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INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ON RELIGIOUS INDIA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education

by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

India is the mother of four religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Zoroastrianism, Islam and Christianity entered India as foster children. There is no land comparable to India in the variegated expressions of its beliefs, which add picturesqueness to its country and diversity to the people.

Religion plays an important part in the life of an Indian. Durant calls India, "The Paradise of the Gods," and then goes on to say:

In no country religion is so powerful, or so important, as in India. If the Hindus have permitted alien governments to be set over them again and again it is partly because they do not care much who ruled or exploited them--natives or foreigners; the crucial matter was religion not politics; the soul not the body; endless later lives rather than this passing one. When Asoka became Saint, and Akbar almost adopted Hinduism, the power of religion was revealed over even strongest men.¹

Still in this religious India the rights according to the constitution are:

1. No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of state funds.
2. Nothing in clause (1) shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the state but has

¹ H. Durant, The Story of Civilization, Our Oriental Heritage (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1942), p. 503.

been established under any endowment or trust which required that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

3. No person attending any educational institution recognized by the state or receiving aid out of state funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto.²

Educationally India is behind many countries of the world. As yet only about fifteen percent of the population is literate. There are many reasons for this. However, at present India is moving forward at a very rapid rate.

The purpose of this study. The purpose of this study was to show the influence that Christian education has had on the character, life and education of the people of India.

The first part of this thesis has been devoted to showing the life and educational provisions of ancient India. The founding of new religions for a better way of life and the religious movements of modern India which were brought in; and finally the coming of Christian missionaries and their influence as a whole are discussed. Although the Christian population of India is only about two percent of the total, it has had great influence on the people as a whole and this the people of India realize. H. D. Bollinger in

² Constitution of India.

"What are Students of India Thinking?" said that while he was in India he was talking one day to two Hindus on the train.

I asked them if the missionaries had done any good in India and if they thought they should stay. Both of them were instant in their response and emphatic in the fact that they thought missionaries had done great good for India. They said it would be tragic for the nation if missionaries should leave. In this connection I thought of a statement that a doctor gave me, namely, to the effect that 90 to 95% of the women nurses of India and most of Indian women doctors received their training in mission hospitals. This is one contribution of missions to the life of our nation.³

The statement of the problem. The problem was to trace briefly the educational developments in India and to show the influence of Christian education in general on the culture of religious India.

³ H. D. Bollinger, "What are the Students of India Thinking?" World Outlook, XII (April, 1953), p. 30.

CHAPTER II

AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW OF ANCIENT INDIA

Life. The civilization of India is considered to be one of the oldest. The excavations at Mohenjadaro show remains of what seemed to be an older civilization than any yet known to historians. Sir John Marshal estimates the age of these remains:

The discoveries established the existence in Sind (the Northernmost province of the Bombay Presidency) and Punjab, during the fourth and third millennium B. C., of a highly developed city life; and the presence in many of the houses, of the walls and bathrooms as well as an elaborate drainage system, betoken a social condition of the citizens at least equal to that found in Simer, and superior to that prevailing in contemporary Babylonia and Egypt Even at Ur the houses are by no means equal in point of construction to those of Mohenjadaro.⁴

The lowermost layer of these remains showed more highly developed art than the upper. Among the things found there were all kinds of household utensils painted and plain, coins, chessmen, different kinds of seals, weapons and all kinds of silver and gold jewelry. "So well finished and so highly polished," says Marshal, "That they might have come out of a Bond Street Jewelers of today rather than from a prehistoric house of 5,000 years ago."⁵

⁴ J. Marshal, "The Prehistoric Civilization of India," Illustrated London News, January 7, 1938, Cited by Durant, p. 395.

⁵ Loc. cit.

The original inhabitants of India were Dravidians and their religion was animistic. These people were already civilized people when the Aryans invaded India. They were driven into the south, where today Deccan is essentially Dravidian in stock, language, custom, art, literature, etc.

The earliest records of Hindu culture are found in the Vedas. The Vedic literature goes back to 2000 B. C. or even 2500 B. C. These Vedas are the outpourings of Aryans as they came into the rich land of India and brought their ideas with them. They are collections of hymns, prayers, rituals for sacrifice, magic and poetry.

The early Vedic religion as far as can be ascertained had no temples or images. There was no idolatry except that altars were used for sacrifices. There was no caste system in the Vedic period but that period marks the beginning of it. The Aryans saw that if they intermingled with the other original tribes they would soon lose their racial characteristics. And so in order to prevent it, they laid restrictions on intermarriage. This was the first caste division and was by color, not by status. It is said that in its later profusion of hereditary, racial and occupational divisions the caste system hardly existed in Vedic times.⁶

⁶ Ibid., p. 398, citing Davids, Buddhist India, pp. 56-62.

From the Vedic age India passed to the Heroic age (1000-500 B. C.). Conditions changed from those described as prevailing in Mahabharata and Ramayana. Occupations became more civilized and heredity and caste became more rigid. The main occupation of the people in those days was farming and raising cattle. There were, we are assured, no landlords and no paupers, no millionaires and no slums.⁷ All the people had enough and were happy. The cows were not sacred for these people. There is always mention of sacrifices of bullocks. They even ate pork. It is said Buddha, after nearly starving himself in his ascetic youth, seems to have died from a hearty meal of pork.⁸

Durant says that in the towns handicrafts flourished. There were organized groups of different artisans, stone-workers, leather workers, ivory workers, potters, sailors, dyers, hunters, butchers, confectioners, barbers, florists, cooks, etc. This list shows the variety of Indo-Aryan life. This all was found five hundred years before Christ.⁹

The trade in those times was not very good, because of the clumsy methods used. The barter system was the first method of exchange. Later heavy coins were used, which were

⁷ Ibid., p. 399, citing R. Mand Parekh, M. C. Mahatama Gandhi, p. 37.

⁸ Ibid., p. 400, citing Buddhist India, p. 46.

⁹ Loc. cit.

possessed only by private individuals. There were no banks and money was hoarded in homes. These primitive methods still exist in many places, especially among illiterate people of India. But Durant says:

Commercial morality stood on a high level those days. The Greek historians of Alexander's campaign describe the Hindus as remarkable for integrity, so reasonable as seldom to have recourse to lawsuits, and so honest as to require neither locks to their doors nor writings to bind their agreements; they are in highest degree truthful.¹⁰

The women enjoyed more freedom in Vedic times, appearing freely at feasts and joining with men in religious ceremonies. Also they had more to say in the choice of their life partner than in later times and if left widowed, they were allowed to remarry but these freedoms were lost in the heroic age. Women were discouraged from appearing in public and their seclusion was begun. The practice of Sutee, or burning of the widow with her husband's body increased.

Literature, science, art and astronomy. While the earliest records of Hindu culture are found in the Vedas, the inscriptions on stone and copper, palm leaf records of temples, and in later days the manufacture of paper indicate not only a general knowledge of, but also the common use of the art of writing. The origin of the art of writing is not known

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 401.

as the Vedas contain no hint concerning it. The priests formed the learned class as for hundreds of years their discoveries were handed down by word of mouth. Webster says that India had no highly developed system till the fifth century B. C. In the third century inscriptions began to appear in the Brahman alphabet, the parent of nearly all the modern alphabets of India. This is not a native script. The invention is traced back to Phoenician script, which was brought to India from Western Asia by Hindu merchants.¹¹ Once an alphabet was introduced it was made over and improved. The letters increased in number to thirty-eight providing a symbol for every sound in the Sanskrit language arranged on a phonetic basis according to the vocal organs chiefly used in pronunciation. It is said in its final form the Brahman is more complete and consistent than any other of the world's alphabets.¹² For a long time writing was only used for commercial and administrative purposes, so it is seen that merchants not priests developed the art of writing. Later for the sake of interpreting the sacred language of the Vedas, much attention was given to grammar and philology and because of this lexicons and other aids to language study were compiled at an early date. The oldest inscriptions are those of

¹¹ H. Webster, History of Civilization (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1940), p. 115.

