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The Rev. Dr. Miller, C.I.E.

THE most potent formative influence in the making of Modern India has been the network of Schools and Colleges spread through the length and breadth of this land. And, so far as South India is concerned, the most potent among other factors have been for the last half-century and more, the Madras Christian College and the School attached to it. And if there is one man more than another who has helped to make the College what it is, it is the Reverend William Miller C.I.E., L.L.D., who is happily spared to us and who, from his distant home in Scotland, is still evincing a keen interest in all that concerns the welfare of this land which he loves so well.

William Miller was born on the 13th January, 1838, at Thurso, in Caithness, the northernmost county of Scotland. His father was a well-known merchant and ship-owner. Both his father and mother have a proud ancestry. Their family was famous for their solicitude for public

welfare. To them the seaport town of Thurso owes its pier. The Miller Institution of the place, founded by an uncle of Dr. Miller marks their practical interest in the cause of education. "Dr. Miller's father, whose death took place in 1883, took a life-long interest in this indispensable machinery of national elevation, and followed with the keenest appreciation the educational labours of his son in this Presidency, and especially the development of the Madras Christian College which owes its present existence and efficiency to him more than to any other. It is, therefore, very proper that Dr. Miller should have, with a view to keep alive among the people of South India the memory of his venerable father, founded at the University the Miller Gold Medal given to the student who takes the B. A. Degree with the highest honours in Philosophy. Not less profound was the interest which his mother manifested in Dr. Miller's work. She knew about that work in its details and was acquainted, though not by sight, yet by report, with some of the *personnel* of the institution, including both the teachers and the taught. She had sent to her, and she studied eagerly, every report, lecture or newspaper-cutting that had reference to the work of the College."

Dr. Miller's boyhood was spent among the hills in the neighbourhood of Dale with his maternal grandfather and his aunt. He attended the parish school in Thurso whence he went to a boarding school in Aberdeen—the Bellevue Academy, managed by Dr. George Tulloch. He finished his course at that school before he was thirteen years old ; "and, when told to go up to the University, he would not, and preferred being detained another year." In 1852, he joined Marischal College, Aberdeen. Though all but the youngest, he was the brightest of his year. The Rev. Charles Cooper, his colleague at the Christian College, was his junior by two years at the University.

His studies for the Degree extended over four years. He had a distinguished scholastic career, and he was particularly strong in Philosophy and English Composition. On taking his M. A. Degree in 1856, he received a gold medal given by the City of Aberdeen. The most eminent among Dr. Miller's professors was the Poet William C. Aytoun, Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in Edinburgh.

Dr. Miller is a lover of the fine arts. His greatest favourite among the masters of English

prose is John Ruskin to whose writings he owes his well-known passion for Architecture. He is an enthusiastic student of history. He firmly believes that "through the ages one increasing purpose runs." The most striking feature of his life at Edinburgh was the rejuvenation which he effected in the Dialectic Society of the Edinburgh University.

It was in this society chiefly that Dr. Miller gained that experience which has been of so much service to him in fostering and guiding similar unions in his own college at Madras.

Of his five-years' course in Edinburgh, only the first year was devoted to attending lectures at the University. From 1857 to 1861, he studied Theology at the New College—a seminary founded for the training of its ministers by the Free Church after its disruption from the Established Church of Scotland in 1843. Here too, Dr. Miller distinguished himself both in his work at the classes and in the discussions of the theological Society. After finishing his theological course, Dr. Miller was taken as an Assistant to Dr. Cavendish, the then Minister of Free St. George's Church, Edinburgh. Subsequently he took charge of St. David's Mission there.

He had yet no thought of going to India. At

that time, the feeling in Scotland towards Educational Missions was one of cold distrust; and the Mission field in India had ceased to have attraction for men otherwise willing to serve the Church.

Meantime, the position in Madras was anything but satisfactory. In 1835, the Chaplains of St. Andrew's Church had opened a school in Vepery. Mr. Anderson arrived in Madras in 1837, and shortly afterwards removed the school from Vepery to Georgetown. The school was a success from the outset. In 1843, occurred the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, and the Scottish Missionaries in Madras adhered to the portion of the Church known thereafter as the Free Church of Scotland. The Institution opened at the commencement of 1847 in the premises in which it has since remained. For the new conditions introduced by the foundation of the University in 1857, the Institution was but ill-prepared and none of its pupils were able even to matriculate. And from one cause or another, by 1862, the staff of the Mission had sunk to a very low point.

