

## CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AS SEEN BY A MISSIONARY.

THE article which appeared in THE FORUM for April, 1894, on "Why Christian Missions Have Failed in India" attracted special attention because Mr. Gandhi (like Mr. Telang) is an educated Indian gentleman, and is supposed to speak from personal knowledge of India, if not from personal observation of missionary work. I should be extremely sorry to question the right of either Mr. Gandhi or Mr. Telang to criticise the missionaries of India or their work, and yet it ought to be said that residence in a country does not by any means carry with it knowledge of a country, with all that is going on among its people. Take, for instance, an intelligent graduate of Yale or Princeton, and ask him to write an article for the "Calcutta Review" on the present state of the Protestant churches in the United States; ask him whether any Italians have become Protestants, in what cities the Protestant movement is making most headway among the Bohemians, where the Hungarians are beginning to stir, how much has been done among the Germans, how much among the Spaniards and Portuguese, how the "slum work" is succeeding, and what is the present religious condition of the freedmen in Louisiana;—ask him to state his views on these questions, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the intelligent graduate will be found as ignorant of the facts as if he had spent all his days in India. It is, of course, possible that an Indian gentleman may be found better informed in reference to religious movements in his own country, but the chances are all the other way. An Indian gentleman who moves in good society will never be seen in intimate personal contact with the classes among whom the missionary carries on his most successful work. He very rarely speaks to an Indian Christian, unless it be one in high position, and he seldom has an opportunity of seeing, much less inspecting, any department of missionary work. How far these remarks apply to Mr. Gandhi is seen in his extraordinary statement that not a single (Indian) Aryan had ever become a Christian!

Mr. Telang writes in a style which was current among European writers forty or fifty years ago, but which happily has now almost

gone out of date. Sydney Smith set the first example in his famous tirade against the "consecrated cobbler" of Serampore, and for many years inferior men who could not distinguish between coarseness and wit seemed to think that the correct thing to do when writing on missionary topics was to resort to ridicule as a convenient weapon, even if a very weak one. The caricature of the American missionary and his "pariah convert" going to preach in the street was not intended—we must suppose—to be taken seriously, but it will serve to introduce a description of out-door preaching as it really is. If the reader will go to Beadon Square, in Calcutta, any Sunday evening in the year, he will find two or three Scotch missionaries, a Bengali attorney of the high court—a converted Brahman, by the way—a Bengali physician, and a few others, preaching in English to a large audience the majority of whom are intelligent undergraduates of the Calcutta University. In another public square, about two miles distant, two other groups of preachers, English, American, Bengali and Hindustani, will be found, and the people who gather to hear them are addressed by turns in three different languages. In all the large cities it is easy to find hearers who understand English, but the missionaries who resort to street preaching are, almost to a man, fluent speakers in one or more vernaculars.

Mr. Telang's statement that "a man who earns one hundred dollars a month in India can live as well as one who has a thousand dollars a month in America" is very wide of the mark. Very many missionaries receive much less than a hundred dollars a month, but at the higher figure the missionary receives about one-third of the salary of the chaplain next door, and one-fifth to one-tenth of the income of the station doctor. He sometimes pays more to the headmaster of his school than he receives himself, and always takes rank in income much below the average of the Europeans among whom he lives. He may have five or six servants, but one Irish or Swedish girl in America will do as much as the whole of them, and—including board—will cost about the same. As to having "no cares," the missionary is nearly always a burdened man, having, in addition to his own anxieties, to care for the endless interests of a score, a hundred, or perhaps five hundred families.

While speaking of these personal matters it may be as well to refer to Mr. Telang's accusation that the missionaries win their few Brahman converts by "initiating them into meat-eating and wine drinking." I can easily understand that Mr. Telang made this charge