¹² Loc. cit.

the Asoka. Even the Buddhist canon does not appear to have been written down before the third century B. C. It is hard to imagine how long after India learned to write, she clung to old ways of transmitting literature by recitation and memory.

Sanskrit is one of the oldest of the "Indo-European" group of languages. It was a classic and literary tongue used only by scholars and priests. Languages were many at that time, each tribe having its own language. In fact, India has never been a land of one language.

In North India in the fifth century B. C. Sanskrit was transformed into Prakrit, which became the language of the Buddhist and Jains. By the end of the tenth century B. C. these languages had given rise to various vernaculars, chief of which is Hindi. In the fifth century Kharosthi script was adopted from Semitic models and in those early times palm leaves and bark served as writing material and an iron stylus as pen.

There are a number of books from that era written on various subjects, which are called Shastras. This word now has come to mean Scriptures or holy writings, but it was once applied to every kind of knowledge and science from mathematics to dancing. In fact, in those days the line between secular and religious knowledge was not strictly drawn. Pandit Mehru in his book, Discovery of India, says about

medical science:

Medicine had its text books and there were hospitals. Dhanivantri is the legendary form of the Indian science of medicine. The best known ancient text books, however, date from the early centuries of the Christian era. These are by Charak on medicine and Sushutra on surgery. These text books enumerate a large number of diseases and give methods of diagnosis and treatment. They deal with surgery, obstetrics, baths, diet, hygiene, infant feeding and medical education.¹³

There were even hospitals for animals.. This was probably due to the influence of Jainism and Buddhism with their emphasis on non-violence. There were books on training elephants.

Ancient India made some outstanding discoveries in mathematics. It gave to the world Arabic numerals, which Arabs brought into Western Asia and Europe in the Middle Ages. The zero sign, decimal system, minus sign, and the use in algebra of letters of the alphabet to denote unknown quantities came from India. No definite date for these discoveries is known but it is clear that the beginnings of arithmetic, algebra and geometry were laid in the earliest period of India's recorded history.

Nehru says of the numerology of ancient India:

Ten formed the basis of enumeration in India even at the time of the Rib Veda. The time and number sense of ancient Indians was extraordinary. They had long series of number names for very high numerals. The Greeks,

¹³ J. Nehru, The Discovery of India (Calcutta: The Signet Press, 1946), p. 89.

Romans, Persians and Arabs had apparently no terminology for denominations above the thousands or at most myriad ($10^6 = 10,000$). In India there were eighteen specific denominations (10^{18}) and there are even longer lists. In the story of Buddha's early education he is reported to have named denominations up to 10^{50} .

At the other end of the scale there was a minute division of time in which the smallest unit was approximately one-seventeenth of a given second and the smallest lineal measure as something which approximates to 1.3×7^{-10} inches. All these large and small figures were no doubt entirely theoretical and used for philosophical purposes. Never the less the old Indians, unlike the other ancient nations had vast conceptions of time and space.¹⁴

There was music and dancing in ancient India, music in India having had a history of three thousand years. Like all other poetry Vedic hymns were written to be sung. The dance in Hindu culture through the greater part of history has been a form of worship, a display of beauty in motion and rhythm for the honor and praise of God. Durant says:

To Hindus these dances were no mere display of flesh, they were in one aspect, an initiation of the rhythms and processes of the universe. Shiva himself was the God of the dance, and the dance of Shiva symbolized the very movement of the world.¹⁵

Indian music is written in scales more subtle and minute than English. To the Western scale of twelve tones it adds ten micro tones, making a scale of twenty-two quarter tones in all. It can be written in Sanskrit notation. But usually it was neither written nor read, but passed down by

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁵ Durant, op. cit., p. 586.

ear from generation to generation.

Fine art in India owes its development to religion. Enormous amounts of labor and wealth were spent on images of the gods. The earliest structures in India were made of perishable wood so nothing remains of them. From the third century onward all were made of stone. So all surviving monuments date from that time onward. India is still a land of temples and statues in spite of the wasting hand of time and destruction brought by idol smashing. Moslems are responsible for the destruction of many masterpieces.

The temples of India were made magnificent with their gateways, porches, and high towers with their variety of ornamental designs. Indian painting has a history of many thousands of years. Paintings may be still found in prehistoric caves of Singanpur and Mirzapur. "The Vinaya Patika (ca. 300 B. C.) refers to King Pasendas palace as containing picture galleries, and Fa-Hien and Yuan Chiwang describes many buildings as famous for the excellence of their murals;"¹⁶ but no trace of these structures remains. The paintings of Ajanta caves are most beautiful. Durant says about the early art of India, "It reached a perfection never excelled even by Giotto or Leonardo."¹⁷ There temples in caves are carved

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 589.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 589.

out of the rocky mountain sides. For a long time they remained unseen after the decay of Buddhism and the growth of jungles around them. In 1819 Europeans stumbled on to these ruins and were amazed to see this work. On these walls are pictures of Buddhist saints. It is said that here at Ajanta religious devotion fused architecture and painting into happy unity and produced one of the sovereign monuments of Hindu art.¹⁸

The study of astronomy was especially pursued and it often merged into astrology. The astronomers of India distinguished twenty-seven or twenty-eight lunar mansions named after conspicuous constellations through which the moon pursues her apparent path in the heavens.¹⁹ The Hindu calendar was a lunar calendar.

Educational system. The Hindu educational system may be called the mother of all educational systems in India. It was open only for the upper classes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas.

The aims of education in ancient India were two-fold, religious and vocational. The Brahmins taught the Vedas, which were religious books. The Kshatriyas and Vaishyas

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 590.

¹⁹ Webster, op. cit., p. 115.

furthered vocational and educational training including philosophy, myths, lives of heroes, the art of fighting and the art of manufacturing.

As far as history can be traced the educational system has always been in the hands of the clergy, was open first only to the sons of Brahmins and later on to other high castes. It is said every village had a school master, who was supported out of public funds. Durant describes it thus:

Children went to the village school from September to February; entering at the age of five and leaving at the age of eight.²⁰

Instruction was chiefly of a religious character, no matter what the subject; rote memorizing was the usual method, and the Vedas were the inevitable text. The three R's were included, but were not the main concern of education; character was rated above intellect, and discipline was the essence of schooling. We do not hear of flogging, or of other severe measures, but we find that stress was laid above all upon the formation of wholesome and proper habits of life.²¹

At the age of eight the pupil passed to the more formal care of a Guru, or a personal teacher and guide, with whom the student was to live, preferably till he was twenty. Services, sometimes menial, were required of him, and he was pledged to continence, modesty, cleanliness, and a meatless diet.²²

Instruction was now given him in "five shastras" or

²⁰ Durant, op. cit., p. 557, citing Venkateswara, p. 83.

²¹ Loc. cit., citing Venkateswara, p. 85.

²² Loc. cit., citing Venkateswara, p. 114.

sciences: grammar, arts and crafts, medicine, logic and philosophy. Education came one-fourth from the teacher, and one-fourth from private study, one-fourth from one's fellows, and one-fourth from life.²³

At about the age of sixteen the student finished his work under the Guru and was qualified to go to one of the universities of which there were several such as Banares, Taxila, Nalanda, Ajanta, Vidarbha and Ujjain. Taxila is the oldest of the two thousand cities of North India. It was both a military and a university town, situated on the main road to western Asia and containing the most famous of the original universities.

Students flocked to Taxila as in the Middle Ages they flocked to Paris; there all arts and sciences could be studied under eminent professors and the medical school especially was held in high repute through out the Oriental world.²⁴

Banares was the stronghold of Hindu teachings and still is. Ujjain was outstanding for astronomy, Ajanta for teaching art and Nalanda as a Buddhist school.

It is not known that there were any schools for girls. In Vedic times there were educated women taking part in religious discussion, but not in the heroic age. It was not thought proper to give education to girls.

²³ Loc. cit., citing Venkateswara p. 83.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 442.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Hinduism. Religion plays a very important part in the life of an Indian. Netram says:

Religion in India is not a matter for great occasions, or one day in the week, or even for temple services. It is a thread on which a Hindu's daily life is strung. His bath, his meals, his relations with wife and friends and servants, his journeys, his business transactions, are all regulated and sanctified by religious rule.²⁵

Hinduism has been the sovereign religion over the hearts of the people, because for more than two thousand years people did not know any other religion but Hinduism.

