the Word of God and in prayer. When the pangs of death, accompanied with unquenchable thirst and severe convulsions, came on, she looked upwards and said, “ O merciful Jesus, I perceive that Thy time has come to call me up to drink the sweet waters of life and thirst no more.” In a few moments she was gone to Him who was the supreme object of her life and hope.’

‘ Cases have occurred in which those who have been *afraid to confess their faith* in life have found courage to do so on the bed of death, and have passed away rejoicing in Christ. Of such a case the late Dr. Thomson in his last report wrote:—

‘A much-esteemed Sudra friend died lately. Having found peace in Jesus, he could say, “*I have put my trust in Jesus Christ, and I am glad of it.*” He told those around his bed that “believing on Jesus as our Saviour is urgently required. I am a sinner, but I depend upon the merits of Jesus Christ. Don’t cry, I’ve been with you for the last sixty years; will that not do? I am going to be with my old friends Dr. Leitch and Mr. Baylis.” His last words, the name of Jesus—“*Jesu! Jesu!*” made a deep impression on those around. At the funeral time, as well as during the short illness, the solemn opportunity was taken to tell the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to large crowds gathered together from many places around. He was the chief Sudra of his place, a Thambi, or king’s son, and well known in the country.

“Prayer is better than medicine,” he once said to the dresser. Before taking the physic from his hands, he asked him to pray. He also said, “I remember the words I learned when I was a boy at Neyoor School: Death is certain; time is uncertain.”’



A VILLAGE SURROUNDED BY RICE FIELDS.

CHAPTER X.

THE LIBERALITY OF THE NATIVE CHRISTIANS IN SUPPORTING GOD'S CAUSE.

We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be,
For all we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.
And we believe Thy word,
Though dim our faith may be ;
What'er for Thine we do, O Lord,
We do it unto Thee.

IN India, if Christianity is to be established on a permanent and self-supporting basis, and to become really indigenious, the converts must be

taught to aid in support of the work unitedly and according to their ability. In various forms this aid is rendered: assisting with money or labour in the building, thatching, and repair of chapels, providing for them seats, lamps, and other furniture; contributing in money or kind towards the support of the native ministry, the Bible and tract societies, the hospitals, and the poor, and other religious and benevolent objects in due proportions. Every year the Christians of our mission contribute a total of about thirteen thousand rupees for such purposes.

In the erection of new chapels they bestow much free labour, or if too poor to work a day without wages, they are content with the plainest refreshment provided for the day. In one congregation an elder annually gives a feast to all who come to thatch the chapel and the catechist's house. When the work is finished, and the place cleaned up, they enter the house of God, and offer prayer and sing praises for the privilege of working for Him. Then the food is distributed and eaten with gladness of heart. For church building some give trees from their gardens for the woodwork, or cut and carry timber from the jungles. In the erection of several chapels in Trevandrum district some years ago, in which we were largely aided by special contributions from kind friends in Bristol, delightful and encouraging evidences were afforded of the interest of the native Christians in the work. In almost every instance, only the

skeleton of the building was at first provided for the people, and they were left to plaster and finish it in the course of the next few years.

The need was great. Convenient accommodation for public worship was at that time decidedly the most urgent want of this district. Some of the buildings were utterly insufficient in size, others were going to ruin almost beyond the possibility of repair, while the people were hard pressed for the support of their native teachers. The congregations continued (as they still do) to increase both in number and size, while the accommodation remained almost stationary, or was increased simply by the addition of open sheds erected by the new adherents.

The new chapel at Neyattankara was opened and publicly dedicated to the worship of Almighty God in October, 1876. It is a nice brick building, measuring sixty by thirty feet inside, and furnishing accommodation for fully five hundred persons seated, as usual in our country congregations, on the floor. The plastering and other finishing touches have since been completed, and the pastor and people take delight in keeping the place in beautiful order and cleanliness. Of the help given by the people, the pastor wrote:—

‘The congregation continually increasing, we were much straitened for room. Some materials were collected years ago, but we saw no way to erect a good chapel. The Lord raised up for us

kind friends in England, and the foundation was laid on 27th October, 1873. The poor Christians here have undertaken much labour to assist in the erection, amounting in value to 840 fanams (about £12). They carried the heavy beams and pillars on their shoulders, and worked at the roof, standing on high scaffoldings. Not only men but women, and those the most respectable in the congregation, worked, preparing mortar, carrying stones and gathering sand. About a week before the dedication, a number of women assembled and offered prayer in the old chapel, and then swept and smoothed the floor of the new chapel with great joy. Children also have done what they could. People came from the neighbouring congregations to carry the granite stones for the base of the pillars, and especially to help in putting up the roof.

‘By the mercy of our God, this fine chapel was opened on 11th October, 1874. I cannot describe the joy we realised on that day and the following, when a great missionary meeting was held. On that day eighteen persons were baptized.

‘While the work was going on, the Government officials now and then came to see and admire it, and heard much of the Christian religion, but not openly. They acknowledged that this alone teaches the way of salvation.

‘A woman of this congregation has given 100 fanams to provide two good globe lamps: and another woman promises to pay for another lamp,

and the people for the fourth. There is still some work to do, which the people will accomplish as they are able.'

The chapel at Paruttipalli was opened on 10th October, 1875. There is a good congregation of poor people there, and we have a dozen congregations besides in that quarter. The site is central for united meetings, so the building is seventy-five by thirty-two feet inside, the largest in our mission, I think, except three or four. The people worked diligently at this also, and on the opening day no less than thirteen hundred (young and old) were present, nearly a thousand of them being packed inside the chapel. One or two European friends also kindly came from Trevandrum to this special service.

On 29th April, 1877, another good-sized chapel was opened and dedicated to God at Nellikakuri. While the building was in progress, the catechist wrote as follows:—

'Besides the usual work of teaching and preaching, collections are diligently made for godly purposes. Some of the people of this congregation are descendants of the early converts, who were devoted and faithful, and have entered into the kingdom of eternal rest. Several agents employed by the mission have sprung from this place. The people are not rich—mostly labourers, and unable to give much; but they do their best. Three of them are elders, and one is a village preacher.

These render valuable aid in all church business and in preaching to the heathen. Some pious women also help much by conducting prayer-meetings amongst the females.

‘In the old place of worship there is not room for all the attendants, and some are obliged to stand outside. But now, through the generosity of Mrs. Sergeant, a new chapel is being built, for which the congregation are raising 300 Rs. as their contribution. They are doing even beyond their power for this great object. Some that had not money are doing work gratis at the building, some gave trees, some carried the timber, bricks, and sand for mortar. Some have even borrowed money by mortgages on their lands and valuable trees, and paid their donations. We rejoice much at their willingness and zeal for the glory of God and the good of their posterity.

‘For a pulpit and table, three of our friends gave thirty-five rupees. These have been finished. A catechist’s house also, close by the chapel, has been built, in which I now live, with my family.’

Thus five or six new chapels were built in localities where they would be most useful, and in such a way as to draw forth self-help and increased activity on the part of our people. Every care was exercised to avoid pauperising them by free-and-easy expenditure of foreign funds; on the contrary, the people worked hard, and gave in addition contributions of money as they could afford.

So it is in other mission districts. Mr. Lee writes:—

‘ A case of liberality worthy of mention is that of Mr. P. Paul, deacon of Mayilady. During this year a long-cherished intention of covering the roof of the chapel with iron sheeting has been carried into effect. What makes the case the more remarkable is the fact that it was executed by his express request after his death. He had been preparing to do the work for some years, and had purchased the necessary iron just as he was taken ill; but his illness and death were not made an excuse for not finishing the work. He was very liberal in the congregation, and kind to the poor, and will be much missed. These are services rendered which we are able to estimate; but, even as in England, there are gifts, the result of self-denial and self-sacrifice for Christ’s sake, that though small in amount are yet of infinite value to Him to whom they are offered.

‘ P. Paul was born a Christian, as his parents received Christianity some time before his birth, and he received a good education in the Nagercoil Seminary. On leaving the seminary, he went to Ceylon, and was employed for several years as a conductor in the coffee estates, and returned to his native place with a heathen wife, who, though she professed to be a Christian, was a great trial throughout his life. After his return from Ceylon, he became a true Christian, and was admitted to

church fellowship, and led a consistent life. While he was in the hills he regularly conducted Sunday services in his house with Christian coolies and friends. Through his influence and instrumentality some of his heathen relatives were converted to Christianity. While he was in the congregation, he was a great help to the pastor and to the catechist by deciding cases and exciting the people to keep up regular attendance on Divine worship and pay attention to Christian literature. He was accustomed to give an annual feast to the poor, and provided clothes to all the poor widows in the congregations, and contributed thirty rupees to our sangams. He was very sorry at his wife's impious conduct, and once destroyed her two idols, and burned down the temple she built for Isakee at the cost of fifty rupees. Towards the erection of the school-room at Mayilady he was glad to pay half of the expense. One-tenth of his income was devoted to the mission, and from that he determined to roof the chapel with iron, and began the work, which was finished after his death, at a cost of six hundred rupees.'

In Pareychaley, the people make great efforts to erect chapels for themselves.

'The people at Vendoku manifested great earnestness in this work. At Otteicherimangalam they gathered wood and made preparations for the work.

'At Venkodu, a meeting was held in October, and it was then manifest that the roof of the old building

was so weak that it could not be re-thatched, and might fall at any time. A beginning was made by the collection on that day being devoted to the erection of the new place of worship. After the sangam was over, many of the people went to their houses and brought brass vessels, lamps, fowls, goats, a cow, cases of writing materials, in fact, such things as they possessed, as contributions towards the object.

‘At Kunnattoor the people themselves erected a small, neat and strong chapel at a cost of about two hundred rupees. The congregation is small, but the Christians there were in earnest in their efforts, and succeeded in accomplishing their purpose.’

Sometimes odd scenes take place, and ingenious devices are resorted to, in order to excite one another to liberality, or to procure funds for necessary work.

‘John, deacon of Tittuvilei, though blind, is a great help to us in the work of the mission. We often see him in one congregation or another sitting by the side of the catechist with a staff in the hands of his little boy, whom he employs as his guide. Waiting for permission to speak a word or two, he earnestly presses upon the people the necessity of raising contributions for the work of the new chapel at Tittuvilei. He is not only a speaker, but a very earnest worker himself. He carried stones on his head for the foundation. He collected some ten cottahs of paddy, worth about thirty-five rupees, in aid of the work.’

In the progress of the work of Tittuvilei chapel this good man rendered valuable aid, drilling the labourers, stirring up the overseers, and holding meetings for special prayer. Whenever he found the people dull and tired, he would stimulate them by asking his little boy to lead him to the work, and carrying on his head a load of fuel, or dragging, with others, a log of wood for burning in the kiln, cheering them on all the while with the workman's song.

Pakkiam, a devoted servant of God, white-washed the chapel at Arasankuli inside and outside with her own hands, except a foot and a half all round within the top. When I asked the people what they meant by the black line left, they appeared as if quite ashamed; but Pakkiam cheerfully answered, '*Sir, my hands could reach only so far.*' The whole congregation promised to whiten what remained before Sunday next. But they failed; and Pakkiam, who had waited the whole week, to see whether her friends would make good their word, resolved at any cost to finish the task. She brought in her rice-mortar, and using it for a scaffold, completed the work in which her heaven-born heart deeply delighted.

Even children may take an interest and effectually aid in this good work. Here is an instance in the report of the catechist of Puliadi.

'My heart had to suffer much regret and anxiety for my people in the Puliadi congregation during

the first part of the year, owing to deaths and back-slidings occasioned by the cruel malaria. Sabbath attendance was irregular, and the prayer-house became leaky, as sufficient hands were not found to help in thatching the roof. My soul was sorely sickened in consequence of such a painful disaster. I knew nothing else to do, but taking my case to the throne of grace for mercy and help at this time of need. I prayed with my people, and for them, and comforted them in the name of the Saviour. This I did for many days and weeks, visiting every hamlet in the village as frequently as time permitted. The God of mercy heard our prayers, which we humbly offered to Him in the name of His beloved Son.

He touched the hearts of several of the people, and they were comforted by the Holy Spirit. Two young men, who displayed remarkable interest in God's cause, roused the people to come forward to thatch the house of Divine worship. Immediately a meeting was held and the object was set before

the people. When some hesitated, *a lad rose up in great earnest to say that he would at once lay out before them his two chuckrams (=2d. nearly) towards the expense of the thatching, if they would imitate his example. Strongly aroused by this juvenile proposal, an elderly man seconded him, saying, "Two chuckrams per head cannot make up*



SOUTH INDIAN
COINS.

the sum required. Let us all give ten chuckrams each." This suggestion was unanimously carried. The collection was made, and preparations were attended to without further delay, and the thatching was at once accomplished, and we offered thanks to Him that blessed our humble efforts.'

We urge the people to give something every Lord's day at Divine service, even if it be but a copper *cash* (quarter of a farthing) each; something monthly, at least a silver chuckram (a penny); and pasteboard collecting boxes are placed in each family, and opened thrice in the year for the church building, the Tract and Book, and the Auxiliary Missionary Societies. The Sunday collections are mostly given by the women out of their small change in hand, the monthly collections by heads of families. The united anniversary meetings are called sangams; and to these pleasant gatherings the people assemble, with their families and friends, from all the surrounding congregations. Addresses are delivered upon topics bearing upon the object of the meeting and the prosperity of the work of God, and interesting information is communicated in reference to the progress of the Gospel in India and other lands. These meetings in January, May, and September are of the highest interest, enabling me to meet the congregations and to examine the school children unitedly, as well as in their several localities, quickening the people to Christian duty, the education of their

children, and efforts for the spread of the Gospel by warm addresses; and powerfully cultivating general good feeling and sociality amongst Christians of different castes.

By these means many are trained to form a conscientious habit of giving.

A Christian at Kakaravillay died of cholera. He was a good man, and was accustomed to contribute four and a half fanams at each of the sangams. After his death the catechist of the place asked his wife for her sangam money, expecting that the subscription would be much reduced, as she has no one to look after her affairs. He asked her to give what she could, telling her that she need not be grieved because she was unable to pay the usual amount. She answered with a smile, 'The death of my husband has indeed proved a great loss to me as well as to the congregation; but though he has departed from us, he has not taken with him the little property he had procured; that is in its place, and I will try to continue giving the same amount as long as I live.' This woman is not able to read, neither has she much Biblical knowledge; her desire, therefore, to keep up the subscription is the more striking.