A strong man was obviously wanted in Madras. And Dr. Miller was at once thought of and the

offer was made to him. The biographer who fondly believes that the subject of his sketch has or ought to have some inkling of his appointed sphere of work will find little to encourage him in the life of Dr. Miller. For he did not have any premeditated plan of work in India. Nor had he studied the question of Indian Missions with special reference to education with any particular attention.

Dr. Miller arrived in Madras on the 9th December 1862, when he was twenty-four years old. His first years in India were devoted to the zealous discharge of all the duties that devolved on him as practically the sole agent of the Free Church in Madras. As Secretary to the Mission, he superintended its operation in all departments.

The question had to be faced as to what should be done with the Mission, and especially with the Institution. It was determined that the Institution should at all hazards be maintained, and that a course of action by which it might be restored to its old educational efficiency should be resolutely followed. To the maintenance and development of the institution,

Dr. Miller accordingly gave his main time and strength.

At the end of 1863, the staff of the Institution was strengthened by three new additions. The position of the Institution was now practically assured. The first of its pupils who passed the entrance examination of the University directly from its classes belonged to the Matriculation class of 1863, while in 1865 a class studying for the First Examination in Arts, then a single year's course, was formed, so that the Institution became a College in the present acceptation of that term. A junior B. A. class was formed in 1867 and the Institution became a First Grade College, as it has since remained.

After having thus silently changed the aspect of affairs in Madras, Dr. Miller, on the expiry of his first term of five years, went home on a well-earned furlough. He came back to Madras in 1869, quietly determined to make his college one of light and leading and a power in the land for the highest ends.

Till his second furlough in 1878, Dr. Miller directed all his energies towards making the College efficient.

At the end of 1876, when the staff had become

fairly adequate, the institution became separate from the other departments of the work of the Mission in respect of organisation, support, and control. The College had now become the most important among the distinctively Christian educational institutions of Southern India, so that it was deemed desirable that it should hold a direct relation to as many as possible of the Christian bodies interested in education, and be no longer connected exclusively with one of them. In a letter written by the Principal to the authorities of the Free Church of Scotland in April 1874, Dr. Miller urged that the Free Church Mission Institution should be placed on a permanent basis as a Central Christian College for Southern India. In an appendix to the letter a hearty general approval of the scheme was given by all the representatives in Madras of the various Protestant bodies engaged in Missionary and educational work. The result was that by the end of 1876 the necessary arrangements had been made, and on the 1st of January, 1877, the Institution entered on its new course as the Madras Christian College. Between 1865, when College classes were opened and this date, the number of students had grown from 6 to 174.

Dr. Miller spent his second furlough in impressing on all who took active interest in such matters in Scotland the importance of educational Missions in India, with special reference to the new position which the College had just then begun to occupy. And his views were published by the Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Church under the heading: "Indian Missions; and how to view them."

This was the cause of a heated newspaper controversy in Madras which went by the name of the Miller-Duncan Controversy.

Dr. Miller had referred in his speeches in Scotland to the religious education imparted in the Madras Christian College, as distinguished from the purely secular education given in Government institutions in accordance with the avowed principle of the Government of the country to observe neutrality in matters of religion. As soon as an account of Dr. Miller's speech appeared in India, there was a storm of indignation raised, and Dr. Duncan, a Professor in the Presidency College, led the attack by sending a letter to the *Madras Mail* controverting Dr. Miller's views. The point of real dispute in the whole controversy was whether morality

could be taught or practised without the aid of religion. On this point, there is room for difference of opinion. But the view which Dr. Miller holds, has been thus neatly expressed by a colleague of his, Dr. Cooper. "While morality may be separated from Christianity as a special form of religion, it cannot be separated from all religions. It cannot be separated from the doctrines of the existence of a God, a divine Government of the world, immortality and a future retribution—doctrines which are not special to Christianity, but which belong to all religions."