During the pre-Vedic age there were conceptions of deity among the Aryans. Mason says Varuna, "the encompasser" the name given to the infinite vault of heaven, was the first conception of deity. In the Vedas are still found hymns addressed to Varuna.²⁶

Later their gods which were the forces of nature as sun, rain, and fire, were combined and worshipped as "Om." This notion of triad, indefinitely multiplied, runs throughout the whole Hindu religion. The Vedas speak of God as "thrice eleven" in number, while later ages give the number as thirty-three millions.

²⁵ J. D. Netram, Will India Become Christian? (New York: Richard R. Smith, Indiana, 1930), p. 6.

²⁶ C. Atwater Mason, New Christ, An Outline Study of India (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 8.

The Vedas give no sanction to the doctrine of transmigration, the burning of widows, the prevalence of child marriage, the caste system and idol worship. But in spite of freedom from all these later Brahmanisms says William Boden, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, they will be found when taken as a whole, to abound more in puerile ideas than in lofty conceptions.²⁸ Also Max Muller, the first translator of Vedas, says large numbers of the Vedic hymns are childish in the extreme.²⁹

Brahmanism. It is the second phase of Vedic religion. It derives its name from "Brahma" the supreme soul of the universe. The Brahmins interpreted Vedas according to their will and for their own benefit. This system became more and more corrupt. A fourfold order of caste developed from Rig Veda hymns.

The caste system. It is a unique system. Jones says, "No other people in the history of the world have enriched a social structure comparable to this of India."³⁰ India does not recognize distinctions between the social and the

²⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁹ Loc. cit.

³⁰ J. P. Jones, India It's Life and Thought (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908), p. 91.

religious. Religion to the Hindu permeates the whole social domain; and the social order draws its sanctions from and is enforced by the penalties of religion. Caste dictates every detail of human relationship and controls the whole destiny of man for time and eternity.³¹ In this caste system the high caste Brahmans enjoyed life while low caste people and untouchables were exploited. Durant says that the power of the Brahmans was based upon a monopoly of knowledge. They were the custodians and remakers of tradition, the educators of children, the composers or editors of literature, the experts versed in the inspired and infallible Vedas. If a Sudra listened to the reading of the Scripture his ears (according to Brahmanical law books) were to be filled with molten lead; if he recited it his tongue was to be split; if he committed it to memory he was to be cut in two; such were the threats, seldom enforced, with which the priests guarded their wisdom.³²

The Brahmans did not work to earn their living but were maintained by public and private gifts not as charity but as sacred obligation. Brahmans not only acted as priests but trained themselves for the clerical, pedagogical and literary professions. They were required to study law and learn the Vedas; every other duty was subordinated to such

³¹ Ibid., p. 92.

³² Durant, op. cit., p. 485.

study.

The Code of Manu. This consisted of rules of law based on the Vedas and the precepts of the Brahman. These were formulated after the fifth century B. C. The most authoritative of these codes was the Institute of Manu, ascribed to a mythical sage named Manu. Webster says about the code of Manu that it became the basis of Indian jurisprudence and the Magna Charta of Hinduism and the caste system.³³

Mason says:

This code stands for rigid conservatism, for the iron severity of caste . . . with their bitter cruelty, as these indicated. With what-ever member of the body a low-born man may injure his superior, that very member of his body must be mutilated. (Book VIII) A once-born man insulting a twice-born man with abusive language must have his tongue cut out. (Book IX) ³⁴

Upanishads came into existence at about this time. Upon Upanishads are built three systems of Hindu philosophy, Nyaya, Sankhya and Vedanta. The last is the leading philosophy. It has two main principle, the illusions--Maya and Pantheism. It holds that all is God and God is all. It is said that difference is illusory, unimportant and negligible. In reality the world is nothing but an apparent world. It

³³ Webster, op. cit., p. 115.

³⁴ Mason, op. cit., p. 12.

says that no human being or earthly event has value. That is one of the reasons why ancient records of India cannot be found. Nothing was important enough to be written down.

The god Brahma is the supreme being. The Brahma power is at the heart of the world and all events are to be regarded as its manifestations.

In the language of traditional religion, that "It" may be called the power of prayer (Brahma). But philosophically Brahma is to be interpreted as the absolute, infinite, eternal, omnipresent, impersonal, indescribable, neuter being. It may also be designated as spirit (atman), a world soul, into which the individual human spirit is also to be merged.³⁵

This idea of illusion makes the individual personality unreal, something to be transcended. One not only must get rid of his evil nature but also of his individuality. Salvation is simply a realization of one's self as free from all changes.

Sherwood Eddy says:

This has made the highest religious type of India to be not the apostle or the benefactor, who seeks to bless others by words or deeds, but the ascetic whose main virtue is renunciation and whose main concern is his own salvation.³⁶

There is no difference between good and evil, since all is illusion. These words are just the expression of our

³⁵ R. E. Hume, The World's Living Religions (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 24.

³⁶ S. Eddy, India Awakening (New York: Missionary Movement of U. S. A. and Canada, 1911), pp. 38-39.

imperfect senses.

Doctrine of Karma. A Hindu believes that a man dies and is determined by his Karma (deeds) in this life. The accepted number of rebirths is 8,400,000. They believe that what one is now is the exact result of what he has been in the past. In other words good works will reward a man with being born in a high caste and a good home, without them he may take the form of some animal or even a woman. For this reason all life is sacred to a Hindu and they do not eat meat. This is one thing which has hindered the progress of India. It makes the people satisfied in whatever condition they find themselves because their plight is punishment for their previous doings. This belief has developed much superstition among the Hindus and especially among low caste illiterate people.

Jainism. It is a religion of asceticism; not much is known about it. Yet it holds a notable place among the religious systems and philosophies of India.

It is the oldest personally founded religion in India. Mahavira was the founder and his purpose was to reform Hinduism. It is against the animal sacrifices and caste divisions of Hinduism. It resembles in some respects Buddhism which was founded later.

Jainism never went out of India. It holds an important

place in the architecture and archeology of India. The oldest brick stupa at Mathura bearing an inscription of very early date is supposed to belong to the Jains. There is a very small group of Jains in India. They are wealthy business people and most orthodox.

Buddhism. Thirty-two years after Jainism, Buddhism was founded. It was the first religion in the world to become international.

Buddha did not set out to form a new religion but to reform Hinduism. Later Buddhism was recognized as a separate faith. Buddha was against caste division. His message was simple and that was to save oneself. He said that the world is full of misery and sorrow and saving oneself from this means to kill self-desire. Self-desire is the cause of all suffering. In order to escape from suffering men must follow a noble eight-fold path based on self renunciation and simple living:

1. Right belief, without superstition or delusion.
2. Right aspiration, after such things as the thoughtful and earnest man sets store by.
3. Right speech, speech that is friendly and sincere.
4. Right conduct, conduct that is peaceable, honorable and pure.
5. Right means of livelihood, i.e., a pursuit which does not involve the taking of life.

6. Right endeavor, i.e., self restraint and watchfulness.

7. Right meditation, i.e., earnest occupation with the riddles of life.³⁷

Buddhism was taught to people through conversation, lectures and parables. The founder Buddha claimed enlightenment, but not inspiration. His main emphasis was "ahimsa," that is not to kill any living thing.

Though Buddhism was founded in India it never became dominant there. In fact it almost died out in India while spreading in other countries.

³⁷ George A. Barton, The Religions of the World (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1917), p. 100.

CHAPTER III

RELIGIONS IN MODERN INDIA

Islam. The Mohammedan conquest of India is said to be the bloodiest story in history. The first Moslem attack was made in 664 A. D. These attacks continued for about three centuries during which time the Mohammedans took much wealth away from India. The internal divisions and wars within the country made it possible for them to conquer India. The actual Moslem conquest took place about 1000 A. D.