A catechist reports:—

'The female members of the congregation have fixed upon Friday for their prayer-meeting. On the first day of their gathering, one of them proposed the desirability of requesting the mistress

of the house to put, in her turn, one chuckram into the missionary box. In emulation of which, another said, "Not only the owner of the house, but let each one of us bring a chuckram for the purpose." And while a third observed, "That will be rather too much for our ability," she was answered by a fourth thus: "I can suggest to you a plan to render the matter easy and less burdensome. Let us save a chuckram one day per week by seasoning our supper with a *thuvayal* (composed of tamarind, salt and chillies) instead of fish curry." Meanwhile one ran home to bring a collecting box, which immediately had four chuckrams put in. This inspired another sister with a desire to keep the suggestion by laying by a small quantity of rice from what is allotted to her as her daily supply, which she brings in every Saturday evening, when she gets down from the hill where she works as a coolie in a coffee estate.'

'One day I asked a new convert the following question: "What do you think of the Christians of this place, comparing them with the heathen?" He replied, "I have never seen such kind people, who help their neighbours and the poor, and I believe this to be a good religion." Again I asked, "How do you know?" He answered, "When Joseph had gone to the hills there was nothing in his house for their livelihood, and his wife Mary was ill. Until her death, her husband Joseph did not

return. Still the Christians themselves helped her by providing food and medicine. Also they spent for burying her. Not only that, until Joseph's arrival they looked after his two children, and they did not ask him to repay their expenditure for his wife and the two children; and from this I know that nobody but Christians would do such generous and kind deeds."

Although these poor Christians, many of whom earn but at the rate of a few pence a day by the sweat of their brow, are thus trained and encouraged to contribute, as is due, for the spiritual instruction and intellectual improvement of themselves and their children, yet they are nothing the worse for all their givings, even in a temporal point of view, but are steadily rising and advancing in social circumstances and consideration. 'There is that *scattereth, and yet increaseth*; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty' (Prov. xi. 24). The same principles of self-help and godliness that induce them, and habits of thrift that enable them, to support Christian institutions, lead them also to diligence and virtue, temperance, honesty, and intelligent effort to improve their circumstances. 'Godliness is profitable unto all things.' 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich.' 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.'

CHAPTER XI.

EFFORTS FOR THE SALVATION OF OTHERS.

Never was the world more needy,
Human hearts more sad and poor
Crying blindly for a healer,
Seeking not the heavenly cure.

Never did the great ensnarer
Spread his spells with wiser skill,
Turning light to darkness, mingling
Sweet and bitter, good and ill.

Never was the harvest greater;
Yet the reapers, where are they?
Far and few, where most are needed,
Fainting in the heat of day.

IN the Travancore Mission, voluntary effort to spread the Gospel amongst their neighbours and friends has always been expected of the converts and encouraged, and has been a considerable factor in the success achieved. Every one that heareth the Gospel should say to others, according to his abilities and opportunities, Come to the Saviour. God requires of all believers to cultivate 'the mind that was in Christ,' who wept with Divine compassion over perishing sinners; to follow their Lord's example in doing good to all; and to live to

Him who died for them and rose again. Like the apostles, every Christian should, 'knowing the terror of the Lord,' realise the tremendous danger of sinners, and their need of a Saviour, and should, at the same time, be 'constrained by the love of Christ,' and sympathy with the blessed Redeemer in His great purposes of salvation for mankind. All should be as missionaries. The whole Church should be a working and witnessing Church.

This, in fact, is the only way in which Christianity can possibly spread over the whole of the vast empire of India. While European Christians begin and lead in the work, organise missions with systematic institutions and agencies supported, for the time, by foreign aid, native Christians must also in large numbers give their voluntary labours, their united contributions and prayers, preach and exhort and conduct meetings, distribute tracts and Scriptures, and withal must 'adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.' In course of time the older and more established native churches in India will themselves send forth missions to unevangelised provinces and districts. For this we need a thousandfold more zeal and aggressive action than at present exists in our Indian churches. Many are indifferent and lukewarm. But we have always had some amount of voluntary effort to spread the Gospel put forth by native Christians; and sometimes instances of singular zeal and devotedness, such as ought to appear in a people saved from sin

and hell, from devil-worship and idolatry, for the enjoyment of the love of God and the light and blessedness of the Gospel.

In some mission districts, select church members have been appointed as village or local preachers to conduct Divine service in outlying places not sufficiently reached by the mission catechists. These men are of various castes and grades of education, but are diligent and useful. They, and the elders and deacons and unofficial church members of the congregations also, visit the sick and lead prayer-meetings. Some visit the houses of heathens, and invite them to attend the worship of God. The women's prayer-meeting is conducted weekly by pious and educated females. Several are accustomed to call a few children, give them food, and teach them to read.

We have one case of a Christian man of property, who labours regularly in a Christian congregation, in all respects as a catechist would do, without receiving any salary. This is not merely an impulsive act, but a service which has been rendered for some years. A new house of prayer has been finished for his congregation through his efforts.

'I am pleased to find,' writes a native pastor, 'that six persons of this congregation help me much in my work. They teach the lower classes after the morning service, and conduct Sunday services occasionally. Though these men have not

received a high education, they can preach out of a full heart the blessings of salvation.'

There was a native doctor, named Joseph, in the Vakkam congregation, whose character and conduct I often viewed with admiration. Though many years a Christian, his wife still remained in heathenism. No day passed in which he was not engaged in speaking about Christ to several families. He prayed thrice a day, and was noted for all kinds of good actions. By becoming a Christian, he lost his property and position, and was in very poor circumstances, yet never repined. 'If I desire riches,' he would say, 'sin might destroy me. But if for Christ one must leave house, and land, and friends, eternal glory will be his position.' Thus he spent his life for God's glory and the good of souls; and to him a sudden death was sudden glory.

It is loving, earnest effort that moves the hearts of men everywhere. 'There must be something wonderful,' said a Hindu lately, 'in the Christian religion. Christians build schools, pay teachers, publish books, and take great pains in spreading the Gospel. *They would not spend their money for nothing.*'

In one of our congregations in Trevandrum district, a very poor Christian widow, with her only son, live in a miserable hut. The boy learnt to read in the mission school, and taught his mother the lessons of Scripture, the hymns, and prayers he learnt, so that she became a member of the church.

They are poor working people, possessing nothing in this world, but happy in knowing that Jesus Christ is their help.

The first-class scholars are in the habit of reading to their unlettered heathen parents the magazines and other tracts they get from us. This seems to work well. A few have been thus led to a better understanding of the nature of Christianity.

One night, as a boy was singing in his house a poem on the sufferings of Christ, his father, being greatly affected by it, asked: 'Who is this good Man, my son, that has suffered so much? His sufferings appear greater than those endured even by our celebrated King Arichandra.' His son replied, 'This Person is not a mere man. He is God-man.' 'Is it possible, then, for any one,' observed the father, 'to ill-treat Him in this manner?' 'True,' answered the son, 'but He voluntarily submitted Himself to all these in order to save us from sin.' 'What!' said the father, 'you speak of sin and saving. I do not understand what you say; can you explain it?' 'Father, you may recollect that our Nádán's stray bull fell into that yonder well, where two cobras were found on its back, and Nádán, who heard about it, ran in great haste and cleverly removed the serpents and saved the bull. Like that bull, we, going astray from our Maker and His way, have fallen into a most dangerous pit, and our sins, like the cobras, are about to destroy us, and Jesus is come to destroy sin and to save

us from ruin. If you think of this illustration, father, you may perhaps understand the meaning of *sin* and *salvation*.' 'Now, my son, I think I understand it from your explanation. The more a person hears the Christian Vedam, the better he may see its excellence. The quality of fine gold becomes known only from rubbing it on the touchstone. Had it not been for your explanation, I should not have understood what is meant by *sin* and *salvation*.'

The schools are a great blessing, notwithstanding all their defects. On the Sabbath they are all turned into Sunday-schools; many children learn 'the old, old story,' which is ever fresh and new, and we have many encouraging proofs that this work is not in vain; for example:

As Andrew came and stirred up Peter his brother to go to Jesus, so one of our Christians has been all his life doing the same. His parents and all his family were heathen, and belonged to a family of dancers. He learnt to read in one of our mission schools, and the Christian truths then taught him made a deep impression upon his heart and brought him to Jesus. He then made friends with the Christians, and as a boy he began to attend our services. When there were demon ceremonies in his house, for days together he would not go near his home. His parents persecuted him, destroyed his Christian books, and threatened to cut him off from the family. Finding they could not drive

him, they became silent. Then his influence began to tell. He began to teach his parents and his brothers about the love of Jesus. God has blessed his life-work. The previous year his parents and one of his brothers came to the church, and this year his other three brothers, with their wives and children. The young man said to the catechist one day, 'The Lord has heard my prayers on behalf of my relatives, and I thank Him that we have a peaceful life at home.'

The poor also seek to save their superiors in wealth and rank.

'One day,' writes a native missionary, 'when I was travelling towards the east, I saw a high-caste man, nicely dressed, and a poor man, shabbily dressed, walking and conversing together. On coming near, I discovered that the great man was a Vellalah, and the other Caleb, a convert from the Pulayars, one of the lowest castes in the country. Caleb was, with great courage and zeal, speaking about the resurrection of the dead and the judgment day, and showing how that Jesus Christ shall judge all the nations of the world. The Vellalah was walking quite close by the Christian. Nor could either be ignorant of his companion's caste, for Caleb can only pronounce like other Pulayars, so that his speech would easily be recognised. Some years ago Caleb dared not have walked on the road with other people. Now, while on his way to his daily work, by which he

would only earn two or three chuckrams a day, he was become the friendly instructor of this great man.'

In recent mission reports, one feature has been specially noticeable—the efforts of godly women labouring in the Gospel.

At Sotthavilei, the womens' prayer-meetings on week-days are conducted by three voluntary female workers. One of them is Paranchothi. She was not taught to read in her youth, but recently she has learnt to read. She cannot yet read fluently, but every Tuesday she goes about with the Bible in her hands, calls the women from house to house to meet for prayers, and conducts the prayer-meetings. She has much work to do, but she never absents herself from these meetings. We may notice her reading the Psalms while she cooks and does other work. She puts money into the collecting box by the profit of her own work. She is called by the people an assistant catechist. Another woman, named Natchathirum, has much household work to do and her children to attend to, but she conducts these meetings very diligently, and often visits sick people. She is accustomed to read the Scriptures to the sick, and thereby give comfort to the afflicted.

'No part of the voluntary work,' writes Mr. Hacker, 'is more interesting than that done by women amongst women. Many who were educated in the boarding-school are a great help to the churches

of which they are members. Most of the women of the country are deplorably ignorant. The custom and religion of the country are against the education of women. One of the most popular of the Tamil proverbs is, "Ignorance is woman's greatest ornament." The women themselves do not agree to this, and I am glad to see that some of the enlightened men are become awake to the importance of their women getting knowledge. Some of our Christian women are therefore welcome in many houses as readers, and every Sunday some go forth, two by two, carrying the message of life.'

The following instances may illustrate the influence the women are exerting among their own less favoured sisters. The Rev. S. Zechariah says:—

'Some of the members of this congregation have rendered valuable help in preaching the Gospel to the heathen. A few of the women especially, who belong to the Bible-class, have formed themselves into two classes for the purpose of going to read the Gospel on Sunday afternoons. One set come to the Bible-class one Sunday, while the other set are among the people. The next Sunday the other set attend the class, while the others go out. They visit chiefly the women around us, and declare the Word of God to them. They are received kindly wherever they go.'

The Rev. P. Yacob says: 'There are some men and women in my congregations who spend the evenings on Sundays and other times in making known the

Gospel. Yesudial is very poor, but she works with a very good spirit for her Saviour. She is engaged with others in making rope from cocoanut fibre, and as she sits at work with her fellow-women and children, she teaches them the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and other truths of the Gospel. On her way to the church on Sundays she never misses calling at some house to ask the women to come with her to the church. Happy indeed would our Church be if all its members were in this way striving to do something for Jesus.'

Vethakan, catechist of Kodyoor, says: 'During the year, a woman, named Snakapoo, has been the means of bringing two others to the church, who were her heathen relatives. She used to talk to them at all times about the love of Jesus, and tried to show them that good would come to them if they trusted Him. I spoke to this woman one day, and asked her about the motives which led her to bring these women, and she said she felt it her duty to say to her relatives what Moses said to his relative, "We are journeying to a place of which the Lord has said, I will give it to you; come with us and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."''

I believe in this work thoroughly. If women are not reached by women with the Gospel message, they will not be touched at all.

CHAPTER XII.

HINDU CHRISTIAN WOMEN.

THE devotion and tenderness of godly women have often, and in varied ways, been used in the Divine service, as is evident from the records of the Old and New Testaments, and from the history of the Christian Church. So it is and shall hereafter be in India. The number of educated and pious women in the native church in Travancore is steadily increasing and producing a conspicuous increase of voluntary effort and holy influence. In no class in the country is there so large a proportion of educated females as amongst the Protestant Christians. Besides the Bible-women and zenana workers, who devote their whole time to this work, and are specially supported in it, there are voluntary workers in many of the congregations; and as the pupils now under instruction in our village schools grow up and enter upon the duties of life, we may fairly expect still more marked results. 'When the women are willing,' said a Hindu, 'the whole country will become Christian.'

Intelligent and pious women help in the congregations by conducting, under the direction

of the pastor or catechist, social meetings of the Christian women for prayer. These generally assemble once, or even twice, a week, in three or four houses in rotation, conveniently situated for meeting in. At the same time, the appointed



A BIBLE-WOMAN.

Scripture lessons are sometimes taught, and the contributions towards the support of the means of grace collected. In Neyattankara, the attendance at these meetings is usually from thirty-five to forty; the labours of these good women are highly

prized; much good is done, and some heathen women have been baptized through their efforts. One especially labours very hard for the good of the females, both Christian and heathen. She reads the Scriptures with them, teaches the catechism and prays. She helps to collect the monthly subscriptions from them. Another woman, who resides in the midst of a heathen neighbourhood, is a spiritual light. Though she cannot read, she knows the Bible well, and gets her little son to read to them. Some Sudra women invite her to their houses to pray with them, and these have relinquished the offerings to devils and send alms to our chapel. These Christian women thus 'labour with us in the Gospel,' and such voluntary labours are even more valuable, in some respects, than those of our paid agents, and should therefore be greatly encouraged.

Efforts are also made to reach the surrounding heathen, by going out, chiefly on Sunday afternoons, to read the Scriptures to them, sing hymns, and engage in conversation with them on religious topics. The Sudra caste chiefly is in this way reached, but some Christian women of humble birth are listened to kindly even by Brahman females. These heathen women of good caste have hitherto been, through their prejudices and seclusion, to a great extent inaccessible, and have not heard the name of Jesus Christ; or if that name reaches them, they hear it with horror and

dread of the white people and their strange customs and religion.