Returning from his furlough, Dr. Miller continued his work at the College. During these years, Dr. Miller exerted his influence with the educationists of this Presidency to get them to agree upon certain rules relating to the internal management of schools, by which a more efficient discipline might be secured among the school-going population. These rules, now popularly known as the "Madras Educational Rules" have been adopted by Government and are embodied in the Grant-in-Aid Code. Dr. Miller has been instrumental in introducing similar rules into the University of Madras in relation to the affiliation

of Colleges. Dr. Miller had also to maintain a stiff fight in connection with grants for his College with the Government Education Department presided over by Colonel Macdonald who did not treat aided institutions in any generous manner in the matter of grants.

The increasing number of students made better accommodation indispensable. In 1871, by an expenditure of about Rs. 50,000, the entire block of buildings was made fairly fit for a place of education. But by 1882 the wants of the College had completely outgrown the accommodation then provided; accordingly a movement was set on foot for still further improvement and enlargement. The work was begun towards the end of 1883 and was not entirely finished till early in 1887. As a result, the College was provided with a large examination hall, a chemical laboratory, additional class-rooms and tiffin-rooms, at a total cost of Rs. 1,36,000. Further additions were made between 1891 and 1896, the most important being a biological laboratory, a large class-room and the College Office. The Anderson Hall, a property of the United Free Church became available for College purposes in 1895. In 1907 a large extension of the College buildings

was undertaken which has cost the College more than 3½ lakhs. But this was practically after Dr. Miller had left these shores for good and so does not come within our scope. But it must be a matter of gratification to Dr. Miller to learn that the Christian College has risen equal to the demand made by the University on it with the introduction of the new courses and that its future, so far as it is in human hands, is assured.

It is not possible to record in detail the various acts of Dr. Miller's self-sacrifice on behalf of the College and to give a list of his many munificent donations to different branches of that institution. But his initiation of the Hostel movement in South India deserves special mention.

Dr. Miller at an early time recognised the need for providing better accommodation and some guidance and supervision for such young men as, coming from a distance to study in Madras, had no relatives or friends with whom to lodge. Accordingly in 1882, he rented a house near the College where both board and lodging at a reasonable cost were provided for a number of Brahmin students. The results were so encouraging that Dr. Miller secured a site in Thumbu Chetty

Street, on which in the course of 1884, he erected the Madras Students' Home. This home which affords accommodation for forty-six Brahmin students was the first College hostel to be erected in Southern India, and to Dr. Miller is due the credit of initiating a movement which has since spread all over the country. The success of this first attempt led Dr. Miller to erect the Fenn Hostel for Indian Christian students, which was opened in 1888, and provides accomodation for forty members. The buildings of these two hostels remained for many years the private property of Dr. Miller, but in 1902 the first of these, and in 1906 the second were acquired by the College Council with the assistance in each case of a grant from Government. In 1895, Dr. Miller erected with the assistance of a large subscription from the late Raja the Setupati of Ramnad, the second Students' Home and *presented* it to the College. In 1902, a fourth hostel, the Caithness Hall, was built by Dr. Miller with assistance from Government and *presented* by him to the College. The value of the property which the College has acquired for hostel accommodation is estimated at more than Rs. 2 lakhs. And for a not inconsiderable portion of this sum,

the College is indebted to the generosity of Dr. Miller.

An aid to the stability of the College was secured when the Professor's Retiring Fund was established with effect from January 1889. The basis of the fund is an endowment amounting to Rs. 45,000, provided through the generous gift by Dr. Miller, of College House, together with a sum of £1,100, equally generously presented by Dr. Miller's brother, Rev. Alexander Miller of Buckie. Besides these endowments, there are various endowed scholarships and studentships, the aggregate amount of capital invested to maintain these being Rs. 1,27,600. For much the greater part of this sum the College is indebted to the Rev. Alexander Miller, D.D. He and his brother Dr. Miller have been the most generous benefactors of the College, and have in many ways helped to secure permanence and stability for the College.

By the early eighties, the College had made a permanent place for itself in the forefront of educational institutions in Southern India. "The hostels attached to the College, the district scholarships offered therein, the education given within its walls by a staff of professors, perhaps

the most efficient in Southern India, the sober and thoughtful cast of mind of the young men who went out from the College,—the effect of all this was that Dr. Miller's College (as the Christian College is popularly known) was thought of in every family having sons to educate from Berhampore to Point De Galle."