These conquerors brought their religion and culture with them. They had no tolerance toward other religions, especially idol worshippers. Durant says that all of them were armed with a religion militaristic in operation but far superior in its stoical monotheism to any of the popular cults of India. They concealed its attractiveness by making the public exercise of the Hindu religion illegal and thereby driving Hindus more deeply into the Hindu soul.³⁸

The people were forced to become Mohammedans and those who did not were persecuted and almost reduced to poverty, for the Mohammedans thought that such persecution was the only way to put down and control the Hindus.

³⁸ Durant, op. cit., p. 459.

According to Durant these sufferings resulted in Indian culture becoming a matter of the inner life:

This is the secret of the political history of modern India weakened by divisions, it succumbed to invaders; impoverished by invaders, it lost all power of resistance, and took refuge in the supernatural consolations; it argued that both mastery and slavery were superficial delusions, and concluded that freedom of the body or the nation was hardly worth defending in so brief a life. The bitter lesson that may be drawn from this tragedy is that eternal vigilance is the price of civilization. A nation must love peace but keep its powder dry.³⁹

The Moghul dynasty brought a high but narrow standard of culture with it. They loved literature as much as the sword. They were greatly interested in poetry. We hear of famous poets during this period who have made some fine contributions to Indian poetry. The most important effect of Moslem rule was the introduction of a new vernacular called Urdu although not much is heard about education during Moslem rule. It was mostly individual, through tutors engaged by prosperous fathers for their sons. There was no education for women.

A religious education program was carried on through the Mosques, where the Mullahs taught the children Koran, their holy book. The method used was memorization, repeating after the teacher and thus committing passages of the Koran to memory without understanding them as the Koran was written in Arabic. Women were never admitted into the mosques.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 463.

The mosques were different from the temples as they were built for congregational worship.

These Mohammedan rulers were fond of beautiful architecture and built beautiful mosques and tombs. In some of them Hindu and Moslem art was combined and they utilized Hindu labor. One of their masterpieces is the "Taj Mahal" of which Jones says:

The Taj has well been described as a work conceived by Titans and finished by jewelers. The grandeur of the conception and the wonderful delicacy of the workmanship cannot fail to impress even the most unlearned in architecture.⁴⁰

This beautiful tomb was built by King Shah Jahan in memory of his favorite wife. Both of them are buried in it.

There are verses of Koran written on different pillars and upon the panel of his own shrine the mourning emperor had these words written from ancient tradition, 'Saith Jesus, or whom peace be, this world is a bridge. Pass thou over it but build not upon. This world is one hour; give its minutes to thy prayers, for the rest is unseen.' One cannot but feel that the Taj is the highest expression of art that human affection and domestic affliction have ever achieved. This is not religion, but it is closely kin to it.⁴¹

In certain respects Mohammedanism is superior to Brahmanism and Buddhism. It contains no pantheism, polytheism, atheism or idolatry. Mohammedans believed in one God Allah. It forbids wine and the practice of gambling.

⁴⁰ Jones, op. cit., p. 46.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 50.

On the other hand the Koran allows polygamy and concubinage. Moslems may marry four wives at one time. There is not much respect for women in it.

Mohammed was the founder of this religion. According to Mohammedans God made his last revelation through Mohammed and no prophet was to come after him. He took many things from Judaism and Christianity. Mohammedans believe Jesus was a prophet but not the son of God. Mohammed preached the doctrine of submission to God and therefore called this new religion "Islam" which means to submit. The Moslem must say his prayers five times a day and there are certain religious observances. Mason says:

Perhaps no class of men can be found more scrupulous in the performance of their religious forms than are Mohammedans, but their religion leaves heart and character untouched, unchanged.⁴²

Mohammedans believe that if they observe these ceremonies and destroy the infidels, they will be rewarded for it in heaven. They will live on milk and honey and beautiful women will serve them.

All the kings of the Moghul dynasty were bigoted Moslems, even fanatics, with a single exception. They did their best to spread Islam.

⁴² Mason, op. cit., p. 118.

Akbar the Great was the only king, who was tolerant toward other religions. During his reign the Jesuit missionaries came. They were welcomed and even allowed to convert people to their faith. Hindus were welcomed in his court, he listened to their doctrine and removed the tax, which all non-Moslems had to pay. He did his best to bring unity among all religions, even forming a new religion by taking something good from all religions. He called this new faith "Din Ilahi" which means religions of one God. He built a temple of all the united religions, hoping that now the inhabitants of India might be brothers worshiping one God. But he was not successful. Many of his own people turned against him. After his death, Islam again came into power and people of other religions were persecuted.

Sikhism. It is the latest among the eleven living religions of the world. It arose from a disposition to harmonize Islam and Brahmanism. It was founded by Guru Nanak in the fifteenth century A. D. Nanak was originally a Hindu but he denounced idolatry and tried to combine the good elements of the Hindu and Moslem faith on the grounds of belief in one God. Hurst says:

But as one looks more clearly into Nanak's principles this is clear that he was more pantheistic than monotheistic. Brahma called by the name Hari, is the author

43 J. F. Hurst, Indika (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891), p. 426.

of all living. He does not create but evolves out of himself. He is thus an expansive force, and the expansions are really manifestations and essences of himself.⁴³

There have been ten Gurus (leaders) in this religion, including the founder. Politically, Sikhism is the only religion except Judaism in the history of the world which has given birth to a nation. From being merely a religious community the adherents of this faith developed a singular capacity for organization, social power and military strength. So when the Moghul emperors saw this they were alarmed and in spite of Sikhism bringing unity, there has been always enmity between Moslems and Sikhs.

The last Guru (leader) Govind Singh became a military leader and organized the Sikhs into an armed force. He added the name Singh, which means lion, to their other names. And set down certain rules. They were to wear their hair long. They must wear an iron bracelet as a sign of "iron will." They were to wear a kind of short trousers and always carry a sword. Each disciple was admitted by a baptismal rite called "Pahul."

The sacred book of the Sikhs is "Granth." It is a collection of poems arranged partly according to authors, but mainly according to the thirty-one different meters used. The original Granth called "Adi Granth" was compiled by the fifth Guru in 1604 A. D. Later the other Guru added pieces to it. The Granth is treated with great reverence which

almost amounts to idolatry. They call it "Granth Sahib" which means "Mr. Book" as if to say the book has a personality. Jones says that in several other particulars this faith is unique. They do not have any idols or altars but meet once a week in their place of worship for prayer and praise. Their preacher reads passages from the "Granth" and prays to their god, who may be reached through the intercession of Nanak his prophet. They sing hymns and do not object to the presence of strangers in their assemblies.⁴⁴

Salvation in Sikhism consists in knowing god, or in obtaining god or in being absorbed into god.⁴⁵

After the weakening of the Mohammedans in 1751 A. D. the Sikhs ruled the North West province of Punjab. They ruled there until 1849 A. D. when the Punjab was taken over by English people.

Zoroastrianism. This religion was brought to India by Parsees who fled to India for shelter in the eighth century A. D. when the Arabs attacked Persia.

It was instituted in Iran, its founder being Zoroaster. It is a monotheistic religion. The sacred book is named "Avesta" which means knowledge. It is made up of prayers

⁴⁴ Jones, op. cit., p. 65.

⁴⁵ Hurst, op. cit., p. 98.

and hymns. Ahura Mazda is the supreme being (Lord of wisdom), the good god. Angra Mainyri is the devil.

A distinctive feature of Zoroastrianism is the doctrine of a fundamental cosmological dualism. One good and evil are co-equal from the beginning of time, and they will continue to limit each other until the end of the world.⁴⁶

The Zoroastrians have been also referred to as fire worshippers. They regard fire, especially the sun, as a symbol of divine light, purity and warmth. The maintenance of an undying sacred fire in connection with formal worship is an important feature of this religion.

Their worship chiefly consists in repeating the prayers of their sacred book. They have both daily and seasonal prayers.

The final hope of its followers is the punishment of the wicked and the reward for the righteous. This was the most persistent message given by Zoroaster.

Immortality was desired or assured at least seventeen times in his Seventeen Gathas. A great revealing bodily resurrection of the dead was intimated by Zoroaster perhaps only once. But the idea occurs frequently and vividly in the later scriptures.⁴⁷

This religion is essentially a religion of good works. Heaven is a reward for good works and hell for evil works.