with a measure of confidence in its truth, for in a case of conversion such as he narrates all manner of incredible falsehoods are put into circulation; but it is necessary only to remark that nearly all missionaries are total abstainers, and that the Brahmans have no greater aversion to wine drinking than have the missionaries. Some Germans and a few English missionaries may not have adopted the rule of abstinence, but among the Americans I do not know of a single exception. It does sometimes happen that a youth is permanently separated from home and friends by becoming a Christian, not because he leaves them, but because they thrust him out. In a few cases I have known missionaries to act unwisely in giving shelter to youths under twenty years of age. The boy can legally claim freedom of conscience at sixteen, but it has never seemed to me quite right to advise a youth not fully grown to accept baptism against the will of his parents. In such cases an appeal is nearly always made to the courts, and no matter what the age of the convert, plenty of witnesses can be found to swear that he is under sixteen, while all manner of wild stories are put in circulation against the missionaries. Such cases, however, are rare. During the thirty-five years I have been in India, among more than eighty thousand baptisms in our own missions, I cannot now recall a single case in which a youth's baptism led to an appeal in the courts.

The American reader can hardly appreciate Mr. Telang's use of the word "pariah" in speaking of the convert that a missionary took with him to preach in the bazaar. Mr. Telang applies the word "pariah" to the convert preacher no less than six times. It is a term which belongs to South India, but since it has become anglicized it has come into general use, and is often applied by Europeans not only to the out-castes of Southern India, but to the meanest variety of dogs, the scavenger curs of the village. Not many Indian gentlemen of culture and refinement would apply it to a Christian preacher, but it sometimes happens that hostile writers try to identify all Christians with the out-castes, and especially those who before conversion belonged to one of the higher castes, by applying this term to them. The epithet as used by Mr. Telang was probably aimed less at this particular convert than at the general body of Indian preachers.

The pariahs of Southern India form a part of an immense division of the general community numbering about fifty million souls, or more than one-sixth of the whole population. These fifty millions are divided into many castes and sub-castes, and in recent years the

term "depressed classes" has been applied to the whole mass, from the lowest scavengers to the more respectable artisans. The whole fifty millions are below the line of social respectability; and, although legally entitled to admission to the public schools, their children are practically excluded from them. Public sentiment would not tolerate their presence. The condition of these people is very hopeless, unless they can in some way escape from the hard lot which has fallen to them. Up to the advent of the Christian missionary in India, no door of hope had ever been opened to them, and Mr. Telang admits that this good office has been done for the pariahs by the missionaries.

The impression prevails very widely that these depressed classes can never wield much influence, even after becoming Christians; but that is by no means certain. The Brahmans are but a handful of the general community. In Northwest India, the chief seat of ancient Hinduism, the Chamars, or leather-dressers, a very low caste, are about equal in number to the Brahmans. What would the United States be to-day if the whole artisan population had been kept in a state of absolute ignorance and social degradation, from the first settlement of the country to the present day? When General Grant was President, and Henry Wilson Vice-President, the former visited Boston and was accorded a public reception. In driving in an open carriage through the streets it so happened that the President, the Vice-President, and the Governor of the State occupied seats in the same carriage with the Mayor. As they passed by, an Indian missionary said to a friend, "There go three Chamars!" General Grant had been a tanner, Henry Wilson had been a shoemaker, and Governor Claflin a leather merchant. Had Hindu caste prevailed in America these three men would have been lost to the nation, and Abraham Lincoln would have been obliged to spend his entire lifetime as a common day-laborer. India possesses within herself many of the elements which belong to a great empire, but she can never rise to a worthy position among the empires of the world while one-sixth of her people are kept in a state of dense ignorance, with every avenue of improvement rigidly closed against them. If the presence of three-and-a-half million slaves proved an incubus too heavy to be borne by the people of the United States, the presence of fifty millions of these depressed classes will prove—is proving—a burden which India cannot permanently endure. Mr. Telang frankly confesses that the hope and the help of these lowly people is in Christianity. With admirable candor, he says, "The structure of Hindu society and re-

ligion is such that there is no such help for the pariah as the Christian missionary has brought to him." If it were granted that the low-caste people are mentally and physically inferior to their high-caste neighbors, the fact would remain that India as a whole will be depressed by the injustice to so large a section of the community.