In one congregation, these Christian volunteers after the morning service go to the house of one of their number to partake of some light refreshment,



A SUDRA LADY.

and offer prayer for the Divine blessing on their plans, then go out to read and sing to the heathen. The kindness and ardour of such in Tittuvilei greatly interested the high-caste women, and led some to express their surprise and admiration in such terms as these: 'What can have led these

women to come out to preach to us? Have they not housework as well as we? How is it their husbands have permitted them to go out? One of them is the mother of a very young child. How intense is the desire of the Christians to propagate their religion! They speak to us words of wisdom, while we know only how to cook and to eat. These are but women like ourselves—how pleasant is their reading and singing! But our eyes do not see what is written in books. Our gods are blind, and so are we. We had better begin at once to learn to read.’

In Kadamaleikunun congregation, several women were engaged in this work amongst the heathen throughout the past year. ‘They were very diligent in going together on Sunday afternoons to heathen villages near, to speak about Christ, especially to women. They always begin the work by seeking the Divine blessing, and then go forth. Many heathen women who never heard of Christ were thus made to know the way of salvation. The Christian women, though they are met with reproaches and opposition in some cases, are not ashamed of Christ, but cheerfully and hopefully continue their efforts. On one occasion, when visiting the house of a rich man, the people were astonished to find them coming there, and their surprise was greater when they heard them tell the story of Christ. The women received them kindly, and listened to them attentively. But are there converts to Christianity by the labours of

these women? I can gladly answer, "Yes." Four women during the year have left heathenism and attend regularly at the chapel. One of these new converts is so earnest that she now accompanies the Christian women to induce others to become Christians. May God encourage them in this glorious work, and bless them in their labours!'

In Attur, also, 'some people have become disciples of Christ through an elderly woman in the congregation, named Arulayi. She has been for the last few years a most earnest Christian and a pious mother. On one occasion two of her neighbours were ill, and Arulayi and her children, in keeping with the duties of a Christian to his neighbour enjoined by the Bible, visited them very often, and, along with temporal aid, instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel. She brought them to the hospital at Attur. She visited them daily, though her house was more than a mile from the dispensary. We co-operated with her, and the Lord heard our prayers, relieved their bodily affliction, and gave them a knowledge of Himself. They have now joined our ranks, leaving their heathenism and its evils.'

Christian women also visit the sick and heathen women in travail, to whom their benevolent services are often most helpful. Were it for nothing else than calming the distressed household, and inducing them to cease from their foolish and disturbing

demon-worship, and to call upon the Almighty for aid, the influence of such visits is highly beneficial. At one place, for example, a Chetty woman appeared to be in a hopeless condition, and her friends had tried every means which they thought likely to propitiate the evil spirits which are supposed specially to afflict persons under such circumstances. Two of her Christian neighbours went to the house, and having calmed and quieted the family, prayed earnestly to God for the safe delivery of the poor woman. The heathen woman also knelt in prayer with them, and soon a gracious answer was accorded.

The Bible-women are mostly trained at the mission hospital for a month in each year in nursing and midwifery, and some useful knowledge of these subjects is possessed by various intelligent females throughout the congregations. By this means essential aid is rendered in times of need or of despair, kindness is shown and gratitude evinced, and a hearing is secured for the saving truths of the Gospel.

Imagine what must be the influence gained by a sensible, believing, prayerful Christian woman entering upon such a scene of terror and superstition as was witnessed by one of the Bible-women. She says :—

‘I visited a woman in labour at the request of her father, a respectable man in the service of the Government. Entering the courtyard, I found a

crowd of people there, many of them relatives of the patient, crying aloud and groaning; in the midst were two devil-dancers wildly leaping and pretending to reveal the mind of the demons who were supposed to afflict the woman. One of them shouted, "The reason of this long suffering is that you neglected to fulfil your vows to the spirits." The mother and uncle then arose at once, and said, with awe, "We have erred, and will pay the fine; what is next to be done?" Again jumping and grimacing terribly, the dancer replied, "If the life of the infant is to be saved, you must provide a sheep, twelve fanams in money, a silk cloth, and three measures of rice." They agreed to give all these. The other dancer now took his turn. Rising up from his seat, he leaped about the courtyard, beat on his breast, groaned and shouted, and at last fell down and vomited blood. Again he arose and danced, and two of the women present, excited by the scene, also began to jump and cry. The oracle then said: "The cause of this sad delay is, that when this woman's sister was in similar circumstances, you made a vow which you failed to fulfil, and consequently she died. This is a similar case." The relatives asked him, "Whose spirit are you?" "I am your deceased uncle," was the answer. "You enjoy my property, and forget me. The deceased woman also is with me. We have taken great care of you hitherto, but you have forgotten us." The priest then ate some ashes

from the fire. They offered him a fowl, which he refused to receive, and continued his dancing.

‘Then the unfortunate woman, who should have been surrounded with affectionate care and quiet, became so excited that she also began to move about, and some other women also, and a great cry of distress broke out. The devil-priest was again asked what was to be done. “Build a domestic altar,” said he, “for demon-worship. We are to be honoured; vows should be carefully observed.” So saying, he took the fowl which had been presented, twisted its head off, and drank the blood, then fell down insensible.

‘Having witnessed all these follies, I began to offer my advice. “Demons cannot help in sickness, but all things are possible to God. Trust, therefore, in Him alone.” Going to the patient, I spoke some encouraging and soothing words to her, and pacified the women crying around. The patient lay in a very small, unventilated room, almost filled up with various property. This I had removed, for the admission of fresh air; and while I was advising the poor young woman, she embraced me, and cried, “Oh, save me now!” I said, “Pray to God to save you; life is not in the power of men.” She answered, “If I must die, remain you with me, and I am satisfied;” and she wept bitterly. She was but eighteen years of age; this was her first confinement, and she had been suffering greatly for

four days. Instead of using any suitable medical means, they had resorted only to magical rites and incantations. I put a stop to these, used the applications and medicines in which I had been instructed, and read and explained the third chapter of the Gospel by John, while my husband also read to the people outside. The patient said: "It is a great comfort to me that this good woman is here; the demons are not troubling me now." I taught her a short prayer, "O Lord Jesus, save me!" which she often repeated. By Divine mercy she was safely delivered in the evening, and said: "Had you not come here, I should have been killed by these people. This is the providence of God." Both mother and child are well, and from that time receive me gladly and gratefully when I go to read the Gospel to them.'

Many are surprised at the intelligence, activity, and kindness of the Bible-women. 'These are good words,' said a Brahman woman; 'will you give me the book? My son can then read it to me, and I will learn the words and repeat them to you when you come next time. The lower caste people, who are taught by English ladies, know many things, and have come out already as teachers. This is a great reproach to us Brahmans.'

In the family, also, female influence is as powerful for Christ in India as it often is, on the other hand, in favour of superstition and evil

customs. The Gospel spreads from one to another in the household and amongst relatives, as the Samaritans believed on Jesus 'for the saying of the woman.' Sometimes, indeed, opposition has to be long and meekly endured before the unbelieving husband and other friends are converted.

'Marthal has been rebuked by her husband because she saves a little out of her domestic expenses to give to the cause of God. But not only she, there is another woman who thus incurs the displeasure of her husband. Her heart is glowing with love to her Saviour, and on this account she is looked upon with aversion. She is very anxious for the salvation of others, and she is often found visiting the houses of nominal Christians and of heathens, and speaking to them about the love of Christ crucified.'

As the wife is in Holy Scripture exhorted to seek by patience, love, and prayer to save the husband, so godly women in India do. If the right means be used, and in the right spirit, such efforts will often—perhaps it is not too much to say will usually—be successful; a consistent, loving, prayerful wife is almost irresistible. Here is an instance of a good wife reclaiming her husband, who was a drunkard.

The Rev. C. Yesudian writes:—

'An occasional attendant on our ministry was a Sabbath-breaker and drunkard, steeping himself and his poor family deeper and deeper in the

depths of poverty and misery. One Sunday I earnestly preached how God bestows His blessings upon His people that keep the Sabbath holy. The man did not attend service, but had gone to plough. On his return in the afternoon, Pakkiam, his wife, took care to refresh him and to keep him in good humour, and then with earnest tears repeated to him what she could recollect from the sermon she had heard, and entreated him to give up his evil and most dangerous habit. Her kind words, under God's blessing, touched poor Muttu's heart, and he, calling upon God for help, resolved to comply with the earnest request of his good wife. Ever afterwards he was sober, and became a regular attendant upon Divine worship, not only on Sundays, but on other special occasions too. On one pitch dark, rainy night, though the road lay through paddy fields, and a deep watercourse had to be crossed by a narrow piece of timber only, he was seen at the chapel with others. His presence excited the surprise of every one of us, but he relieved us by disclosing to us the secret of the change. God has mercifully wrought on his soul through his good wife. He is now trying to do good to his neighbours by showing them the evil consequence of sinful habits, referring them to his former wretched condition as example.'

He continues to lead a reformed life, and has been baptized.

A cheering instance of the power of the Gospel in enlightening the mind and heart of a young wife who is, indeed, under peculiar difficulties, a light in the dwelling, occurs in one of the congregations in Neyoor district. 'This Christian girl had been educated in a village school, and possessed only very little Bible knowledge. But she made up her deficiency by private reading and meditation. Whilst she was in her father's house, before her marriage, she showed herself a true disciple, and her parents, who are long-standing Christians, encouraged and fostered this spirit. She was connected by marriage with some new adherents, who, I believe, only came to the chapel for the purpose of making this match, and I had much fear and anxiety lest the family should relapse into heathenism again. But, although only eighteen years old, she exerted herself for the good of the whole family; her light shone beautifully in that almost heathen household. Her husband, father-in-law, mother-in-law, and all the house derived instruction from her. She instituted family prayers, herself reading the Bible portion and praying—a thing rarely done in other families by women. She is now twenty-two years old, and for four years she has been a source of light and blessing. Such a case as the above needs but little comment. Here is one of those hidden lives whose power is "not shown by bustle, but by silent deeds."'

There was in the congregation at Mandeikader

pious woman named Poruthiyudial, one of the oldest Christians there, being seventy years of age. She lost her husband many years ago, and was left with six children almost destitute. Notwithstanding her poverty, she resolved to get her children educated. She brought them with her to all the services, and earnestly sought their salvation. Several of them became preachers of the Gospel; then she forgot all her trials and hardships, and would praise God, who had enabled her to provide for her children and train them in good ways. Whenever she had time she would go to the houses of heathen neighbours and talk to them about Christ, and would urge Christian mothers to send their children regularly to school and to the house of God. When her strength decayed so that she could not walk to the chapel, she was very anxious to join in prayer with the Lord's people, and would often invite the catechist to come and read and pray with her. One day she spoke of her expectation of dying soon. 'Are you ready for it?' asked the teacher. She replied, 'Jesus calls me. He has washed away all my sins, therefore I am ready to go to Him. I have no fear of death, and am glad to receive my portion in heaven. My beloved Saviour is on my side, and I glory only in His merits. He is always before my eyes, and I shall live for ever in heaven with my Saviour and all His saints and angels.' In a similar tone she comforted and exhorted her relatives, and died, as she had lived, in peace. May many follow her example!

CHAPTER XIII.

EARLY PIETY.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

How is Christianity affecting the young and rising generation in India, on whom the hopes of the Church and our great Eastern empire so largely depend? What influence are Christian missions exercising on the children of Hindu parents? What training do the children of converts receive, and what is the character of the young people educated in mission schools? These are questions of vast importance, which may be answered from practical experience and authentic incidents.

Along with the children of the Christian converts, large numbers of heathen children are gathered into the mission schools and taught. Of the 11,508 scholars in the London Mission in Travancore, nearly half are the children of heathen parents. In the village schools, useful knowledge is communicated—reading writing, and arithmetic being taught, and, as far as possible, the elements of grammar, geography, and history. Day by day religious instruction is imparted, so that these schools may almost be regarded as Sunday-schools, conducted every day in

the week, and only in the larger congregations held for an hour or two on the Lord's day also, as the schoolmasters are often engaged on that day holding services in the out-stations. In the morning, before secular lessons are begun, the school is opened with singing, reading of the Scriptures, and prayer. Before closing, also, a short prayer is offered, and perhaps some text of Scripture repeated by each child that is able to read. The Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments, Scripture texts and hymns, are committed to memory ; and the catechist or pastor occasionally visits the school to inspect and give special addresses, as well as the missionary in charge, who examines the school, if possible, once a quarter.

It is pleasant to be able to report that the native children in Travancore are remarkable for docility, obedience, and willingness to learn. Fighting amongst themselves, or resistance to superior authority, are almost unknown. In such a country they see with their own eyes that education is associated with and followed by advancement, civilisation, and temporal prosperity ; and doubtless this acts as an additional incentive to diligence. They are as capable, too, of learning as children in any other country—the lower castes as well as the higher. Some persevere in pursuit of education in spite of considerable difficulties, or even opposition. Amongst the lowest castes, want of sufficient food and clothing is sometimes a sore trial. Many children are obliged to work hard morning and

evening to help their parents by gathering firewood, drawing water, beating rice, or helping in other domestic duties: then they come tired and weary to school. When the teacher visits their homes to call them to school, he sometimes finds that they are gone to the rice fields and jungles in search of snails, crabs, or wild roots for food, sometimes is told that as the poor children had had nothing to eat on the previous night or in the morning, they were unable, through faintness or exhaustion, to rise and attend the school.

Respectable children sometimes suffer hunger from a different cause: the fear of ceremonial pollution by eating near children of lower caste, or after touching them. If their home is distant, some of these dear little ones, the children of heathen parents, are unable to take their usual luncheon in the middle of the day, but struggle on at their lessons till four o'clock, when all are dismissed. Here is an instance in point.

‘Two little heathen girls attended school, whose father had been a village school-master, but died, leaving a widow with five children to provide for. She earned a scanty livelihood by the sale of vegetables. The eldest daughter was a leper. The second was a bright, intelligent girl, and she and her little sister were so anxious to learn that even hunger did not deter them, and many a time they came without the morning meal, and stayed in the schoolroom all the forenoon, while other girls went to their noon meal. Such hold has caste, even upon children, that

hunger would not induce them to break its rules by partaking of food with their fellow-pupils, some of whom would willingly have shared their meal with them.'

A little girl asked her mother to send her to school, that she might learn how to pray to Jesus. The mother ill-naturedly answered : ' I will not give you leave. If you go to school to-day, I will give you no supper to-night. Bear that in mind.' The child answered, ' Mother, if you deprive me of my supper, *the prayer I shall learn at school will be supper for me.*' So saying, she ran away to school, where she was taught the little prayer she so ardently longed to learn, meaning

Jesus, my God! my life Thou art ;
In sin I'm dead ; Thy help impart.