⁴⁶ Hume, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 208.

Women are respected in this religion. There is no door for entrance into true religion. One is a follower only by birth. Marriage outside the faith is not allowed. The strangest thing in this religion is that they do not burn or bury their dead but expose them to the vultures. They have a tower of silence where they place the bodies on a platform, no one being allowed to enter.

The followers of this religion in India are a minority group, but they are prosperous people, mostly in business, and literacy among them is almost one hundred percent.

East India Company and Nominal Christianity. The coming of the East India Company marks the Christian epilogue in India. It was formed in 1600 A. D. for the purpose of trade. Its military establishment was meant to protect trade.

The Company saw that India was weakened by divisions after the decline of the Moghuls. They had a well trained military, so they helped one party against another and took heavy payments for help. Thus their power continued to increase. In 1757 A. D. the battle of Plassey marks the establishment of the British Empire in India. Thus it is said that the English, after fighting 111 wars in India with Indian money and troops, to complete the conquest of India, established peace throughout the Peninsula.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Durant, op. cit., p. 614.

During the early days of the rule of the East India Company, the promotion of education was not recognized as a duty of the government. Later Warren Hastings opened the first school in Calcutta and then more were founded. The aim of these schools was to train the Indians in Western methods in order to have more clerks for the company.

It might be thought that the rise of a Christian Protestant company would from the first bring Christianity. But religion was not emphasized and religious teachings were given only in private schools. The company had established some churches and had some chaplains but they were only for the personnel of the company.

Mason says that the monopoly of the opium traffic under Clive and the favoring of heathen religions and repression of all missionary labors are the strange and unnatural facts of the history of the East India Company.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Mason, op. cit., p. 144.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN INDIA

The missionaries came with the gospel of Jesus Christ to make this so called religious India more religious.

According to tradition Christianity was not new to India. The Syrian Christian church of South India claims its beginning in the first century A. D. Although it is an ancient church, it failed to carry the Gospel to other parts of India. In 1500 A. D. came Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries. It is said that during the time of Akbar the greatest Jesuit missionaries came, but they were not very successful. Early Protestant missionaries were Dutch and Danish, but due to the coming of the British their influence was limited. Danish missionaries translated the Bible into Tamil in 1727. This was the first Indian Bible..

The coming of the English Baptists in 1793 A. D. marks the actual beginning of the great Protestant missionary movement of modern times. "The name of the first English missionary, William Carey, is the most illustrious in the Annals of Protestant Missions."⁵⁰ Marshman, Duff, Ward, and Wilson were among the outstanding missionaries. They were not welcomed by the British government and were opposed for doing

⁵⁰ Mason, op. cit., p. 146.

evangelistic work. It is said that though discouraged by the official authorities and ever liable to banishment or deportation, they not only devoted themselves with courage to their special work of evangelization, but were also the first to study the vernacular dialect spoken by the common people.⁵¹

It was in 1813 that the charter of the East India Company was renewed and missionaries received full freedom to settle in India. At this time the government too awoke to its responsibility. East India Company schools were organized and developed. More English speaking schools were established in every district. "The government grants were given even to lower vernacular schools, public instruction was erected into a department of administration in every province under a director with a staff of inspectors."⁵²

Missionary Aims. The interest of missionaries in education, which has never ceased to the present day had two distinct aspects:

1. They studied the vernacular in order to reach the people by their preaching and to translate the Bible.
2. They taught English as the channel of non-sectarian learning.

⁵¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, XII, p. 775.

⁵² Loc. cit.

The basic aim of the missionaries was evangelization. Mason says, "From the period of Carey and Duff no feature has been more emphasized in Indian missions than the education of natives as the basis for evangelization."⁵³

Bishop Pickett gives as the three aims of Christian education by early missionaries:

1. That many Christians might learn to read the Bible and that they and their families and neighbors might become familiar with the Scriptures.
2. That leaders might be developed from among the new converts who would help to establish them as Christians and to win others to the Christian faith and life.
3. That some abatement of social oppression and of poverty might be effected.⁵⁴

Missionary Method. Before Jesus sent out His disciples, He went to the cities and villages teaching, preaching and healing. Similar methods were adopted by missionaries to bring the people of India to Christ. Thoburn says:

In our Saviour's commission, teaching was intended to refer chiefly to spiritual instruction. But in India teaching must include more than spiritual instruction in order to have a Bible reading church.⁵⁵

Christian Education through Schools. The mission schools have always been the center of Christian Education.

⁵³ Mason, op. cit., p. 166.

⁵⁴ J. W. Pickett, Christian Mass Movement in India (Cincinnati: Abingdon Press, 1933), p. 265.

⁵⁵ Thoburn, The Christian Conquest of India (New York: Y. P. M. S., 1906), p. 173.

Wilder says:

The aim of the mission schools and of the oral proclamation of the gospel is ever one and the same. They are never to be viewed as having a different object, but as different ways for accomplishing the same object, each rendering the other more effective in effecting the great work of evangelizing the heathen.⁵⁶

It was necessary to make the people literate in order to preach to them. Their minds were full of superstitions and the teachings of false religions and since they could not read for themselves, it was hard for a preacher to obtain stated hearers in many parts of the country.

Secondly, the idea of making people literate overcame opposition.

William Carey was the first pioneer in educational work in Bengal. Opposed by the government, he started translating the Bible. He went to Serampore mission station which belonged to Denmark, where he received encouragement in his work. By 1800 A. D. he had translated the whole of the New Testament into Bengali. And before his death he had translated the Bible into about forty languages, Chinese among the number. He started his life career as a shoemaker and he died a professor of Sanskrit. His most important life work was the establishment of the training college at Serampore and of the group of schools in its neighborhood.

⁵⁶ R. G. Wilder, Mission Schools in India (New York: A. F. Randolph, 1861), p. 20.

Although he did not have a great body of converts, he laid a solid foundation to be built on by those who succeeded him. He established the first printing press in Serampore. Of this Pandit Nehru says:

The early Christian missionaries especially the Baptist mission at Serampore, helped in this process greatly. The first private printing presses were set up by them and their efforts to translate the Bible into prose versions of the Indian languages met with considerable success.⁵⁷

Alexander Duff was the one outstanding in the work of education. Thoburn says that Dr. Duff introduced the modern educational movement into India which resulted in the adoption of his plan by the British government, with the religious phase omitted.⁵⁸

Dr. Duff arrived in India in 1830 A. D. He was the first missionary from the established church of Scotland. Before the coming of Duff, Christian education had been mainly carried on in the vernacular. But when Duff arrived in India, he started a new line of missionary policy and tried to influence the higher castes of North India by providing schools in which through the medium of the English language, a liberal education was offered to all who were willing to receive Christian instruction at the hands of

⁵⁷ Nehru, op. cit., p. 273.

⁵⁸ Thoburn, op. cit., p. 174.

missionaries. His first school proved a great success. The Hindus were afraid that many people would turn to Christianity and so they announced in their papers that any one who would send his son to this school would be turned out of the caste. The people were frightened and the school was almost deserted, but not for long. Robinson in his book The History of Christian Missions says:

With a few interruptions Duff continued his work in Calcutta till 1863. His converts were not numbered by thousands, or even by hundreds, but they included a large number of high caste Hindus whose brilliant mental gifts and whose strength of character have exercised an immense influence upon their countrymen in North India.⁵⁹

The mission schools and colleges have ever since exercised a very wholesome and lasting influence on the life and thought of India. The missionaries were not only pioneers in higher education, but village elementary schools have been a prominent feature of mission work, since the time of William Carey.