But are these people so very inferior in character and natural ability to the higher castes? To this question it is impossible to give a direct answer, chiefly for the reason that they do not constitute a homogeneous community. They differ from one another not only in different parts of the country, but often when living as sub-castes side by side. It seems almost certain that they are descendants of ancient tribes who were either conquered by more civilized Aryan invaders, or brought into India as camp-followers by these invaders. Hence they have not had a common origin, and many of them may have been Aryans themselves at a very remote period. Others belong to various aboriginal races, and hence differ as widely among themselves as their remote ancestors probably did. One thing, however, is very certain; many of them are men of fine physique, with very fair mental powers, and are abundantly able to hold their own in the battle of life when Christianity gives them a fair chance. Mr. Telang says the missionaries win these people "by giving them bread, and promising them money or employment." This charge is often made by opponents of missionary work, and hence the reader will no doubt be surprised when I assure him that the missionary who works among them is troubled much more by high-caste applicants for money and employment than by those belonging to the depressed classes. During the past four years I have been among tens of thousands of these people who are becoming Christians, and the one thing which they never ask for is money. Wherever I go they beg me to provide schools for their children, but not once in six months does any one ask for food or clothing, or even mention the subject of securing a higher social position.

In fairness I ought to say that the above remarks do not apply to all the divisions of the low-caste community. Some of them are cringing and feeble creatures, with many marks of inferiority stamped upon them, but so far as my own observation has extended it is not from such communities that converts are usually drawn. On the other hand those who become Christians improve rapidly and ask no odds of the Brahmans or the Mohammedans. I have seen a son of an extremely low out-caste preparing high-caste youths for university

examinations. I have seen hundreds of Christian youths, whose parents had belonged to these classes in school and college with Hindu and Mohammedan boys, apparently on terms of good fellowship, and successfully holding their own in the keen competition of the school-room. I have seen many of them placed in responsible positions in the mission field, and acquitting themselves very creditably indeed. I may be too sanguine, but it is my deliberate opinion that the successors of the present generation of Christians will startle the Brahmans of the next century, by appearing on the scene as their competitors for every position of honor or emolument which the latter now hold.

It ought not to be supposed, however, that all converts in India have come from the lower classes. The Christian community has won a recognized position in the country, and in proportion to its numbers—excluding the so-called Portuguese and French Christians, whose ancestors became nominal Christians three centuries ago—stands fully abreast of any other community in the country. In proof of this I need only quote the following extract from "The Hindu," a leading Hindu paper of South India:

"We recently approved the statement of a Bombay paper, that the social eminence which the Parsees so deservedly enjoy at the present moment was due to these two causes: that their women are well educated, and they are bound by no restrictions of caste. These two advantages make themselves felt among our native Christian brethren, and it is probable that they will soon be the Parsees of Southern India. They will furnish the most distinguished public servants, barristers, merchants, and citizens among the various classes of the native community."

This is not the testimony of a missionary, or of a Christian, but of an enlightened Hindu writer who is able to take a broad and liberal view of the situation.

In forming an estimate of the native Christian community in India, a distinction should always be drawn between the converts of the modern missionary movement, and the larger community of nominal Christians whose ancestors more than two centuries ago were, for the most part, induced to become Christians under more or less pressure by the French, the Dutch, and especially the Portuguese authorities. The hostile attitude toward missionaries assumed and long maintained by the English authorities in India was not creditable either to their courage or foresight, but beyond all doubt it was the best thing that could have happened to the English and American missionaries. It is bad enough to have Church and State allied in Christian lands, but it is a hundred times worse in a non-



Christian country. The Christianity which the Portuguese introduced into India was hardly Christian even in name. The name of Francis Xavier is still revered in India, but the Roman Catholic missionaries of the present day would not think of resorting to some of the methods employed by that illustrious saint and his followers. What might have happened, had Clive and Hastings taken it upon themselves to make the people Christians, we can hardly imagine, but it is certain that any success on the part of such men would have been worse than absolute failure. Happily for Christianity they did not make the attempt, and it was left to a lowly shoemaker, William Carey, to become the pioneer of the missionary enterprise, and hence this movement has been in operation only for a single century.