Through fear of having offended her mother, the poor girl did not think of going home that evening, but stayed the whole night in a corner of the chapel where the school was held, repeating the prayer she had learnt at such cost, as frequently as she could. The mother's conscience being aroused, she repented of her wickedness and cruelty, ran to the chapel in search of her child as early as she could in the morning, and brought her back and gave the supper which she had reserved for her.

Ignorance of duty, caste usages, or prejudice against female education, may lead the parent to object to and depreciate the value of education, while numerous instances occur in which eagerness to

learn on the part of the child leads to strenuous effort or self-denial.

Neelapillay, a heathen girl, twelve years of age, grand-daughter of the most violent devil-dancer in the village, became concerned for the salvation of her soul. Anxious to profess Christianity, she called herself by the Christian name of Lydia. She prays at home, earnestly asking God to convert her mother and sister also. She reads to them the Word of God. Whatever she finds interesting in the school books or monthly publications, she is ever glad to communicate to them. The mother, being a widow, is sometimes reluctant to give her money for buying lesson books, &c. Lydia then soothes her parent thus: 'My dear mother, do you not reserve money to make jewels for me when I grow older? Please now help me to learn, and you may deduct the sum from my future dowry.' The mother is unable to refuse compliance with the importunate requests of her good daughter. Lydia has now prevailed on her elder sister to learn to read the Bible by the help of the zenana teacher.

When girls have arrived at maturity they are supposed to be specially subject to the attacks of malignant demons; and in some castes are never permitted to leave the house until married. This prevents their attending school after that period; and the prejudice needs to be guarded against even in families which have recently embraced the profession of Christianity.

‘One morning, on my way to work,’ writes a Bible-woman, ‘a heathen girl of respectable caste, aged about fifteen, asked me whether I would like to teach her, so that she might become able to read our Christian books. In compliance with her wishes, I agreed to do so, at which her mother, being greatly displeased, forbade it, saying that it is not usual among them to teach a girl after she has grown up, and that this will be looked upon by others with great contempt. The poor girl, finding that she was not successful in her desire, confined herself in one of the apartments of the house, refusing food for three days. Greatly troubled at this, the mother called me voluntarily, and asked me to teach her daughter as she desired. The girl, availing herself of the opportunity, commenced to learn with great diligence, and is now able to read a few lessons in the First Book, to say several lyrics, and to repeat the children’s little prayer.’

Though the prejudice against female education is rapidly giving way, yet it still operates as a hindrance. In a girl’s school in Pareychaley district, about seventy-five children are learning. The school has excited no small amount of interest in the neighbourhood; the little girls take a pride in belonging to it, and some parents who had refused to send their daughters to the ordinary schools send them here.

A man who has five daughters, being much distressed at having no sons, did not care to give an

education to even one of his girls. The three elder ones, though not sent to school, were taught to read a little by a mission agent. One day, meeting the two younger ones, the catechist told them they should try and learn to read the Bible, that they might know more about God and the way of salvation. One of them replied: 'I have a great desire to learn, but my parents will neither let me go to school nor be taught at home. My sister can read, but she is afraid to conduct family prayer when father is absent. Could I read, I should never let a day pass without reading the Bible.' She begged him to teach her, has now a Tamil Primer, which her father procured for her with great reluctance, and shows an uncommon desire to get on.

The general improvement of Hindu children, after even a twelvemonth's training in school, has been well described by the late Mrs. Emlyn, in the following words:—'The day scholars join, according to their ability, in all the classes: a few of them are in the highest class; but the majority are little children who came to us ignorant of everything. As regards these, the result of the year's treatment can be clearly seen, and is very satisfactory. Several who did not know all their letters a year ago, now read the Bible with tolerable fluency; those who at the same time began to learn writing in the native style, by tracing letters with their fingers in the sand, can now produce neat copy-books; and those who had never threaded a needle, can without much help

make their own jackets. There has been a great advance in personal neatness. Not a few of the parents are too poor to supply the children with clean clothes ; but the smooth hair and clean hands and face show that the desire for neatness and clean-



HINDU GIRL WRITING ON THE SAND.

liness has been awakened. Some of the little girls, at their teacher's suggestion, have bought cheap calico, and brought it to the sewing class to make up into jackets for themselves. To many of these children the Bible stories are new, and we get touching proof sometimes of the hold that they take

upon their young minds. One child whose father lay dying—a new scholar, and of a family newly turned from heathenism—said to a neighbour, “Jesus did much more difficult things than this; perhaps He will yet cure my father.” Three of the scholars are the children of heathen, but these are as regular as the others at the services in the chapel, and at the Sunday-school at the bungalow; one of them has several times foregone her midday meal rather than miss either the one or the other.’

The change is even more marked in the degraded Pulayars, formerly slaves, when they come under Christian training and civilization.

But higher results than the cultivation of intelligence, order, and good habits are not long in following. The children of heathen parents, when thus brought under Christian instruction, learn to reject the follies of idolatry, and to rise above the popular superstitions, which are so largely based on ignorance. Children so educated will never return to idolatry, but are sure at least to retain, all through life, a favourable estimate of Christianity and its teachings. In not a few instances they do become believers, and perhaps even have the blessed privilege of leading their parents to the truth.

It is curious to observe the various ways in which enlightened children seek to evade participation in idolatrous worship, or even at times to reprove it. Here are some instances:—

One day three Sudra boys, scholars in a mission school, were overheard engaged in conversation together, after an address from the teacher on the inability of demons to do them good or harm.

‘Our teacher,’ said Palpan, ‘is wrong in saying that devils are powerless; for I know for certain that our guardian god is found roaming about the streets twice a week in the dress of the god Shollamadan, and drives away the foul spirit that haunts our homes.’

‘No, no,’ answered Vannian, ‘you are greatly mistaken, for I know that that is the work of my grandfather. He enters the temple now and then, clothes himself with the dress of the god Arakulamadan, and moves about in this manner, armed with the sacred club.’

‘Yes,’ said Palpan; ‘but your grandfather is the power of our god, and as such he can do whatever he pleases.’

‘I cannot believe that,’ said Vannian. ‘If he can drive away evil spirits, how is it he is unable to deliver himself from the power of that bad rheumatism which plagues him constantly?’

Then their little friend, Supiramanian, began thus: ‘I cannot believe Palpan’s words. I know that idols are lifeless things. My father is a devil-priest. Whenever he is absent, I officiate for him. I wash myself first, and then wash the idol, Shollamadan, put a garland of flowers on his neck, and daub his forehead with sandal paste,

and worship him with due respect, reciting the prayers which father has taught me. But the god does not seem to care. And, hoping to please him better, I place a flower on his head, one on each shoulder, on each arm, and in each hand, and thrust two in his ears, carefully watching to see whether he moves, answers or speaks at all. But I never find in him any symptom of life. So the idol Shollamadan is unable to do us any good or evil.'

At the village of Puliadi, on a recent occasion, the worshippers of this same Shollamadan offered the usual sacrifices, but were disappointed to find that their priest was not possessed by the demon, in spite of all their prayers, shouting, and beating of drums. Then they asked their children to unite in invoking the god. The majority of these, being pupils in the mission school, perceived the folly of this demon-worship, and cried, 'Let us not allow the demon to come in, but drive the fellow away.' The parents were incensed at this, and complained to the teacher, who calmed them with gentle answers; and the result has been that this wicked worship has not since been repeated.

Another little scholar, while going home one afternoon from the school for his meal, had to pass through a crowd engaged in devil-worship, and was offered by the demon-priest a pinch of sacred ashes—a boon to every worshipper. But

on his firm refusal to accept the gift the lad was threatened with death within a week. The little fellow, to the surprise of all that were present, boldly declared: 'We do not fear devils now, for we have found a Friend that is far more powerful than they. He is able to preserve me from death, so that I do not care for any of your threats.' Being greatly ashamed, the dancer expressed his regret at being rebuked by a child.

At a school in Trevandrum district most of the heathen pupils get permission of their parents to attend the Sunday services. One boy was asked why he was unwilling to worship Bhadrakali. He replied: 'Because it has no life, and I have learned the command of God—"Do not worship idols."' His parents accordingly left him to his choice. Some of these children pray in secret to God.

One of the girls was seriously ill, and apparently at the point of death, when her parents told her that they were making a vow that, in case of her recovery, they would offer her hand full of money to the Mandakad goddess, supposed to reside in an ant-hill, and to be a powerful demon. The girl, though very ill, replied: 'No; that ant-hill can do me neither good nor evil; God, I feel sure, will help me.' Through mercy, she did recover, and the parents dropped the idea of visiting Mandakad.

Some are so zealous against demon-worship and idolatry that they may be regarded as young

preachers, and we can scarcely blame their zeal in so good a cause. A schoolboy, not much above ten years of age, finding the villagers gathered together under a shed erected in front of their pagoda to collect money for demon-worship, went to them, with a courage above his age, and questioned them thus: 'What do you collect this money for?' They found themselves at a loss to give him an immediate answer. The boy again remarked: 'Why do you big men bow down before lumps of clay and wood, and spend on them the money you work so hard for?' To which they, with much hesitation, replied: 'This we do out of respect to our ancestors, who erected this fane in our village.' Little Puthukunattan continued boldly: 'Our ancestors were blind and foolish. They did not know what was good for themselves and their children. They were groping in the darkness of heathenism. But this age is different. We now see things better and act better in other concerns of life; and why not do so in Divine worship?' Struck by the force of this juvenile argument, the men confessed their folly, saying: 'O little boy! we do see that our worship is unprofitable. Our gods seem to have lost all their influence now-a-days.' Taking advantage of the opportunity, Puthukunattan addressed the large gathering thus: 'My friends! we are all sinners. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Embrace

Jesus as your Saviour, and worship God through Him.'

The children are learning that there is a better way of spending money than on superstitions and silly ceremonies.

'In one family there are two girls, the elder of whom is learning at home from one of the Bible-women; the younger one is learning in the girls' school at Kottar. She is a good-natured, clever girl, and attends the school regularly. She received a prize for repeating Psalm cxxxiv. correctly. On one occasion, the elder sister asked her mother for some money to buy a school book. The mother said she had no money; but the younger girl replied, "Have you not four chuckrams tied up in a cloth and kept in a pot for offering to the devil for my younger brother's recovery? What good will giving this money to the devil do to my brother?" Upon this the mother took out the money, and gave it for the book. May God speed the day when the money spent by the women of India on offerings to demons and idols shall be spent on school books for their daughters!'

Evidences of decided piety are often seen in these children of heathen parentage, as well as in those of the Christian converts. Some of them constantly pray to God, reverently repeating the Lord's Prayer or some other prayer which they have learnt at the school. And they are almost always pleased to join in the opening and concluding exercises of prayer and praise.

In one village the school-master opened a night school for heathen lads who could not find time to attend the day school; and for the first few nights he hesitated to open and close the school with prayer. To his great surprise, the boys themselves remarked upon this, and said: 'Sir, why do you withhold prayer from our class? Please begin with prayer and dismiss us, with prayer, as in the day school.' This was gladly done, and now the lads, accompanied by their friends, attend Divine worship.

It is not difficult to imagine how great must be the influence in a heathen household of a pious and loving child who has received such reasonable and gracious instructions as Christianity supplies, and who seeks to carry it out in her conduct. The parents and friends see the practical work of the Christian religion, and are attracted by the simple prayers, the sweet hymns, the spiritual worship of the true God and the practical precepts of the Bible. In such instances, the light so shines before men that they, seeing their good works, are led to glorify our Father which is in heaven.

A Sudra girl, a pupil of the Bible-woman, was in the habit of offering on her bed the short prayer,

Jesus, my God! my life Thou art;
In sin I'm dead: Thy help impart,

which her grandfather having noticed, asked what she was muttering on her bed. To which the girl answered, 'It is a prayer taught by our matron, to be offered to Jesus every day.' One night, finding

the girl going to bed without saying the prayer, he called out, 'My daughter! why have you neglected to say your prayer this night?' And the little girl immediately rose from her bed and repeated the prayer, so that all in the house might hear it. Her grandmother, who was busily engaged in the kitchen, ran in to know what she was saying, and taking a fancy to her little one's prayer, she learned it from her at night, and repeated it to the teacher next morning, earnestly asking her to teach her child more about Christianity.

'A Sudra girl, under sixteen years of age, taught at the Kottar Girls' School, met a party of our school-children with great delight, who were on their harvest singing tour, and observed: "I can sing most of the songs in the small lyric book. Please sing, 'Believe the name of Jesus only,' and 'Besides the name of Jesus, there is no other name on earth worthy believing.'" Her requests being complied with, she delighted our little friends with the words, "These two are my favourite hymns. I sing them at home every morning and evening. They are sweet and charming. We sing them when the missionary and his wife come over to preach to us and visit us." Hearing this, one of her friends who stood by sneeringly remarked: "You appear so fond of Christians you had better join them." To which she mildly replied, "Sir, you see that I am a minor, and not free. But I expect to see better days when I can decide for myself."

Instances like these inspire us with brighter hopes for the future, and urge on us the duty of continuing to sow the seed of life with increased perseverance and greater self-consecration, 'for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

Sometimes, however, it is only after the death of a praying child that a full account reaches us of the religious character and experience induced by Christian instruction, and of the sweet and profitable memories left behind.

An instance may be cited of a little Chetty girl who died of fever at Talakulam. Her father was away when she was taken ill, so they delayed to send to the hospital for medicine till too late. At the beginning of her illness, however, she called on Jesus, and His name was on her lips to the last. Her relatives said her whole thoughts were so filled with heaven that there was no use for her to live longer in this world.

The Bible-woman wrote concerning her:—

'I heard of her death a day or two after it occurred, and on going to the school, the teacher expressed much sorrow, and said she was one of the brightest and most regular girls in the school. It was owing to her influence that the girls from the Western Street attended diligently. I went to the house of her parents, to try and alleviate their grief. She had been attacked with fever, and died within three days. The mother related many things the girl did when alive. She told me she often spoke

to her of the humble birth of Jesus, the sufferings He endured, and of the salvation wrought out by Him even for the worst of sinners, and advised them to become Christians. She scarcely passed a day without speaking of eternal things. Moreover, she said her daughter often begged for money to buy books, and being asked one day, "Why do you trouble me for money? You will soon be of an age when I shall need it to make jewels for you." Sivagamay at once replied, "Why do you care to make jewels for me, mother? I don't want jewels, but learning and sewing are better for me. It is therefore your duty to give me what I require to buy books." The mother weeps when she thinks of these things. She said: "My daughter was very dear to me, as well as to madam, the teachers, and all her friends. She was very dear also to God, so He took her from this world to be with Him." Seeing her crying, I told her about the death of the widow's son, and that Jesus is able to comfort every one of us. I told her we should all one day depart from this world, as her daughter had, and must appear before God. She then asked me, "When shall we go there? Shall I see my daughter there?" I told her no one knew the time, and advised her to become a Christian, that she might appear at the right hand of Jesus. She then said, "I believe on the Lord Jesus alone, as she did. May He break the tide of my sorrows very soon!" We hope to see this little heathen

girl and many more shining as stars in the realms above, and are encouraged to go on sowing the seed.'