These schools have continued to be important centers of missionary work. In them the minds of children are molded. Beach says:

The high respect in which a teacher is held in this country and the great desire which the people have for education give the teacher in a village school a unique opportunity, and if he is the right kind of man, he can

⁵⁹ C. H. Robinson, History of Christian Missions (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 89.

do much in helping to extend the kingdom of Christ.⁶⁰

The education of girls was introduced by missionaries. Although there were a few learned women during ancient times, there was no organized system of education for them. There was much opposition to the education of women in the beginning because of women's position in the Hindu religion, which held that "Woman is an inferior creature, and all creation will be overthrown if she be not kept such."⁶¹

The early missionaries started constructive work among women by sending their wives to visit the women in their homes. These missionary wives as they made friends organized classes in reading, writing, and household arts. Later on girls' schools were established. Taylor says, "India has produced some of the most remarkable women of the last and present generations; but every one of them has been educated in mission schools, or has come under the influence of missionaries."⁶²

In the mission schools one could find students from all religious groups and castes. There was no distinction between high and low castes; it taught equality. The educated Hindus like Raja Mohan Roy, Tagore, and Gandhi approved

⁶⁰ H. P. Beach, India and Christian Opportunity (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1905), p. 195.

⁶¹ Taylor, op. cit., p. 164.

⁶² Ibid., p. 165.

of this and appreciated mission schools.

The great concern of the mission school was to approach the students of different religions with the Christian message. The Christian education program was carried out through Bible classes, chapel services, religious dramas and similar activities.

Besides the general educational work that missions have carried on, in which religious instruction always had a place, they have also conducted such institutions as were needed to prepare men and women to take their part in the work of teacher training and theological and medical work.

Aberly says:

Mission schools were much later in being launched. For many years the medical missionaries were foreigners. It was chiefly in order to provide workers for their own hospitals that medical schools were established by missions in India.⁶³

Christian Education through medical work. The medical work begun by missionaries has been a great blessing in India. From the very beginning it has been a part of the program of missions. In early times the missionary had to do both preaching and medical work. But later medical missions became a distinct department of missions.

Among early pioneers in this work was Dr. Edward Chester who from the years 1880 onward labored for a

⁶³ Aberly, An Outline of Missions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1945), pp. 92-93.

half century in the Madura field of the American Board. He organized his work by establishing a central hospital with a chain of dispensaries radiating around it through the district. The government medical department has followed his plan in providing for the medical needs of India.⁶⁴

The main object of the mission school was to evangelize says Dr. Sommerville. Beach says:

Its object of course, is primarily to evangelize; and the main argument for its use is that it can evangelize under specially favorable circumstances, under conditions which lay the heart bare and bring spiritual concerns into near contact and sharper focus than is the case in the ordinary circumstances of daily life. It comes armed with the sympathy of humanity at its best, and excites, at least for the time being a responsive gratitude which with accompanying impressibility may be turned to account for spiritual ends.⁶⁵

The greatest suffering in India was among women, as they could not be helped by male doctors until recent times. The first woman physician to North India was Dr. Clara A. Swain in 1870 and Dr. S. Kugler in 1883 came to South India. It is said Dr. Swain carried the Bible in all of her work. In her visits the Bible was read and some religious instruction was given in the homes. The comment of a Hindu woman to a missionary illustrates the gospel approach through medical work, "Your God must be a very kind, good God to send a doctor to the women; none of our Gods ever sent us a doctor."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 93.

⁶⁵ Beach, op. cit., p. 203.

⁶⁶ Mason, op. cit., p. 212.

The mission for the lepers was founded in 1874, the pioneer in this work being W. C. Bailey. Bryce in her book published in 1946 says that out of a total of nearly fourteen thousand leprosy patients for whom residential accommodation is provided, about twelve thousand are in Christian hospitals and homes. In fact it would be hard to find a place for the care of lepers where the Christian touch was absent.⁶⁷

Into these mission hospitals people of different religions come and while they are being physically treated, the Christian workers consider it a great privilege to minister to their souls with the gospel message. There are Bible readers in every hospital, who go to each patient, singing hymns and praying with them. In the children's wards Christian nurses tell the children Bible stories and teach them songs and how to pray.

On Sundays, services are held for the doctors, nurses, Christian workers and patients who are able to attend. Christian literature is distributed to the people who can read. The Christian hospitals because of their love and service have brought many Hindus and Moslems to Christ. For along with words, deeds tell the story. When does India see Christ? Netram gives the testimony of a Hindu:

The time when I saw Christ more vividly was not when I heard sermons, but I think it was in 1900 during an

⁶⁷ Winifred Bryce, India at Threshold (New York: Friendship Press, 1946), p. 101.

outbreak of plague when the shadow of death was upon us that I saw Christ face to face. The missionaries went from house to house helping the sick. It was then that I felt that God had come down to us and that Christ was just here.⁶⁸

Thus we see that along with Christian teachings, the Christian love and service have been also a means to win the people to Christ.

Christian education through church and evangelism.

The word of God is central. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The Christian education approach is made through preaching to people of different religions and castes in villages and cities. The Indian church is essentially a rural church. Two-thirds of its members are from villages and most of them are illiterate. The preaching in these areas is mostly done by natives. When the Christian preacher goes to these villages, the people gather in large numbers. They are spiritually hungry and receptive to the gospel. After the preacher tells them that there is only one God, he speaks about the life of Jesus Christ, and that salvation is only through Him. The converts are given instruction in Christian matters. They are taught the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the Apostles Creed before they are baptized. When a number have been

⁶⁸ Netram, op. cit., p. 136.

converted, a program of Sunday worship is planned for them. To the people who can read, Christian literature is given. This method of mass evangelism is more effective among the deprived classes and in villages. For high caste and educated people, the evangelist has to give more time and make personal visits in homes.

The Christian education program is also carried on through other agencies of the church of which the Sunday school organization is the biggest and most efficient. The Sunday school organization is the same as in most of the churches in America. The school is divided into departments and classes. In some places they use the cycle graded lessons. Sunday school retreats, picnics, and other social gatherings are held. There is still great opportunity for improvement because of the lack of materials.

Christian Endeavor. This is for young people and gives them opportunity to make their own programs and carry on their own work. They meet once a week at which time talks are given by two or three students with discussions following special music and prayers. The emphasis is put on self expression. They have social gatherings and parties and thus are helped in the development of the social graces.

Youth Camps. There are high school camps, youth camps, and provincial camps. The purpose of these camps is to

emphasize the spiritual life and lead the young people to a deeper experience and consecration of their lives. Camps are a means of development of social life also.

Other agencies of Christian education are the student Christian movements, the women's society of Christian service, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, etc. All these organizations carry on the work by different ways and means.

Independence and Christian education. The Indian Constitution resembles the American Constitution with respect to religion and public schools. In the Indian Constitution there is freedom of religious thought, freedom to preach religion and freedom to teach religion in mission schools.

The missionaries and Indians were waiting with their fingers crossed when India gained her independence. The Indian church is now more privileged to carry on her religious program than before. It is growing rapidly among all classes of people. As has been said by James K. Matthews:

The church is much less hampered than before because the suspicion that Christianity was a foreign religion has been largely removed. While the British were there it could always be said that it was the white man's religion; that Christianity and Imperialism were allied; but when the British withdrew the church did not collapse, the missionaries stayed at their posts, and India saw clearly that the church has come to stay.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ James K. Matthews, Methodism and the New India (New York: Editorial Departments, Board of Missions, 1951), p. 21.

The people of India now feel proud of their new status of equality with the nations of the world. Now they have to be responsible for their own welfare and progress. They cannot sit and criticize. They have to find solutions for the pressing problems of the country.

H. S. Azhriah writing on Christian educational institutions in India today says:

Nationalism has been a driving force but it has not succeeded in governing the outlook of the nation. The human element has naturally come into the picture. Therefore, although the states are pledged to be secular the president and the minister of the states are reminding the people of the need for a vital religion. Hence, we find the Hindu festivals being celebrated with greater pomp than ever before. Divali, the festival of lights and Janama Ashtmi, the birth of Lord Krishna, are observed now with the enthusiasm that is usually noted in connection with Christmas the world over. This indicates the search for something better than secularism.⁷⁰

Christian people in India think that there has never been such great opportunity for the Christian church in India as today. The question is are the Christian educational institutions in India alive to the new opportunities, or are they frightened by the new restrictions?