At the death of the Founder of Christianity there were about 120,000,000 inhabitants of the Roman Empire. In India there are to-day 284,000,000 souls. While I admit that the Indian converts of the century now closing are regarded with a measure of contempt by many intelligent Indians and Europeans, at the same time I venture to assert that the native Christians of India are more respected, are better known, and are more kindly regarded by the mass of the people than were the early Christians at the end of the first century after Pentecost. We are too apt to forget that the Christians of the first century were constantly taunted with their low social position. It was charged against them, and probably with truth, that the majority of the whole community were slaves. They had some great leaders, but not many. Their existence was hardly known in the "society" circles of that day, and the "leaders of thought" could not have told the name of the Founder of their religion. Gallio, who was one of the most accomplished scholars of his era, could not distinguish between Paul and Sosthenes when they appeared before him in open court. In India we have nothing corresponding to this. The Christian is an honored man in any public assembly. The Christian community is recognized in the National Congress, and Christian orators are among the foremost speakers at its annual gatherings.

Both Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Telang seem to be unaware of the change which has taken place among the mass of the people of India in their feelings toward Christian missionaries, especially in recent years. At the close of the Mutiny a general distrust of missionaries was manifested in some parts of the Empire, but this gradually passed away, and a very different feeling now prevails, especially among the common people. The missionary is regarded as the friend of the

poor, the representative of public morality, and the promoter of reform. The common people are able to distinguish between spurious Christianity and that which is genuine. In every European regiment a few dozen God-fearing soldiers were found, and in the regimental bazaars these men are usually well known to be different from their comrades. Among the more intelligent classes the distinction between nominal and real Christianity is understood to a surprising extent. Nor is there that strong aversion toward the missionaries on account of their "meat-eating" and disregard of animal life of which Mr. Gandhi especially speaks. The sacredness of all life was a tenet of Buddhism, but that religion has long since ceased to exist in India, while in Burmah, where the people are still Buddhists, the use of fish as an article of food is universal. The Burman explains his apparent inconsistency by saying that he never kills a fish, or causes one to be killed, but merely lays it on the bottom of his boat where it dies of its own accord! When, some years ago, I chanced to live in a district infested by bears and leopards, my Brahman and Rajpoot neighbors never failed to send for me when a bear appeared in their grain fields, or a leopard among their cattle, and so far from being shocked when I came to their aid with two double-barrelled guns, their only complaint was that I was a very bad marksman.

The reader in America will probably be surprised to hear that Calcutta had a "Parkhurst movement" in progress before the present agitation in New York was commenced. A little more than a year ago a great mass-meeting was held in the town-hall, in aid of this movement, which was attended by about 3,000 persons, representing all classes of the community, both Indian and European. An American missionary was made chairman, on the nomination of an orthodox Hindu, a Justice of the High Court of Calcutta. Among the speakers were the Parsee sheriff of the city, the European principal of the Jesuit college, one of the ablest and most respected physicians in the city, an Anglican clergyman, a Bengali Christian lawyer, a Mohammedan gentleman, and several other speakers. The editor of the "Indian Mirror," who is a Brahman, and a gentleman who has never hesitated to criticise missionaries, including the chairman of the meeting, asked to be allowed to move the usual vote of thanks to the chairman. In doing so this gentleman took occasion to express the gratitude of his countrymen to the Christian missionaries of Bengal, saying, in substance, that the latter had again and again come to the help of the Indian people when their best interests were



in jeopardy; and, in the midst of enthusiastic cheers, he assured the whole missionary body that the multitudes for whom he spoke would not fail to appreciate those who had so uniformly shown their good will toward the Indian people. This is only one example of good feeling, it may be granted; but in the course of the last twenty years I have witnessed frequent demonstrations, in Calcutta and elsewhere, which were hardly less significant.