In the mission hospital, also, heathen children are sometimes received, feeble and diseased in body, and sunk in the deepest ignorance of spiritual



CHILDREN'S COTS.

things; but under the loving and skilful treatment of the doctor and the medical evangelists they are healed and renewed in soul as well as body. The ignorance of some of these children is extraordinary.

A boy aged fifteen fell from a tall palm tree which he was climbing to collect the sap, and broke

his leg. In the hospital it was difficult to make him understand even that he was a sinner. 'He was not a sinner,' he insisted, 'before his fall from the tree. If he had sinned at all, it was only in cutting green and immature leaves from the palm tree!'

In the mission hospital at Neyoor several cots for sick children are supported by special contributions from Sunday-school scholars in various parts of Great Britain.

'Last year two little children, aged respectively thirteen and eleven, came from the hills ill with fever. They were cured and dismissed, but soon came again, saying this time that they were hungry, and had nothing to eat. As they were not able to work, and their father was dead, the doctor gave them in charge of the hospital woman, to clean them and give them food. After hearing an address on the words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," the eldest was asked what he had heard. "About the mother of God," said he. They are Roman Catholics, and he was telling what formerly he had been taught. On being reminded that they were taught only about the Lord Jesus here, he repeated the text. The boy did not forget it; but on being asked, another day, what it is that Jesus cleanses, he replied, "The soul from sin." But that "He had not cleansed his soul from the sins of abusing others, lying and stealing," he admitted. However, he promised to

ask the Saviour to do this for him. Kneeling down, he prayed, "O Lord, pardon my sins, and give me food and clothing." The doctor told him he was right to seek forgiveness first, then the other things would be added to him. He was also told of the little children in England who gather their pence and send, to help to keep them in food and clothing while here, and thus to answer the latter part of his prayer. Being asked if they had any message to send to their little benefactors, they said, "*May they prosper; we are sick, and have no food or clothing.*" Yes, those will prosper who love the Lord, for He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."'

Another boy of fourteen, who had suffered a terrible fall from a palmyra tree, by which his arm was seriously injured, answered when asked whether he was a sinner: 'My father is, but I am not.' Hearing, however, of the way of salvation, he was led to pray and turn to the Lord and sent this message to English children who support cots in the hospital, 'Tell them that Yakkappen did not know Jesus, or how to pray to Him till he came here, but that now he loves the Lord who suffered and died for him.'

Another little boy, but four years old, brought in with a broken leg, cried, when he was taught of the love of the Lord Jesus for children, 'The good Jesus! I want Him.'

‘Mutteiyan, an orphan boy, recovered from dysentery and sore leg, also sends salams to the Christian children. He returned to work on the coffee estates. He learnt the text, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This he was taught from a large card printed by a Sabbath scholar at home, and hung up in the hospital ward. With his whole heart he offered the children’s prayer: “O Jesus Lord, my life, I am a poor sinner, save me!” and he came to Jesus, as the words of the hymn in his ward (also printed in Tamil, by a Sabbath scholar) taught him:—

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Is it not good to think that a young scholar at home has thus helped to bring a poor demon-worshipper to Christ?’

So much for the happy results of Christian instruction bestowed on the children of heathen parents, who otherwise would have been left ignorant and unsaved, would in all probability have lived and died without the knowledge of Christ. ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.’

The children of Christian parents show, generation after generation, in progressive measure,

the fruits of religious training and example. We endeavour to fulfil towards them the Divine injunctions, 'Feed My lambs,' 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' and may reasonably expect the fulfilment of the promise, 'When he is old, he will not depart from it.' Accordingly, as the children grow up into life, the instruction they receive is often evidently blessed to them. Even while at school they show their piety and are useful in various ways. In Tittuvilei district, under the native missionary, they go out in harvest time, accompanied by their teachers, to heathen villages, to distribute tracts and sing the story of salvation to those who may be disposed to listen to them. Presents of rice are often given in reward of their sweet singing, which helps to procure prize books and other requisites for the school.

They raise the tunes in public worship, to improve the congregational singing; and pious women who have not learnt to read sometimes take out with them an educated girl, to read the Scriptures and to sing when they go to converse with their heathen neighbours. Some of the children, even girls, lead their family prayers where the parents cannot read, and others assist their parents in this exercise. Some boys when sent by their parents go to the neighbouring houses to help them in worship. Thus uneducated parents are helped in Bible reading by their children.

In the congregations of Pulayars such children are of immense service, as few of the adults can read or can readily learn. But their children can learn as readily as those of higher caste: some girls can repeat from memory many hymns, prayers and texts, and assist the women in their prayer-meetings. They also invite other children to attend the school.

In one of the Sunday-schools at Attur is a little girl who has been much blessed to her family. She would always be first in her class, and, however hungry she might be, she would not leave the school until all the classes were finished. Her mother stated that it was through her that family prayer was begun and is kept up in their house. Often, when her elder brothers retire before the family prayer time, she will go and read the fixed Bible portions, and either herself pray or get her brothers to pray before they sleep.

Our hope is that such schools will be widely established and such little lights in different households of the country be multiplied.

Here is an illustration of the promise that children rightly trained shall not depart from the good way. Pakkianathan, a boy ten years of age, had the misfortune to lose his kind father, who was a prayerful man. After his father's death, he engaged to conduct family worship, imitating his father's good example. Whenever his mother was found indifferent, he kindly warned her, saying: 'We

know what blessings we have received through the prayers of father. If we neglect family prayer, we may expect to lose all good.' This proved a very useful reproof. She is no more negligent, and shows herself very attentive to family prayer, so that both the mother and children meet together to praise God for His mercies, and to call upon Him to continue to bless them.

A little neighbour of this dear lad was at the same time encouraged by his example to bear opposition and reproach from a godless mother for his attention to prayer.

A little boy, under seven years of age, was in the habit of kneeling down and uttering a short prayer every day before taking his meals and before going to bed. His angry mother, who looked upon it with annoyance, tried by mild means to prevent him from doing so; finding this had no effect on the young but courageous mind, she began to beat him, using abusive language. At length the poor boy, looking earnestly at his mother, observed: 'Dear mother! Is this not a prayer that I offer to Jesus, my Saviour? Don't you now hear Pakkianathan uttering the words of the same prayer in the neighbouring house? Does any one insult him on that account?' This gentle warning immediately put a stop to the cruel and rude behaviour of the mother.

A little girl six years old was attacked with small-pox, and when suffering severe pain she used to

repeat the verse taught to all the school children, 'Jesus, my God, my life, I am a poor child, save me.' Night and day she offered this prayer. One day she asked her mother to hand her the Tamil primer, and then turned over leaf after leaf in search of something. Her brother, sitting by her bed, asked, 'What are you searching for, my sister?' Having found the page where a woodcut of Christ bearing the cross is given, she showed it to her



CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS.

brother, and said, 'Do not think, brother, that this lesson is like the others; it is much more important. You know our Saviour. You have often heard that He died upon the cross for you and for me. He is a good, loving Saviour, and I pray to Him to save me.' Surely this is true and living faith, though such a child is incapable of reasoning upon the evidences of Christianity.

These children seem to take literally (and why

not?) the precept, 'In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' Their simple and trustful prayers for healing and help for their parents in sickness and trouble are often answered by the Lord. Indeed, the unhesitating faith, prayerfulness, obedience and zeal of some of these little ones that believe in Jesus might be an example and encouragement to any of us. Is not this one meaning of the words, 'Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven?' The children in the temple cried, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' and God is glorified by the prayers and praises and service of believing children.

A poor woman was sick and suffering, and her little girl, seven years old, was playing with a little girl of equal age. In the midst of their play, the child of the sick woman told the other that her mother was ill. The other girl hearing this, said: 'My mother taught me that I have a Saviour who loves me, and will give me those things that I want if I ask Him in prayer. Once when my mother was ill I prayed to Him, and He made her well. If you also pray to Him, He will make your mother well.'

Just as many children in Christian lands are accustomed to contribute to benevolent objects, so these little Hindu children bring their copper coins, worth about a quarter-farthing, and sometimes their silver penny, about the size of a small pea, for the

collecting box. Some delight in doing good, and thus afford bright promise for the future. One girl of thirteen saved enough during the year to purchase a Bible, which she asked her pastor to buy and give to a poor woman who was unable to purchase one by her own earnings.

A thorough missionary spirit is also shown at times. One of the boys, aware of the miserable condition of the children of the neighbouring village, who spent much of their time in feeding the buffaloes of their Sudra or Brahman masters, and in playing at games which involved them in fighting, swearing, and cursing, entered the village and proposed to teach them to read. The poor children gladly accepted the offer of their kind friend; and some twenty of them placed themselves under tuition, promising to pay their teacher two or three pence per head monthly. They now join the mother school for examination, and rejoice in the instruction they receive.

When opportunity affords, these Christian children rebuke evil and oppose idolatrous and superstitious practices. They are often more courageous and whole-hearted Christians than their seniors.

A native pastor writes :—

‘The Word of God preached on Sundays makes in some instances a deep impression on the hearts of children. One Lord’s day I preached from Isaiah lviii. 13, 14, enforcing the duty of abstaining from all secular pursuits on the holy day. After

service, some women on their way homewards began to converse about worldly matters, when a little girl about thirteen, hearing it, said to them, "Did you not hear that such conversation is contrary to the Word of God and displeasing to the Lord? Have you so soon forgotten what we heard to-day?" The women held their peace.'

On one occasion a heathen boy, aged nine years, was taken by his grandfather to the adjacent demon-fane for worship; and he, in obedience to the order of the old man, fell down and worshipped the idol. This coming next morning to the knowledge of his schoolfellows, they were much grieved, and rebuked him: 'Puthumadan, were you not a fool to worship that dumb idol? What is the use of falling down before a block of stone that can neither see you nor speak to you of anything whatever? Have you not learnt the commandments of the living God? And is not your act a sin against the second commandment?' The poor little boy was greatly moved by these remonstrances, and with tears begged his schoolmates to pray to God to pardon his transgression. They informed the teacher, and all, sympathising with the penitent child, knelt down and prayed fervently, not only for him, but for every one present, that their sins might be forgiven, and grace imparted to keep God's holy law.

Some dolls having been sent out from England as prizes to the girls at Neyoor, one of them was permitted to choose a doll if she wished. 'No,

sir,' said she to the teacher; 'last year I had a doll prize.' 'Have you got it still?' inquired the teacher. 'Yes; but I saved it from being used as an idol by a foolish man.' 'Ridiculous! How was that?' asked the teacher. 'A heathen offered me five rupees for it to make a god of it.' 'That was a good offer; why would you not part with it?' 'Part with it! No. Was it not a kind gift from the dear lady, and should I not be found in the last day guilty for encouraging the man's sin by selling him an object of worship?' 'Could you not have told him of our dear Saviour, to whom we should pray?' 'So I did,' replied the girl; 'but he insisted: "I don't want your Christ, but only this pretty image, if you will sell it to me."''

Unquestionably the most important of all our schools are the boarding-schools for training Christian boys and girls, under the more immediate superintendence of the European missionary and his wife, with a view to future usefulness as teachers and wives of mission agents. These may be regarded as the primary nurseries of the mission, and are of great value for the supply of teachers; they have, in fact, furnished the greater number of faithful agents at present in mission employment. The scholars are selected from various congregations, usually from the most intelligent Christian families; and by providing them with board and lodging, we secure their constant attendance until fairly educated, and

their more efficient training under the personal supervision of the missionary ladies. Otherwise the children of poor parents cannot remain long enough at school to obtain a complete education and acquire more cleanly and refined habits. The money thus expended is well spent. The education which is here given is much better than can possibly be afforded in the village schools, where the daily attendance may be injuriously affected by the caprice of the child or the necessities of the parent. Most of these children have never even witnessed the horrible devil-dances and abominable rites of heathenism; and most of them exhibit in their character and conduct the good results of a Christian education. They make rapid progress in their studies; habits of order and discipline are maintained; they acquire an extensive knowledge of Scripture history and doctrine; and there is every reason to expect that most of them will become valuable and devoted assistants in the mission. In some districts, the boys accompany the missionary, two by two, in turns, in his visits to the village congregations, thus becoming acquainted with the people and the mode of preaching to and instructing them and the surrounding heathen.

These boarding-schools, however, are widely different from what is known by that name in England. Their food, dress, and training are not European in style and cost, but strictly native.

‘The children do not live in the bungalow, but in a building a few yards distant from it, and do not in any particular depart from the mode of living followed by respectable natives of their own class. They wear the native dress—which, in some schools, they provide for themselves—assist in beating the husk from the rice, in grinding the curry stuffs and cooking the food, which they eat with their fingers, sitting tailor-wise on the ground. They sleep on mats plaited from strips of the palmyra leaf, which are spread on the floor at night and rolled up by day. The matron, generally a middle-aged widow, herself formerly a scholar, has charge of the girls out of school hours and at night, and it is her duty never to let them be out of her sight for long together. The cost of maintenance and education for each child is about four pounds a year.’

‘Twice in the week, or oftener,’ writes Mrs. Duthie, ‘the higher classes come to the bungalow for sewing and fancy-work, in which good progress is made. Many of the specimens of needlework show much taste and skill on the part of the girls, and reflect credit on their teacher. While we endeavour to give a good education and Christian training to these dear girls, we are also anxious that they should grow up useful, and be well fitted for the station in life they are likely to occupy. To this end we require that the elder girls, in turn, shall assist in the work of the kitchen, in mending their clothes, and keeping their school-rooms neat

and clean. By these means, habits are formed that will be of immense service to them when they leave the school for homes of their own. The boarding-schools have been much blest, and we consider this the most important work we are doing here, for the women are sadly neglected. Probably India will be won for Christ mainly by the influence of Christian mothers. The moral tone of the schools is good, while in the hearts of not a few, we trust, the "good seed" has taken root, and is bearing the fruits of love and obedience to the Saviour. The Bible is prized above all books. Many of them read it through during the year. On the Sabbath they listen attentively to God's Word. Notes of the sermons are usually written down, and given to their teacher on the Sabbath evening. Prayer-meetings are also held amongst themselves, and others retire in secret to ask God's blessing and guidance. One of the youngest scholars has been noticed always asking God's help before commencing her lessons for the day. This little girl has also been the means of inducing a near relative regularly to attend a place of worship. At first there was much opposition, but the simple believing prayer of a little child has at last prevailed. We have seen with joy the diligence and earnest Christian conduct of the teachers, and are grateful that we have teachers who are anxious for the spiritual welfare of these children.'