The constitution of India gives some cultural and educational rights to minorities and this safeguards the position of Christian institutions. But at the same time there are restrictions. Although religious instruction is

⁷⁰ H. S. Azriah, "The International Review of Missions," Christian Education Institutions in India Today (Editor, Norman Goodall, XLI, October, 1952), p. 480.

allowed in institutions receiving aid from state funds, no person is required to take part in it.

Azariah says concerning this:

The provisions of the constitution need not cause alarm. On the contrary, they may well provide men opportunities unknown before. It is not the nature of Christianity to compel people to hear the message of love. That was not Christ's way. The Christian life of love should be a greater compelling force than any kind of a formal teaching.⁷¹

Yet we know that the word of God is the main thing. The program of the church has not been hindered, but there has been a great awakening. Since we cannot depend on public school systems for giving Christian education, the church should have a wider program through which children would have more hours of Bible teaching.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 452.

CHAPTER V

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ON THE GENERAL CULTURE OF INDIA

Christianity is the greatest force that ever touched the lives of men. Crawford says:

It embodies the noblest philanthropy, the truest philosophy, the purest ethics, and the sanest sociology, and inspires the finest character, and the loftiest ideals of service.⁷²

The people of India though very religious minded and of an established civilization were still in darkness till the coming of the Christian gospel. Although the Christian community ranks third in religious population it has had a great influence in India.

Hurst says:

The most of the warm adherents to the old system of Hindu faith see very clearly how much India owes to Christianity.⁷³

The Christian conception of the brotherhood of man, Christian morality and Christian phraseology and ideas are permeating the minds of the educated Indians today.⁷⁴

Dr. E. Stanley Jones says:

I find Him in places and movements I had never dreamed of and by the quiet sense of His presence He is forcing

⁷² W. H. Crawford, Theburn and India (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1909), p. 83.

⁷³ Hurst, op. cit., 378.

⁷⁴ Eddy, op. cit., p. 66.

modification everywhere. Call the roll of reforms that are sweeping across India, and whether they be economic, social, moral, or religious they are all tending straight towards Christ and His thoughts. Not one of them is going away from Him, that is, if it be a reform and not a reaction.⁷⁵

Social Influence. Christian education has had a great influence on the social life of India. Sherwood says, "How completely the social consciousness of Christianity is beginning to possess the minds of young Hindus."⁷⁶ It has broken through the greatest evil, that is the caste system of India, which was a great hindrance in the progress of India. Now the government also has outlawed untouchability. This concern for the untouchables is in great contrast to the past in India. Many under-privileged and low caste persons have progressed and become leaders today because of Christianity. A Brahman of note said before an audience in Allahabad:

I am a Brahman of Brahmins and of the most orthodox school, but I must confess that the way in which Christ has raised the Pariahs (untouchables) of Madras is beyond all praise and puts me to shame as a Hindu.⁷⁷

The most powerful apologetic in India will not be a few converted Brahmins, nor arguments of the missionary, but

⁷⁵ E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road (New York: Grosset and Dunlop Publishers, 1925), p. 212.

⁷⁶ Sherwood, op. cit., p. 63.

⁷⁷ Taylor, op. cit., p. 155.

the mighty uplift of the whole communities once debased and degraded, for whom Hinduism has no message, and who were without hope and without God in the world.⁷⁸

India is proud of the many contributions it has made to the culture of the world. Yet we see a country which was ahead in learning in ancient times has sunken in illiteracy, ignorance and superstition. Why? Brahmanism forbade instruction to any but the castes and thus denied education her right to remake society. Taylor says:

She makes learning consist in subtle speculation and knows no practical art. Buddhism is the most liberal and progressive of non-Christian faiths, but even she has never reared a public school system, made learning popular, or educated women, and her desire to escape from the toil of things material, destroys all desire to know more of the practical world.⁷⁹

As has been said in a previous chapter, Christian missionaries were the pioneers in education. Christian schools have exercised a great influence on the lives of Hindus. Many of the leaders and reformers have been educated in Christian schools and colleges. Aberly says that the colleges are not to be judged merely by the number of conversions but by the way in which they permeate the thinking and the lives of the educated people of the land.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Sherwood, op. cit., p. 96.

⁷⁹ Taylor, op. cit., p. 145.

⁸⁰ Aberly, op. cit., p. 91.

The Indian Christian community ranks third in number but has the highest standard of literacy in the country and exercises an influence far out of proportion to its size.⁸¹

Christian education has brought a great change in the life of women in India. In heathen religions woman is an inferior creature and all creation will be overthrown if she be not kept so.⁸² The code of Manu says, "The source of dishonor is woman; the source of strife is woman; therefore avoid woman."⁸³ The women in older times and still in some orthodox Hindu homes are more like servants and not equal life partners. A faithful wife, says Manu, must serve her lord as if he were her God and never do ought to pain him whatsoever be his status and even though devoid of every virtue. The law laid it down that all through her life woman should be in tutelage, first to her father, then to her husband, and finally to her son.⁸⁴

Raman says:

In the last few decades several influences have pushed the women of India more and more into public life and organized social activity contacts with the west, the example of English women who move about transacting business on an equal footing with men, was reinforced by the activity of Christian missions. Hindu women converted to

⁸¹ T. W. Wallbank, India (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1948), p. 58.

⁸² Taylor, op. cit., p. 164.

⁸³ Durant, op. cit., p. 493.

⁸⁴ Loc. cit.

Christianity went in for higher education, and even launched on teaching and nursing careers.⁸⁵

As has been said Christian missionaries were the first ones to start the education of girls. Bryce says that until the close of the first half of the nineteenth century female education was the child of no one but missionaries. Indians, except for a small number, did not send their daughters to mission schools, few started to school themselves.⁸⁶ Now many schools are opened for girls and people of all religious communities are interested in getting their girls educated. There was a time in India, not far back, when it could be said that 90% of the nurses in India were Christians, and 80% were trained in mission hospitals. The scene is changing now and Indian women of all classes are coming forward to take up this needed and noble service. But Christian women have given the leading example.

Many non-Christian leaders have paid tribute to Christian womanhood. Lala Hans Raj, a leading Hindu reformer, said:

The best result of Christian missions is the social emancipation of woman. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, who was the first woman to be deputy speaker of the legislative assembly of Madras, said, 'The women of India have been placed under a deep debt of gratitude to the several

⁸⁵ T. A. Raman, Report on India (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 65.

⁸⁶ Bryce, op. cit., p. 70.

missionary agencies for their valuable contribution to the educational uplift of Indian women.'⁸⁷

The progress of India owes a great deal to Christianity and its influence on the womanhood of India. There is no elevation of race possible unless its mothers are elevated.

Hinduism and Buddhism teach that she has no salvation except she be born again as a man; Christian education teaches her that there is worth in her own soul. A. Maclean says that there is not a woman in Christendom that is not under infinite obligations to the Christ. If women were sensitive to the benefits that Christianity confers upon their sex, they would so train their sons in the love of Christianity, for their mother's sake, that multitudes more of them would pay a more just tribute of respect to the emancipator of their mothers.⁸⁸

Christian hospitals have made a very great contribution to the alleviation of physical suffering and especially that of children and women. One of God's good gifts to India is the Christian doctor whether in medical mission work, or government service or private practice, the doctor, man or woman, plays an indispensable and greatly appreciated part not only in the prevention and alleviation of human suffering, but also in building up healthier and happier standards of

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 68.

⁸⁸ Taylor, op. cit., p. 165.

living. Even today, in the general medical service of India one-eighth of the total effort is borne by Christian missions.⁸⁹

All this social service and recognition of outcastes under the principle of the brotherhood of man is in direct opposition to the spirit of caste. Every reform has sprung directly or indirectly from Christian teaching or example. It marks the infusion of a new life and will in time create a new social order in India.⁹⁰

Economic. Poverty seems to be a characteristic of India but there are many reasons for it. There is an unequal distribution of wealth. The higher caste people have had more privileges and have always had money. While the lower classes have served them for small wages. Then there are the extravagant expenses at marriages and deaths prescribed by caste customs and religion. Added to this is the great number of Sadhus (religious mendicants). These are just lazy, worthless fellows, who live as parasites. Jones says:

But alas for the community! Hindu charity is proverbial, but it is blinder than love itself. Such a body of consumers would tax even a wealthy land. So India

⁸⁹ J. A. Hodge, Salute to India (New York: Friendship Press, 1946), p. 119.