So far as I have noticed, all the Indian gentlemen who have recently written or spoken unfavorably of Christian missionaries, preserve a discreet silence in reference to missionary work among the women of India. Mr. Vivekananda has ventured to say of woman in India, that "from the Hindu standpoint she receives all her rights," but he did not explain that the orthodox standpoint was one from which women of the highest caste are viewed as on the same plane, intellectually, as the pariah. To the Christian missionary alone, the women of India are indebted for the door to education and intellectual progress which now stands wide open before them. No more difficult task has ever been undertaken in any missionary field than that of demonstrating to the people of India that their women could learn, that it would be safe to permit them to learn, and that it was of the first importance that schools should be provided for them. It would require a volume to tell the whole story, but suffice it to say that the field has been fairly won, that Hindu and Mohammedan ladies are now competing in many places with missionary teachers in the zenanas, that schools for girls are multiplying, that many influential gentlemen are deeply interested in the cause of women's education, and that there are now two institutions of college grade for women, while a third, under Hindu auspices, is about to be started. One of these colleges is non-sectarian, but most of the pupils belong to Brahman or other advanced Hindu families. The principal of this college is an accomplished Bengali Christian lady, whose education was chiefly received in a missionary institution. The third institution mentioned above is said to be intended as in some measure a rival to the flourishing Christian college for girls which has been for some time in operation in the same city. This, however, is by no means a discouraging omen to the missionaries. The more rival schools, the better evidence they have that their educational work has not been in vain.

I will mention only one other instance of an invaluable work accomplished by missionaries for the women of India, for which as yet but scanty credit has been given. I can remember very well when

the first woman physician who had ever been sent into a non-Christian country arrived in India to take up the work of a medical missionary. Many readers will remember how much courage and perseverance were required by those women who ventured to act as pioneers of the medical sisterhood in America. The opposition which they incurred amounted to little short of downright persecution. If this was the case in the United States, it need hardly be said that the first female physician who ventured to offer her services to the women of India required a measure of courage, patience, and tact—to say nothing of professional skill—of the highest possible quality. Dr. Clara Swain was the pioneer upon whom this honor fell.

She arrived in India as late as 1870, and still remains engaged in her noble work. About the same time Dr. J. L. Humphrey made the first attempt to give Indian women a training in medicine. In this work he was ably seconded by Dr. Swain, and in due time it was fully demonstrated that the women of India could not only be persuaded to receive treatment from physicians of their own sex, but that they themselves could be trained for the medical profession, and thus a lucrative employment be found for them, and at the same time a service of unspeakable value rendered to the secluded women of India, who previously had been shut off from all medical aid.

Other women physicians soon followed Miss Swain, and in the course of a very few years all doubts with regard to the value of such services as these ladies were able to render had completely vanished. It thus happened that the way was prepared for what is now known as the "Dufferin movement." A returned woman missionary was honored with an audience by Queen Victoria, and ventured to speak to Her Majesty of the need of medical help for the women of India; and, when Lord Dufferin was appointed Viceroy, the Queen warmly commended the subject to Lady Dufferin, who chanced to be admirably fitted in every way for taking the lead in such a work. As soon as she arrived in India she took up the matter in earnest, made inquiries upon every hand, formed far-reaching plans, solicited aid from all possible donors, and in due time succeeded in establishing one of the most important humanitarian agencies ever introduced into India. The whole world has heard the story; and the fame of Lady Dufferin will forever be inseparable from her great project of giving medical aid to the women of India. It ought not to be forgotten, however, that but for the missionary women "the Dufferin movement" would most certainly never have been inaugurated. The possibility of such a move-

ment was first clearly demonstrated, and nearly all the real difficulties involved were removed, before Lady Dufferin arrived in India.

Mr. Telang speaks in very severe terms of the "enormous cost" of missionary work as at present conducted, and calls the expenditure "a waste of money." On the other hand, I venture to affirm that, when the extent of the work and its results are fairly considered, it is the most inexpensive work to be found in the whole wide field of benevolent enterprise throughout the world. As I am at a distance from India, and have no statistics of other societies at hand, I must beg to be allowed to refer to the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India and Malaysia, which chance to be under my superintendence. The total number of missionaries employed in this field is 78, with 75 wives of missionaries, and 38 unmarried ladies. I omit these from the calculation altogether, as Mr. Telang pleads for education and other kinds of non-religious work. I omit the large staff of Indian preachers, churches and chapels, and even the medical and industrial features of the work. I omit also the four publishing houses, and all that is done in the way of preparing and distributing literature among the people, and after making all these omissions we have the following result:

We have 1,204 day-schools, 302 of which are for girls. It will certainly be granted that \$100 a year is a very moderate sum to allow for each of these schools. We have 13 orphanages, and surely no one will object to an estimate of \$20,000 a year for this item. We have also 18 cheap boarding-schools for the children of the poor, for which I put down the very moderate sum of \$18,000, or \$1,000 each. There remain 11 high schools, for which an estimate of \$25,000 ought certainly to be accepted as very reasonable. We have thus:

Day-schools.....	1,204	\$120,400
Orphanages.....	13	20,000
Boarding-schools.....	18	18,000
High-schools.....	11	25,000
Total.....		<hr/> \$183,400

The total amount sent out during 1894 by the two missionary societies which support this vast work was \$229,917. According to Mr. Telang's estimate the married missionaries alone would have received \$93,600, and when we add to this not only 38 unmarried ladies, but also more than 1,200 Indian preachers, four publishing houses, two colleges, one theological seminary, an extensive medical work, and various industrial enterprises, the reader cannot fail to see

that an immense amount of valuable work is going forward at a cost which is so slight, when compared with American rates, that it seems almost nominal.

As one who has long been resident in India, I can understand, and to some extent sympathize, with Mr. Telang's feelings, when he sees the ancestral faith of his country challenged by the followers of what seems to him not only an alien religion, but a religion which the foreign rulers of his country, in the very nature of the case, seem to be constantly thrusting before him. The people of India have never been conquered by the English, and do not, in the proper sense of the word, occupy the position of a conquered people. A few Englishmen have built up a great empire in India, but in doing so they have as often been helped as opposed by Indian princes and Indian armies. The Government of India is English, and yet in a sense Asiatic. Mr. Telang may yet live to help to make laws for the empire. All this is true, and yet the aspiring Indian cannot but remember that the foreigner is in the land, that the highest places are his, and that the India of the golden age of Hinduism is steadily passing away. No people in the world are so proud of their ancestry as the higher classes of India, and it is not strange that many of them cling with desperate tenacity to their ancient traditions, and oppose Christianity as the embodiment of all the alien influences which seem more and more to endanger the very existence of all that has, from time immemorial, been most distinctive in the ideas and institutions of the country. The Indian's pride of ancestry is natural and, within limits, commendable, but it is at present a source of great weakness. It hinders his progress and makes him blind to the inevitable. It chills all feeling of real patriotism by trying to substitute an impossible past for a hopeful present and a splendid future. Happily, many leading men in India see this clearly, and not a few who decline to accept Christianity personally are practically adopting its spirit and commending its precepts. It is the only religious system ever propagated among men which is equally well adapted to every clime and every people, and in due time the people of India will discover that it is no more alien to them than the air which they breathe, or the rain which fills their magnificent rivers. It is the common heritage of all humanity.

J. M. THOBURN.

## CHARITY THAT HELPS AND OTHER CHARITY.

OUR word "charity" has strayed far away from the *χάρις* of the Greek, which signified the treating of a person kindly, as if he were of the same kind or kin as one's self. It is chiefly with the desire to make clear this meaning of the word charity, and to urge a new standard of kindness, that I have gathered together a few of the stories of our neighbors of the College Settlement in New York City, as they have come to us through this last terrible year of distress.

The College Settlement is simply several young women who are trying to be friends to those who are near them, and we learn to know much of the lives of many of our neighbors. Many know something of the sorrows and sufferings of the poor, but it is a privilege given to only a few to know well their everyday home-life.

Through all the past year of distress, though the rich have given thousands of dollars, it is the poor who have given the most freely. "There is no way of calculating the kind deeds of neighbor to neighbor till the judgment day." The only natural form of relief is the help given by friend to friend. When a feeble old man without relatives and absolutely penniless was asked by a friend of mine if he ever suffered from hunger, "Never," he answered. My friend asked him, "What do you do?" and he replied promptly, "I go and get something." There was always ready for him in some neighbor's house a pail of soup or a bowl of coffee.

Scattered about among the tenements there are many who, in ordinary times, make a bare living by scrubbing floors and by doing washing for those who are better off than themselves. In a time of great poverty there is no money to pay for such work, and these people become helpless. One such old woman came to the housekeeper of a Chrystie-Street tenement and told of her great need. The housekeeper had neither work nor money to offer, but she sent out her daughter, who usually did the house-cleaning, to look for work. The girl obtained a temporary position in a large dry-goods store, and the