Numerous instances might be adduced of the blessed results of Christian training in the conversion of these children. Some years ago such a gracious influence accompanied the preaching of the Word and the school teaching, that about twelve of the children of our boarding-school at Trevandrum were received into the Church at one time.

An earnest Christian teacher at Neyoor writes:—

‘The girls have made good progress in their lessons, but it is still more gratifying to know that several have given their hearts to the precious Saviour, and are going out with the Water of Life which the once thirst-stricken Traveller gave to the woman of Samaria. One Sunday evening, while speaking to the girls on this incident, I asked a few of the elder girls whether they had obtained the Water of Life from Jesus. Then a few girls, with eyes suffused in tears, said that they had put their faith entirely upon Jesus Christ. Again I asked, “If so, have you acted like the Samaritan woman in making this salvation known to others?” Whereupon a girl Saral replied, “I have spoken about Jesus to my untaught mother and a few others at home.”

‘The evening before they went to their homes (for a holiday) I individually talked with the elder girls about their spiritual interests. I found that in the first and second classes nearly a dozen girls have made Him that is altogether lovely their grand object of love. This confession, being made with great signs

of devotion, in no small degree encouraged and refreshed my soul.'

Another writes :—' I have often noticed on Sunday afternoons, after the class was over, many of the girls have gone two by two to lonely places, that they might ponder over what they had heard, and pray for a blessing.'

And again :—' The week previous to their going home they had as their motto the text which was given by the Missionary Deputation to the people, and afterwards by our missionary lady—Mark v. 19, " Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

' When they came to give their salams before going home, I knelt down with them in prayer. One of the girls prayed that some may, through them, see light. When they finished praying my soul pleaded, and I thought God would hear me and would go with them to their homes to reveal His own name.

' One of the boarders left us during the year to be for ever with Jesus in the celestial city.'

The little girl to whom the teacher alludes was one who had been in the school about twelve months. Her delight in being admitted to the school was very touching to witness. The people have a strange custom of boring the ears of little girls in infancy, and gradually, by means of heavy leaden rings, pulling the lobe down until it almost touches the shoulder by the time they have reached the age of

ten or twelve. It is a very ugly and disgusting custom, and we are striving to enforce a rule that children whose parents have served them in this way shall not be admitted. This little girl's ears, as usual, were down, and, unknown to us, she asked her father, and cheerfully endured a painful operation, that her ears might be made right; and when, after all, she was admitted to the school, her happiness seemed complete. She died during a short vacation in August. Her father, who is one of our old catechists, gives the following account of her:—

‘My child Saral was very pleased at getting admission into the boarding-school. Her stay there was very short—only nine months. About the middle of August she came home to enjoy her holiday. As soon as she came home she showed some tickets with Scripture texts on them to her mother and friends, and said she had got them from the lady for correctly repeating Sunday-class lessons. She then rolled them in clean paper, and pleasantly put them by in her box.

‘After she returned from the school she took fever, and while ill called me and said, “Father, I shall die soon.” “How do you know that?” I asked her. “They call me, they call me,” she replied. “Who?” “Don’t you see all those little children? They call me,” she answered. “Do you like to go?” was my next question. “Yes; I am going to the Saviour.” But she was unable to continue, and spoke no more. She died in the twelfth year of her age. “The Lord

gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”’

Surely this is a most useful department of Christian labour in India, educating the young and rising generation who shall be, thirty years hence, the fathers and mothers, the citizens and active workers, the communicants and evangelists and pastors of the Christian Church. We trust that our congregations will soon be filled with educated and intelligent Christians, and we look forward very hopefully to the effect that can hardly fail to be produced in course of time by so large a number of instructed men and women. May the Lord fill them with His Spirit and fit them by His grace to glorify His name amongst their heathen countrymen!



A NATIVE PASTOR.

CHAPTER XIV.

HINDU CHRISTIAN PREACHERS.

Tidings, sent to every creature,
Millions yet have never heard;
Can they hear without a preacher
Lord Almighty, give the word!
Give the word; in every nation
Let the Gospel trumpet sound,
Witnessing a world's' salvation,
To the earth's remotest bound.

We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God.—Acts xiv. 15.

To carry out the apostle's words in India it is necessary to employ in each field of missionary enterprise *native* preachers and ministers, as the apostles 'ordained them elders in every church, and recommended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.' The hope is that it may be possible to hand over the whole work to such native preachers. In India they are specially valuable, and can be obtained in sufficient numbers by training the young, and by a careful selection of adult converts. Without a staff of native teachers, the European missionary would be thoroughly crippled; while, on

the other hand, the more earnest, intelligent, and devoted these helpers are, the more the work will prosper.

The physical constitution of the native teacher is fitted to endure the climate; his children need not be separated from him in their tender years for education in a distant land; and if he is sick, his house is at hand for rest and refreshment. In the use of the language he is more ready and effective, though not always more clear and impressive than the European. What we gain by the hard labour and study of years, they, of course, possess at once. The labour of the native preacher is, of necessity, more economical, his food and clothing being more simple; and he can walk about in the sun where a European would probably be cut down by sun-stroke, fever, or other fierce diseases. And, if faithful, the Indian teacher will exemplify Christianity in the details of *native life*—a most powerful and effective argument to the heathen—just as our blessed Lord Himself has instructed mankind not merely by precept and doctrine, but by illustrating and embodying in human nature on the earth the principles of godliness, righteousness, and self-sacrifice.

In Travancore we have had engaged as our assistants in mission work men who had been carefully instructed in the vernacular languages and in English, under the tuition of English missionaries, men who have themselves been teachers in our seminary; and others of purely

vernacular training in the boarding schools either born and bred in Christianity; or adult converts from Hinduism or demon-worship. A small proportion of them have also been religious leaders, ascetics, dancers and sorcerers, Brahman priests, Hindu schoolmasters, or Sudra officials. In the early history of the mission, men were of great service who had been common field labourers and could scarcely read, but who were remarkable for natural force of character and heaven-born zeal. All these were tested by long years of practical work and success in the Lord's vineyard, and advanced from stage to stage as Providence seemed to direct. Former habits of simplicity and Eastern dress are retained, so that the catechists are not denationalized or separated from their compatriots and hearers. Spheres of labour and influence are found for them as Scripture-readers or catechists, itinerant evangelists or settled pastors, school inspectors, medical evangelists, or native missionaries. Had it not been for their valued and assiduous labours (under European superintendence), the work could never have been undertaken, and there would have been no such successes to rejoice over as have been achieved.

We therefore thank God for the gift of such teachers and fellow-labourers. The amount of good done by any one of them year after year is not easily estimated. Many a story could an aged catechist tell of strange scenes of repentance,

conversion, and death, and sometimes of unhappy apostasy, of devil-dancing and dark superstition, of former times of oppression, and of the wonderful advance not only of Christianity, but of civilisation, liberty, and knowledge. Every Lord's day hundreds of Christian native preachers in Travancore proclaim the Gospel to many thousands of reverent hearers, reading the Holy Scriptures in the house of God, and leading the devotions of the Christian congregations, encouraging the young, strengthening and consoling the aged and feeble, the afflicted and the dying.

To-day, on weary nations
 The heavenly manna falls ;
 To holy convocations
 The silver trumpet calls ;

Where gospel light is glowing
 With pure and radiant beams,
 And living water flowing
 With soul-refreshing streams.

Little is known in England of the lives and labours of these devoted native teachers and preachers, who are diligently and prayerfully working amongst their fellow-countrymen, and who are honoured of God to lead many souls to Christ, and to aid in laying the foundations of great and promising Christian churches. Hence a short account of several who thus lived and laboured may be of more than passing interest.

Abraham Tabasa was the son of Patros, a

catechist who laboured with much acceptance and success for many years in connection with the Trevandrum Mission. Patros was blessed with numerous offspring, whom he and his pious wife trained up in the fear of the Lord. Three of his sons became Christian teachers, Abraham far excelling the others in talents and natural capacity. Patros had been originally a Roman Catholic, but having heard from the missionaries the simple truths of the Gospel, he was led, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, gladly to receive them and to devote his life to their dissemination and defence. He exercised a happy influence for good over the people of his congregations, was spared to a very advanced age, and died in 1868.

In a letter written shortly after his father's death, Abraham thus speaks of him:—'On the 17th of November, my father was taken to the Lord. He was the first-fruits of the Trevandrum Mission, and cheerfully laboured for the Lord in Nagercoil, Neyoor, Pareychaley, and here also, in the early times of persecution and difficulty. We now reflect with joy that from the fatigue of his labours and the anguish of his diseases he is released, and received to eternal rest and comfort. The day before he died he addressed most weighty instructions to both Christians and heathens who came to see him. With good hope, with courage, desire and joy, he died in the Lord.'

Abraham was born in 1835, and educated for several years in the mission boarding-school at Trevandrum, an institution which, like others of a similar character in Travancore, has been the means of much good in training native teachers, both male and female. His education was conducted in his native language, and he was wholly unacquainted with English. Consequently he wrote and spoke Malayalam with great purity and accuracy, though resident in a part of the country where the Tamil and Malayalam languages are more or less intermixed, and both often spoken with foreign or corrupt pronunciation.

After the completion of the usual course of instruction in the boarding-school, Abraham was appointed assistant catechist, to aid his good father in the superintendence of the congregation at Neyattankara. This congregation then numbered two hundred and forty souls (now four hundred and twenty-one), and the town was one of some importance, as the head of a Government district, the residence of a native magistrate and many high-caste Hindus, and the site of an ancient temple and a royal lodge. Here father and son worked together in the spirit of perfect harmony and with much benefit to the people in the increase of the congregation and their steady progress in Divine things. The chapel was once enlarged, and though many of the people were cut off in one year by the

prevalence of famine and cholera, the house was again filled with attentive and willing hearers.

In April, 1859, Abraham was married to a Christian girl. Three or four children were born to them; but the young couple were sorely tried by the loss of their first-born, who was taken away in 1865, at the age of five years. 'Into this gulf of sorrow I fell,' wrote the afflicted parent, 'but not without hope. I have much reason to rejoice in the Lord concerning my dear child. He had learned many things about God. I taught him the first catechism, the Ten Commandments, etc., and instructed him about Jesus and the great salvation He procured for us. He asked many interesting, childish questions about these things. Two days before his death the dear child suffered much from severe pains and convulsions, and felt difficulty in speaking. Nevertheless, on the night before his death, he requested me to tell him more about Jesus. I asked him some questions which he had previously learned, and which he answered, still speaking with difficulty. As he was so weak, I taught him but a little. The next evening he died in the Lord, and was taken to heaven. I rejoice that my son had the knowledge of Christ in his infancy, and am determined to labour on, trusting in the Lord.'

Abraham was an eloquent, correct, and fluent speaker and preacher. He possessed an extensive acquaintance with the popular and Christian literature of his country, wrote the curious characters of the

Malayalam language beautifully and rapidly, both on the palm-leaf and on paper, and was an able business man. On the occasion of a general united examination of all our native preachers in South Travancore, Abraham was unanimously voted second-best preacher in the whole mission, which employs one hundred and eighty native preachers or catechists for the instruction of over forty-two thousand native professing Christians. He was an attentive hearer and a diligent student, being accustomed to take full notes of the sermons which he heard from myself and other European missionaries, afterwards copying these out very carefully at home, so that I believe he had a large collection of such sketches. Abraham was long supported by a kind friend of the mission at Brighthouse, and with a sum of money, presented for the purpose by his generous supporter, he purchased a good theological and general library of Malayalam and Tamil books, and a strong book-case to protect his treasures from dust and white ants.

In 1861 and 1862, Abraham had charge of the boarding-schools in Trevandrum, he being principal teacher of the boys' school, and his wife of the girls' school, and in this position they gave great satisfaction. He afterwards consented to go and endeavour to raise up a congregation at an important country village where there were special difficulties to contend with, requiring an able and trustworthy man. After much toil he was successful

in establishing a small congregation there. Later on this was placed in charge of another catechist, and Abraham was appointed to the congregation at Nellikakuri, where his pious father had been the first to preach the Gospel and collect a congregation, a quarter of a century previously. There were here two hundred and twenty-one souls (now five hundred and thirty-four), over whom it was hoped that Abraham might ultimately be settled as an ordained pastor. Here his plans and efforts were very judicious, and increasingly fruitful of good results. He instructed his people in Scripture lessons and religious knowledge according to their several capacities, visited the sick and others from house to house, conducted prayer-meetings and weekly services, instructed candidates for baptism and church communion, and laboured earnestly amongst the surrounding heathen. He induced some of the most experienced Christians to aid in counselling the negligent, bringing back the wanderers, and seeking to spread the truth amongst their heathen neighbours. On Tuesday evenings a prayer-meeting was held in the houses of the Christians in rotation, when the special subjects of prayer were as follows, viz.: (1) The salvation of the people of the house in which the meeting was held. (2) For all the Christians of the congregation. (3) For the heathens in the neighbourhood. (4) For the Maharajah and all kings, and for all that are in authority. (5) For missionaries, catechists, school-masters, and others.

On each subject one member would offer prayer; then a short address would be delivered by the teacher himself, specially addressed to the household, upon their social and relative duties as Christians and members of the congregation.

In his addresses to the heathen, and in discussing religious questions with them, Abraham was ready, ingenious, and judicious, and his manner polite, kindly, and winning. He met objections and doubts with great wisdom, using simple and apposite illustrations suited to the comprehension of his hearers, and introducing anecdotes or popular stories calculated to throw light upon the topic in hand. With the Christian people he had great influence, possessing as he did singular clearness and soundness of judgment, in addition to impartiality and scrupulous integrity, so that he was frequently appointed, along with some of the senior catechists, to examine into and arbitrate in cases of personal difference or complaint that might arise amongst our people. He was one of our sub-committee of the best men appointed to examine and instruct candidates for baptism, and report the results to the European missionary. At the weekly meetings of the native agents he rendered valuable service by instructing the junior teachers in Malayalam grammar, poetry, and Christian literature.