⁹⁰ Sherwood, op. cit., p. 64.

has a dreadful burden and drain.⁹¹

The people of India have brought on part of its poverty and suffering because of its own religious systems.

This is well expressed in Madhava Rao's words:

The longer one lives, observes and thinks, the more deeply does he feel there is no community on the face of the earth which suffers less from political evils and more from self-inflicted, self-accepted, or self-created, and therefore avoidable evils than the Hindu community.⁹²

With the influence of Christian education great change has been brought about. Schools have given equal privileges to all castes and have thus changed the status of many. With education young people have gone into better jobs and financially and socially progressed. Fickett says that Christianity has improved the economic condition of mass movement converts by breaking down inhibitions and occupational restrictions. This has been partly achieved through schools.⁹³

Christian influences are also affecting improvement in economic standards by stimulating a desire for better living. Education, medical help and the uplift of womanhood all have added to economic betterment. In ancient times it was a sin to cross the ocean; caste did not permit it. Today

⁹¹ Jones, op. cit., p. 20.

⁹² Ibid., p. 21.

⁹³ Fickett, op. cit., p. 141.

thousands of Christian and non-Christian students are studying abroad to learn the ways of improving the economic conditions of their own country through science and education. It is all a result of Christian school education. It has wiped out superstition and fear from their minds. Taylor says:

Christianity comes to them with the impact of western attainments, it is born on the wings of invention and brings a world of progress that commends its message in a thousand ways.⁹⁴

Political. In India this very movement toward nationalism was prepared for by the system of education which missions began.⁹⁵ The struggle for freedom continued long under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He knew there were two ways of achieving freedom. He rejected the way of the sword and bomb, and followed the way which was certainly and infinitely more Christian than the people of the west have taken.⁹⁶ Even in this it can be seen how much the people of India were influenced by Christ. In their own religion they could not find anyone to compare with Gandhi but Christ. Although Gandhi never accepted Christ as his Saviour he followed the principles of Christianity more strictly than many Christians. The cross

⁹⁴ Taylor, op. cit., p. 63.

⁹⁵ Aberly, op. cit., p. 86.

⁹⁶ Jones, op. cit., p. 75.

as also the Christian teaching that evil is to be overcome not by striking back but by turning the other cheek, has been given a new setting which has left an impression not only on India but also on the whole world.⁹⁷

Halide Edib says:

It was through his Christian friends that he became acquainted with western thought, religious and otherwise He studied the Christian Scripture and he was profoundly affected by the sermon on the mount.⁹⁸

India has followed and adopted the American and English constitution. It has a democratic form of government. There is full religious freedom and freedom of opportunity for the individual to progress.

Religious. The impact of the west and the work of Christian missions in India served as a search light under which the people of India began to see that the old systems were not good enough for the new day. So dissatisfied with old systems they wished to assimilate the new principles of Christianity. However, the strong grip of the old system would not permit them to change to the entirely new and so as a result, numerous eclectic systems have sprung up.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Aberly, op. cit., p. 89.

⁹⁸ Halide Edib, Inside India (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1941), p. 257.

⁹⁹ Netram, op. cit., p. 102.

The first of these systems was was Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He was greatly influenced by missionaries at Serampore and as a result began serious study of Christianity. He learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the original Scriptures in their original languages. He said:

The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational being, than any other which have come to my knowledge.¹⁰⁰

He also wrote a book entitled The Principles of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness.

He did away with many social evils as caste, polygamy and satee (burning of widows). It was under his leadership that satee was abolished by the government.

Keshah Chandra Sen was another leader of Brahmo-samaj. He said in one of his lectures:

In Christ we see not only the exaltedness of humanity but also the grandeur of which the Asiatic nature is susceptible. To us Asiatics therefore Christ is doubly interesting and His religion is entitled to our peculiar regard and thus in Christ, Europe and Asia, the east and the west, may learn to find harmony and unity.¹⁰¹

Rama Krishna Mission was another religious group. It has been said that Karen, leader of this group, after Rama

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁰¹ R. H. Frazer, Indian Thought Past and Present (New York: Fredrick A. Stokes Company), p. 311.

Krishan, and Rama Krishna himself and some other men were invited by a village woman to consecrate her village home. While dhuni (sacred fire) was kindled, all of the party sat around it and the leader began to speak of renunciation; gradually the conversation turned to the prophet of Nazareth, His divine love, suffering and sacrifice and how His followers have fulfilled the commission of their Master through persecution and oppression. And as the people heard it, every mind present was inspired with the zeal of renunciation and service. Thus was formed the monastic order of Rama Krishan.¹⁰²

Pradhana Samaj, another organization, was a prayer society. Of it Aberly says:

It cultivated prayer both in private and in groups but did so on a Hindu background. It aims at religious worship and social reform. It has organized work among the poor and suffering and the depressed classes. The inspiration of this kind was confessedly received from the work of Christian missions.¹⁰³

Testimonies of educated Hindus show how Christianity has influenced their religious life. Dr. E. Stanley Jones records the testimony of an outstanding philosopher of India:

"Professor, what do you think of Jesus Christ?" I asked. He replied, "We had high ideas of God before Jesus came. But Jesus is the highest expression of God that we have seen. He is conquering us by sheer

¹⁰² Netram, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁰³ Aberly, op. cit., p. 86.

force of His own person even against our will."¹⁰⁴

One of the greatest Christians of the world, Sadhu Sundar Singh, came from India. He went to a Presbyterian Mission School where he got acquainted with the Scriptures which he despised in the beginning. He searched for truth and peace in Gita and in Granth but could not find it. Torn with anguish and driven to despair he read from the New Testament, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." With that day he began to study the Scriptures. Against the wishes of his relatives he became a Christian and was baptized at the age of sixteen. Thirty-three days later he knew God had called him to be a sadhu and preach. Since that day he has carried out his commission and not only preached in India, but made a world wide tour. Thousands of people in England, Europe, America, Australia and Asia found Christ through his preaching. It has been said that the remarkable thing about him was not the fusion of Christianity and Hinduism, but a fresh presentation of genuine Biblical Christianity.¹⁰⁵

Smith writes:

The supernatural power of Christianity and the secondary influence of western science and literature have thus been allowed, for the first time in the history of Asia to take place side by side with all agencies of the

¹⁰⁴ Jones, op. cit., p. 217.

¹⁰⁵ Mrs. A. Parker, Sadhu Sundar Singh (Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920), p. 170.

Hindu, the Mohammedan and the Aboriginal religions and social systems. The result is a revolution, silent, subtle, and far reaching, which works in each successive generation with increasing force.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ G. Smith, The Conversion of India (New York: Young People Missionary Movement), p. 227.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Religion plays the most important part in the lives of the people of India. That is one reason that India has been ruled by foreigners for Indians were more interested in their religions than their political life. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were founded in India. Zoroastrianism, Islam and Christianity entered as foster children. This is a land of great contrasts.

India is one of the earliest civilizations, yet, because of religious beliefs and for other reasons has not progressed. Her people have always searched within for a better way of life and that is one reason new religions were founded.

The coming of Christian education in India has brought a great change in the lives of the people. Many social evils have been abolished. It has shown them a better way of life for which they have been searching. It has brought to India the spirit of brotherhood, love and service. It has brought equality and opportunity for all.

Christian education has in general influenced the culture of India. India is progressing. In new India the challenge to Christianity is great.

Conclusion. Hinduism has had a fair field for three thousand years in India, but it has not met the needs of the people. Buddhism came but it died in the land of its birth. Other religions sprang up but are now only nominal. They too, have failed to meet the needs of the people. Then came Mohammedanism but it failed to uplift India. The British government with religious neutrality and secular education could not answer the moral and spiritual needs of the people. Only Christianity has and can satisfy India's deep heart hunger. Only God Himself as Father can fill the longing hearts of His children and only all who know it should make it known.

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