Such a man was evidently fitted in an eminent degree for the sacred work of the Christian

ministry, in which, indeed, he was virtually engaged, though not an ordained pastor. I, therefore, had the pleasure of proposing his name to the district committee for ordination as pastor of the church and congregation at Neyattankara, where he had first laboured, and which was ultimately fixed upon as the best sphere for a native pastor. He was cordially and unanimously approved and accepted, and arrangements were in progress for his ordination and settlement. The principal difficulty was the question of salary. The people of the congregation, being mostly of the poorer classes, were unable to raise more than a few rupees per month; it was, therefore, proposed that Abraham should be ordained on his current salary of ten rupees (£1) per month, on which he said he was able to live as heretofore; but some of the missionary brethren, naturally enough, objected to an ordained minister receiving such a miserably small salary. The difficulty, therefore, was the very unusual one, that Abraham was willing to accept a smaller salary than the missionaries were anxious to give him; and so the matter remained for some time in abeyance, pending the increased prosperity and enlarged contributions of the native church. But, in the inscrutable providence of God, this able and devoted teacher and preacher was removed at an early age from his assiduous and valued labours on earth to his eternal reward in heaven. Latterly,

much of the work of the Trevandrum Mission district seemed to depend upon him, and hopes of great promise and extended usefulness were entertained respecting him. But his Lord said unto him, 'It is enough: come up higher.' He rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.

About the middle of 1869, Abraham was prostrated and laid aside from all his activities by an attack of dysentery and fever. There did not, however, appear to be reason to apprehend serious results, until a sudden fright gave him a shock from which he never recovered. Sleeping in his house in the dark one night, he awoke and stretched out his hand and felt a snake lying close to where his child was sleeping. He got up, lighted a lamp, and saw the snake rapidly glide off before he could kill it. After sitting awake with the light for a long time, he extinguished it and again lay down. Some time after, he put out his hand and felt the snake again. In his weak state of health, the alarm brought on a relapse of illness, under which he gradually sank.

I do not know what were his dying words, but well I knew his life—holy, consistent, useful, laborious, and self-denying. I have often, too, heard the expression of his faith in Jesus, whom he ever exalted as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners, and his earnest pleadings in public and social prayer. By faith Abraham Tabasa lived and laboured: in faith, I am persuaded, he died.

All the men to whom the notes immediately following refer were under my own superintendence. One of the teachers had been an ascetic, another was from the high-caste Nairs or Sudras of Malabar, a third came from the ancient Syrian Christian Church, and the next from the once enslaved Pulayars, showing how the grace of God works in and through all alike. The others spoken of were mostly the usual Shanar or Ilavar converts.

Devadasan had been an ascetic, and firmly believed that his devotion and austerities would ensure his entry into heaven. But, as he afterwards observed, 'I was like a man who wished to go westward, but turned his face from the west and ran eastward with all his might.' He performed his devotions in three places, which he himself had built: one attached to his dwelling-house, another under a jack tree in his compound, and a third near a large banyan tree by the roadside. Whatever might be the state of the weather, he would rise up before six o'clock in the morning, bathe in his sacred tank, and then worship in each of these sacred places before taking his food.

At that time a catechist went and spoke to this man of the Christian religion, and he promised to embrace it, but delayed until one night in a dream some one appeared and said to him, 'Although you say, "I will go, I will go to Christ," you never go. Is this just?' He immediately forsook his demon-worship and became a Christian. He also forsook

his old companions, saying, 'Henceforth there is no fellowship between me and you.'

After some time he was received into the church, and also became a mission agent. His prayerful spirit was very marked. Twice a day, in the chapel, and at least seven times a day in his own house, he called upon the name of the Lord. Once a week he called his friends together, and prayed with them on a small hill near his house. He drew many heathens to Christianity, and had a good report from all. At the last, when he was on his dying bed, he said to those about him, 'Why should an old pilgrim like me desire to tarry in this house of my pilgrimage? I desire to depart and rest with Christ.' May we not fitly pray that our last end may be like his?

Adam was a young Sudran. His parents were wealthy heathens, and he was the officiating priest in the family devotions and ceremonies. He built a small temple and conducted worship therein. A great part of his youth was spent in seeking for hid treasures, which he supposed his god would discover to him if he sought for them; but instead of finding treasure he wasted his property in the search. In this condition he sought Christianity, not, at first, as a means of salvation, but as a means of livelihood. The Rev. J. Abbs, however, kindly received and instructed him, and as he appeared afterwards to be truly in earnest, I baptized him, admitted him to church fellowship, and employed

him, first as a schoolmaster, then as a catechist. His conduct gradually grew more and more consistent and holy, and his diligence and zeal became manifest to all. He allowed no irregularities in his congregation, but strove constantly to keep everything in accordance with the Bible.

He would often speak to his fellow-castemen about Christianity; and some would then revile him, saying, 'Many of our castemen hold important offices in the State. If you had continued in their friendship, you might have gained a high position by this time. But, now that you have taken up with these despicable low-caste Christians, you have disgraced our caste and degraded yourself.' His reply to such taunts was, 'The blessings which result to me through embracing the Christian religion are many and unspeakable, but you know nothing of them: you will find out hereafter.'

While thus usefully employed in the Lord's vineyard, consumption took hold of him; but he feared not. He constantly said: 'This disease is rapidly taking me to Jesus.' In the intervals of apparent convalescence, he used to resume his work, notwithstanding all remonstrances, alleging as his reason that he longed to die actively engaged in his Saviour's service. In his last illness he was brought to Pareychaley, and thence passed away to his place in heaven. The words most frequently on his lips were, 'I have confided my soul to Jesus.'

Koshi (Joshua), catechist, was the son of a Syrian

Christian of respectable family, and was pretty well educated in his childhood, but not in the knowledge of the Scriptures. After his marriage, his parents becoming poor through misfortune, he gave them back what they had bestowed him on the occasion of his marriage, and built a house for himself with his wife's dowry and his own savings. When a clerk in the Custom House at Quilon, and about thirty-two years of age, he met the Rev. Mr. Thompson, who spoke to him of Christ. Koshi afterwards joined the mission, and was appointed a schoolmaster, and ultimately catechist. His wife learned to read and write through his instructions, and both of them became communicants. He was very charitable in giving, and patient under reproach and persecution for Christ. At one time the troubles he endured through the ill-feeling of others were such that he became distracted in mind, and for some time wandered about the country. After his recovery he was again employed as catechist, and laboured for many years in various villages, with much humility and earnestness. He was at last taken ill of dropsy, and received kind assistance from the hospital and the mission, but died on 11th March, 1864, aged sixty-one. Up to the time of his death he was diligent in reading God's Word and in prayer.

David Arjebam was a devout and intelligent Christian and teacher. He was first brought under Christian influences in 1861; a year afterwards he

was baptized by the chaplain of Trevandrum, and soon after married to the senior girl in the Pulayars school. David laboured for some time as a catechist at Pulavur, but being greatly persecuted there, he was again employed as teacher in the Pulayars' school. For two years he suffered much from ill-health, and was frequently in the hospital. Before his death he gave excellent advice to his wife respecting the religious training of their children, and, lifting up his hands toward heaven, he repeated several times the prayer: 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' Shortly after he peacefully departed.

Kunamudian was educated in the boarding-school at Pareychaley. He was not a man of deep learning in ordinary subjects, but he had carefully and reverentially studied the Holy Scriptures. His disposition was peculiarly meek and gentle. In his conduct as a mission agent, no fault was ever laid to his charge. He lived in peace with all men. Before the commencement of a prayer-meeting or other service, he would be found ready in his place, with a book or tract in his hand to occupy the time, while waiting, with profit. His health began to suffer from consumption; but when his friends expressed their sorrow, he said, 'We all must die, and it is a great mercy that this disease in particular allows time for meditation and prayer. Though I die, yet shall I live in Jesus my Saviour. You who have good health think of death, and prepare for it.' To one who often conversed with him of death, he

said: 'I think of my approaching death with cheerfulness, in the prospect of a better life through the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom I place my trust.' On his death-bed he exhorted his weeping friends to live to God and prepare for eternity. He consoled his dear wife, who stood by him weeping bitterly, with these words: 'God will be your refuge and help. Train our dear children for Him. Send them to the school regularly.' Immediately before his death he called his family together, and while praying with them he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

The two following memoirs of native catechists, who died some ten years ago, were compiled by the late Rev. S. Jones.

'Gnanapiragasam was born of heathen parents at Mayilady in the year 1786. The first twenty years of his life were passed in total ignorance of the true God and in idolatrous practices of the most abominable and degrading character. The devil was in all his thoughts—was the only god he worshipped, the only master he served. As yet, the Light of Life had not visited Travancore. But the dawn was at hand, and our esteemed friend was one of the very first to catch its beams. Indeed, that blessed dawn appeared first of all among his own relatives. It happened on this wise. His cousin, Maha Rayan, afterwards called Vethamanikkam, while on a pilgrimage to Tanjore, to worship at a celebrated shrine of Siva, chanced to hear the Rev. J. C. Kohloff, of the Tranquebar

Mission, preach, and was so wrought upon by the truth that he sought further instruction, embraced the Christian religion with all his soul, and became a new creature. Returning to Mayiladi, he lost no time in proclaiming the "Good News," and urged upon his relatives, with all earnestness, the importance of giving themselves to Christ without delay. The first to obey the call was Perumal, afterwards called Gnanamutthu, the elder brother and guardian (both his parents were now dead) of Gnanapiragasam. Others soon followed. So, without a missionary, by the influence and teaching of one Christian native only recently converted, originated Protestant Christianity in South Travancore. Shortly after, when the Rev. W. T. Ringeltaube, by the invitation and entreaty of Vathamannikkam, came to Mayiladi from Tranquebar, he found a number of people quite ready for baptism. Among those was the subject of this sketch, who was then in his twenty-second year. Baptism, however, did not give pardon and peace. He speaks of himself at this time as having been greatly distressed by certain texts; such as "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Baptism had but made him a Christian outwardly. He must also, he felt, experience the "washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." This great inward change he earnestly sought and joyfully found, and

never afterwards lost the sense of complete acceptance with God through Jesus Christ.

‘The next forty-eight years of this good man’s life were spent in the service of the Mission as schoolmaster, catechist, and superintendent of the mission rice-fields respectively. For fifteen years he laboured as catechist at Tamarakulam, with great zeal and much success. The chapel was enlarged, and again became too small. The congregation rose to the number of 1,100 souls; a church was formed; three schools were established; Bible-classes were begun and vigorously maintained; village-to-village and house-to-house visitation was carried on; and preaching to the heathen occupied no small share of our friend’s time and attention.

‘Whilst a faithful and diligent worker in the church and the world, Gnanapiragasam was not unmindful of his own household. He strove to train up his children in the way they should go, and had the satisfaction of seeing them all become good and useful men and women. His two daughters were married to catechists. Many of the lyrics in the volume published by the Madras Tract Society (a book greatly prized by Christians and others everywhere in the Tamil country) were composed by his eldest son. Another son, named Yacob, was a most devoted and useful catechist.

‘Space forbids the record of many interesting facts and anecdotes regarding the life and labours of this

exemplary servant of Christ. For honesty, industry, consistency, hospitality, faithfulness, brotherly kindness and charity, humility, readiness to forgive injuries, and return good for evil, love of prayer and the house of God, desire for the prosperity of Zion and the conversion of souls, success in attempting to establish the kingdom of heaven—for all these things he has had few equals, perhaps no superior, in these missions. During the last twelve years he was very feeble. As often as strength would permit he went to the sanctuary, but for the most part was unable to move beyond his own door. He seemed never to tire in relating the story of God's mercy to all who visited him. He would often say, "I am quite ready to go, but the Master's order has not yet come." When asked, a little before death, whether he felt sure he was going to Christ, he replied, with a pleasant laugh, "To whom shall I go if not to Him?" Several times he was thought to have passed away. His coffin was prepared and his friends assembled for the funeral, when, to the astonishment of all, he revived. At last, on 4th July, 1875, the long-expected call home had really come, for the spirit of our brother was found to be not in the flesh.'

Caleb, evangelist, was born of Christian parents. His father, after his conversion, was for upwards of twenty-five years a mission agent. He had a great desire to see his sons employed in mission work. For this he constantly prayed, and God

gave him the desire of his heart. He lived to see two of his sons engaged in active service under the superintendence of the Rev. E. Lewis, in the Santhapuram district. Caleb, the elder of the two, received a good training for his work, first in the village school at Atticadu (now Wioapuram), then in Mr. Lewis's theological class, and lastly in the seminary at Nagercoil. Caleb appears to have been a diligent and painstaking student.

On leaving the seminary in 1857, Caleb was employed as a teacher in the girls' boarding school at Santhapuram, under the care of Mrs. Lewis. In this large and important institution there was great scope for usefulness, which Caleb was not slow to avail himself of.

Caleb's first sphere of labour as a catechist was Putthalam. Here, as would appear, he gained the respect and esteem both of Christians and heathens, and was not unsuccessful. On the recommendation of the Rev. F. Wilkinson, he was received by the committee as an evangelist, which office he held till death. Kulathuvila, Agasteespuram, and Koduppaculi had the advantage respectively of his evangelistic labours and teaching. As a preacher, Caleb was always acceptable, never dull, sometimes striking, often pathetic. When I say that I regret his loss from my staff of helpers, I am saying not a little in his favour.

He was carried off by a disorder that had been undermining his constitution for some years. The

night previous to his death he said to his brother, 'I am a great sinner, but I have thrown my whole burden on Him who taketh away the sins of the world.' Afterwards he said to his sorrowing friends, 'There is no need for tears. I am going to a world where all is joy.' The next morning he was cheerful and strong in faith. Having requested his friends who stood at his bedside to pray with him, he shortly after peacefully passed away to the joy of his Lord.

Isaac, catechist, was a native of Vadalivilei, near Nagercoil. In his youth and early manhood he hated Christians and Christianity, and would often abuse and curse them. He was a most enthusiastic idolater. Having been induced to read some of our tracts, he became convinced of the error and folly of his ways, and, without delay, declared his renunciation of heathenism and his acceptance of Christianity. This step brought on him the rage and abhorrence of his parents and kinsfolk, banishment from home, village and property, as well as other cruel hardships. All this he 'endured, as seeing Him who is invisible,' and this faith enabled him to hold fast the truth he had newly embraced. The Rev. C. Mault soon saw that this man might be turned to useful account in the Mission, and so, after some training, Isaac became a catechist. In this capacity he laboured for thirty-five years in various parts of the Nagercoil district with diligence, faithfulness, and success.

Though not an educated man, he knew and understood the Scriptures, and his acquaintance with the writings of Hindu poets made him an attractive preacher to the heathen. His great hatred of heathenism, and daring in attacking and exposing it, led him sometimes into trouble. Once, at Kottar, he narrowly escaped being beaten to death by heathens and Mohammedans, who fell on him with great fury after an excited discussion.

He loved prayer. He would never begin anything without first seeking direction of God and asking His blessing on the undertaking. He was a man of keen sympathy. Often while preaching and praying he would burst into tears. Hence some of his addresses and public prayers were uncommonly effective. If he thought that he had offended any one, he would not rest until he had asked and obtained forgiveness, and he was never unwilling to forgive those who had trespassed against him.

Love of truth is not, by any means, a common quality in India. Most people lie as a matter of course. Isaac, to his honour, or rather to the honour of Divine grace be it said, had a great horror of lying. He would speak the truth at any cost. I am sorry to say that this trait caused him to be disliked by some.

After nine months' suffering, this catechist died in peace, in the fifty-eighth year of his age and the thirty-fifth of his ministry. During his illness,

it seemed to be a great satisfaction to him that his son Pakkyanathan had given himself to the Lord's service as a catechist.

Yovan, superintending catechist, was a man of striking appearance. He had a large robust frame, with a Kymric face. His mind corresponded with his body: it was not of the common order. He knew no English, and having been employed as a village schoolmaster at the early age of thirteen, he could have had but few educational advantages. Still he stood in the first rank among our agents. Indeed, he not only kept abreast of our young men; in some things, such as the higher branches of Tamil grammar and poetry, few, if any, equalled him. He was not a great preacher, but his intellectual abilities and character, his knowledge and wisdom, and his quiet devotion to the cause of the Redeemer, won him a respect from his fellow-labourers and others, such as scarcely any one has gained with so few adventitious aids.

At the age of thirteen, Yovan was employed as a schoolmaster in Nagercoil district; and at the age of twenty-four he became a catechist. As he was well versed in what was then commonly called learning, was a clever native physician, and skilful in poetical composition, he was much respected by the people. His own house was in the Neyoor district, but he accompanied the Rev. J. Abbs to Pareychaley; and from that time till his death this district had the benefit of his labours. His last sphere of work was in two

congregations, both of which prospered under his devoted care. About two years before his death he thought of retiring, but resolved first to rebuild the chapel at Mangarei, which was in a bad condition. He urged the people to raise funds, and having contributed generously himself, he pushed on the work, so that the roof was soon completed and the building thatched.

Just at this time he began to suffer from an affection of the brain, and was obliged to remain away from his congregations for nearly three months. During this period the native missionary visited him one day when he seemed to be in possession of his senses, and asked him, 'Do you continue to pray to Jesus, or do you find your love to Him become cold?' He remained silent, hanging down his head; and on looking at his face he was seen to be weeping. He then answered, 'Shall I forget Him whom I have served so long? I do pray to Him as often as I can: it is His love that now sustains and comforts me.'

After he had quite recovered the use of his faculties, he came to the missionary, expressing a wish to resume his duties, but was advised to finish the chapel building, and then retire from exhausting labour. His reply was: 'I shall not retire, but continue my work as long as I am able to do anything for my Master.' He recommenced his work, but, alas! three weeks after, having conducted the Sunday morning service at Mangarei, he went in the

heat of the day to the other congregation, and there, while conducting the noon service, fell suddenly on his face. He lingered speechless for six days, and then resigned his spirit to the Lord. He died in the seventy-second year of his age and in the fifty-ninth year of his mission work.

John Moses was born in 1828, of Roman Catholic parents, at Mayanadu, near Quilon. Four years afterwards his parents became Protestants, joining the London Mission under the superintendence of the Rev. J. C. Thompson. They were God-fearing people, especially the mother, who would send her son even in his boyhood to the houses of heathen neighbours to read the Scriptures to them, and often expressed the wish that her children would become catechists and teachers. She taught Moses in his childhood to pray morning, noon, and evening, sometimes at midnight also, contributed from her small means to the support of the Mission, and engaged in kindly conversation on religious subjects with those who called upon her.

Converts from Romanism have thus often proved most devoted Christians and preachers, arising, no doubt, from their early training to reverence and devotion, and some acquaintance with Christian truth. This good woman, whose name was Anna, died on 5th September, 1873, at the age of seventy-eight, leaving behind her a fragrant memory of piety and love. Her end was peace, and her dying testimony to her son was that she was prepared to

depart, and all was joy with her. Such a mother and such training must have had great influence in forming the character of the son and preparing him for future usefulness.

At the age of six, Moses went to the village school, and at twelve he was placed under the care of Mr. Thompson, in the boarding school, where he was diligent and obedient, took an interest in the Scripture lessons, and was attentive to the duties of private and public prayer. He learnt Tamil, as well as his own language, Malayalam, so that afterwards he could preach in either language; but he was unable to make any progress in English. He acquired a considerable knowledge of the Hindu vernacular books, and could quote from them freely in his intercourse and discussions with heathens.

About 1846, Moses was spiritually awakened and converted to God, and shortly afterwards obtained employment in the Mission as a schoolmaster. Speaking of this period, he said on the occasion of his ordination: 'At the age of eighteen, the Lord was pleased to awaken me from the sleep of sin, and this was a most memorable period of my life. I was at first sunk in fear and sorrow, but read the Scriptures and prayed with tears in places of retirement. God, through His beloved Son, granted me comfort and peace of mind. Thenceforward I felt less concern to fulfil my own desires; and my youthful pleasures were seen to be unprofitable. Many temptations, fears and dangers have

encompassed me, but in them all my merciful Saviour has been with me. He began the good work in me, and will maintain it unto the end.'

After the death of Mr. Thompson, in 1850, Moses was transferred from Quilon to the Trevandrum district, and employed as an assistant catechist in the congregation of Nellikakuri; then as catechist at Kodianur-Konam; and again for some time in his native village, where he was desirous to preach to his own people. Earnestly and successfully he laboured amongst Protestants, Roman Catholics and others. His life was a model to his own congregation; and opponents he addressed with great gentleness and affection, united with moral courage and boldness. None of his time did he spend on private business, but was constantly devoted to study, and teaching and prayer, visiting the sick, and other good works. At all times his prayerfulness was remarkable.

From 1862, for about four years, Moses laboured as an itinerant preacher to the heathen in Trevandrum and the surrounding country, for which work he was well fitted. He earnestly sought out places where the Gospel had not previously been proclaimed, and often had to endure hardships from heat and cold, malaria and hunger, wild beasts and dangerous roads. He afterwards returned to Mayanadu and Quilon as a catechist, or virtually village pastor, the whole work of the ministry,

except the administration of the sacraments, being usually committed to such tried agents.

While stationed at Quilon this devoted man was ordained in Trevandrum, on the 14th November, 1877. Thenceforward Moses proved himself more than ever a true servant of God, and he enjoyed two or three years of happy and useful labour as a pastor and native missionary, in addition to his thirty years of service in subordinate positions. His ordination not only increased his sphere of usefulness, but served to bring him as a model Christian pastor before the notice of our own people, the Syrian priests, and Christians of the surrounding country, and the heathen of various classes, all of whom acknowledged his worth. He was full of sweetness and charity to all, displaying a childlike spirit; and European gentlemen and native officers of high rank would sometimes listen to his exhortations and affectionate teachings. One judge became a regular member of his church.

His salary was but a pound per month, scarcely sufficient for his wants, but he did his best to make it suffice. Out of his small income he was accustomed to entertain strangers and help the poor. Having some knowledge of native medicine, several patients were restored to health by his benevolent treatment and earnest prayers. He sought not to lay up treasure on earth, and at his death left only a few books and clothes and household requisites. Indeed, he had abstained from the management of

a small hereditary property in order to devote himself more fully to his work; and for the same reason he remained unmarried all his life. Of this I have never known another instance in Travancore. He managed to provide for and train up several children of his widowed sister, though from one of them he received only the deepest ingratitude.

Tall and thin, and somewhat Jewish in features, Moses usually dressed after the manner of the Syrian priests, in long white cotton coat, loose trousers, and cap. He assumed the surname of Apadaptaswam, an attempted translation of the name Moses into Sanskrit. He was a great student of the Bible, and able to repeat many portions from memory. Several devotional lyrics composed by him in Malayalam occupy a place in our hymn-book, and are used in congregational worship. His sermons were clear and practical, delivered in choice language and with warmth and power. He would quote the Scriptures rapidly and impressively from memory, and drew beautiful pictures of the Christian life and character.

Moses was one of the few who have fully carried out in actual life the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount—meekness and mercy, purity and peace, forgiveness and patience in suffering—and he now assuredly enjoys the blessings pronounced on such. When reviled or exposed to harsh language, though inwardly hurt, he answered not again, but was 'gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in

meekness correcting them that oppose themselves.'

Even at the time of his ordination Moses was not physically strong, and some time afterwards a slow and wasting consumption began to develop. For a whole year he was seriously ill, and for the last four months almost confined to the sick bed, under treatment by our medical missionary and the surgeon in charge of the military station of Quilon. Yet he was never sad, fretful, or unhappy, but hopeful, and desirous of reaching the blessed kingdom of his Heavenly Father. Such a life as his could have only a happy end.

Even while suffering great pain, Moses was supported by the love of the Saviour. From his bed, and to the last, he preached Christ, and exhorted his visitors to follow Him. To him death had no terrors. He commended his flock into the hands of the Great Shepherd, saying, 'O precious Saviour, have mercy on Thy Church, and save the lambs of Thy flock. Send a faithful pastor.' His relatives he comforted by saying: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Trust in Him.'

On one occasion he exclaimed: 'I see the kingdom of my Father. Oh, how bright is His face! Are those heavenly hosts for my comfort?' At another time he said: 'Lord, I thank Thee for Thy mercy.' And his face lighting up with joy, he cried: 'Is this my portion? I have not long to wait now. Can it be that there is indeed so much joy for me?' His

dying words were: 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!' and he fell asleep in Jesus on 3rd September, 1880.

We have here a beautiful life and character, such as the Indian Church will perhaps produce in greater abundance than the more forceful and imperious English type. We need many more such men for India, and a few singularly devoted and qualified men might greatly hasten on the evangelisation of that vast empire. 'It might alter the whole history of our work; it might crowd into a day the moral result of a century of labour, if some strong, noble, large-hearted son of India should be baptized with the Spirit and filled with the Word of God.' Reformers of high moral character and wide-spread influence have already, from time to time, appeared in the religious history of India, but they were unacquainted with the Gospel, the only remedy for the sin and woe of mankind. Let the reader unite with us in praying that many such may be raised up by the Providence and grace of God from amongst the multitudes of children in our mission schools, of students under training in our mission seminaries and colleges, and even from the ranks of those who are now zealous heathen priests and devotees of idolatry.

So shall the bright succession run
Through the last courses of the sun;
While unborn churches, by their care,
Shall rise and flourish, large and fair.

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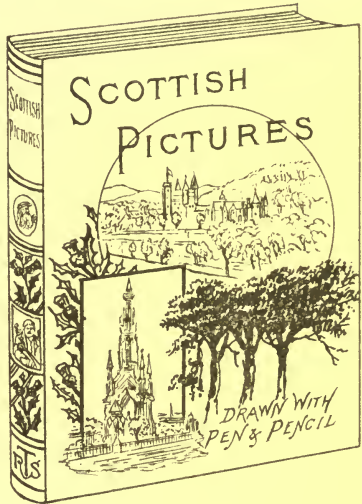
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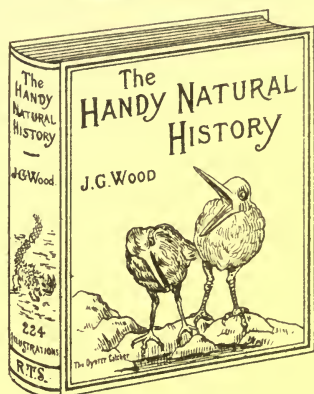
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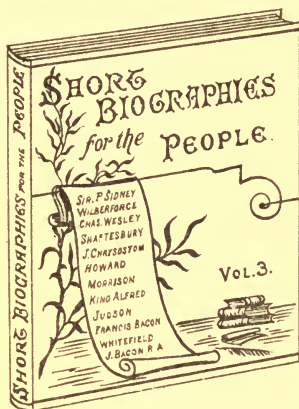
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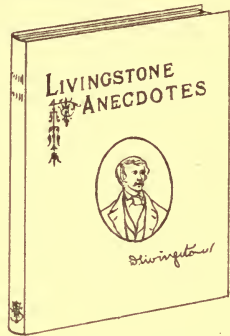
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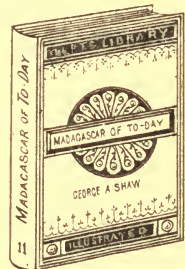
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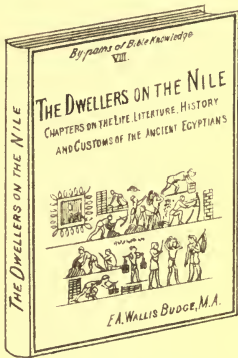
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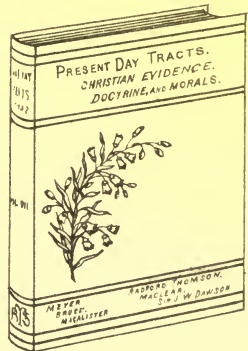
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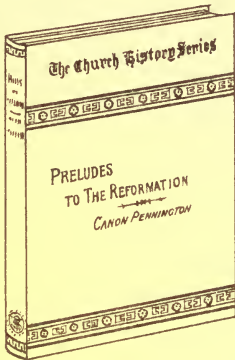
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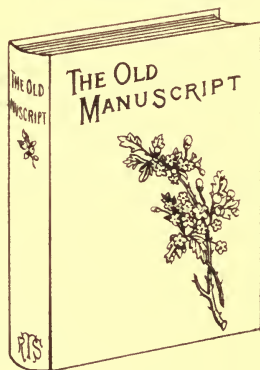
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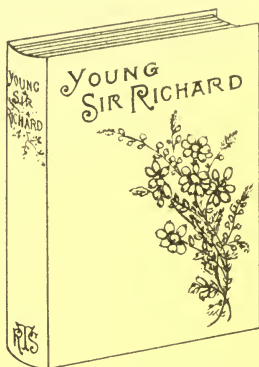
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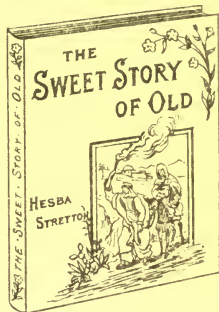
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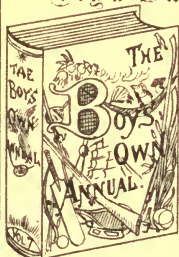
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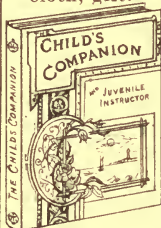


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