Dr. Miller left nothing undone to make the College an efficient place of instruction. The College Library was founded in 1863. It was followed in 1869 by the institution of the Consulting Library which contains books of reference, Class libraries connected with the B. A. Classes were instituted in 1886, and the M. A. Library in 1893. The oldest of the College Societies is the Madras Debating Society, founded in 1877. All the Societies were united later on in the "Associated Societies" of the College, which is a unique organisation in Madras. The oldest of the Athletic clubs is the College Cricket Club, founded in 1882. All the clubs were united in the College Athletic Association in 1902. The first number of the *Madras Christian College Magazine* which continues to flourish, appeared in July 1883. The scheme of district and intra-collegiate scholarships was instituted in 1885.

But, even more than all this, what has given the College its unique and distinguished character is the cordial personal relations which exist between the teachers and the taught. And in this matter a noble and inspiring example was set by Dr. Miller.

Here is another extract to show how warm is the attachment which Dr. Miller feels towards his College and his students. In a letter addressed to the present and former students of the College in 1907, on the eve of his retirement, owing to serious illness, he says that if any real good should result from his visit to Europe, it would be his foremost wish to be among his students once again. He goes on :—

"I think that a very large number of you are well aware how the College has endeavoured to teach you principles and truths and to awaken aspirations within you which you know to be of priceless value if your lives on earth are to be of any value in the estimation of God or for the benefit of men. This last message of mine to you before I leave, is to entreat you to endeavour and to pray that you may be faithful throughout life to all that you yourselves know to be good and true among the things which your College has tried to teach and among the impulses towards everything good and right which it has been its constant aim to awaken in your minds. I trust that your life-long sympathy and aid will help the College to maintain in future generations the position which it holds to-day, as I also trust that in coming years and generations the College will be a powerful and efficient witness to the

great principles on which it has, from the first, been based. I need not tell you that these principles are to communicate in the best possible form such knowledge as may be useful in ordinary life and in doing this to mould aright the characters of its students and to lead them in that formation of their characters to pay attention, most of all, to the great scheme for the guidance and uplifting of our race which forms the central line of all human history."

Here is an admiring description of Dr. Miller's work in the College which may fittingly close the description of this aspect of his life in Madras :—

"His intense sympathy with his pupils, his proverbial love for his old boys, his large benefactions and donations, his construction of the three students' homes, his making over "The Grand College House" for the aid of the staff of his College, his lavish generosity to hundreds of poor and deserving students, all these will never be forgotten. We have heard students describing with considerable emotion how Dr. Miller was seen running about the different corners of Madras to search for his pupils on the day of the terrible fire at the People's Park, of his hurrying about the various homes to look after his boys on the day of the terrible cyclone, of his attending at the sick bed of many a rich and poor student, of his walking in tears to the grave of one of his beloved pupils, and of the thousand and one acts of extreme sympathy and generosity towards his pupils. Indeed it is impossible to describe adequately the great love and personal attachment which Dr. Miller bore to every one of his pupils, and it is this noble element in his character that has contributed largely to the success of the Madras Christian College."

After more than thirty years of toil, advancing age and his great labours began to tell on Dr. Miller's strength, but he continued to partici-

pate in the work of the College until 1907, when failing eyesight compelled him to leave India. In 1909, he formally resigned the Principalship; but the Supreme Governing Body, recognising the great services he had rendered to the cause of Missionary education during the long period of forty-five years, induced him to accept the title of Honorary Principal of the College.

But, since his retirement as before it, Dr. Miller has endeavoured to maintain his connection with his "old boys." And the one thing which cheers him most and inspires him with the deepest joy is to see his students lead lives of noble aspiration and faithful struggling with the problems of life. While in India, much of his correspondence, to which he gave a considerable portion of his time was conducted with his former students to whom he was always accessible in person. Even after his retirement, he has been keeping on his correspondence with his 'old boys' and he has been sending every year to the College Day Meeting messages, each of which may, not inaptly, be described, 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul.'

In one of his numerous letters he offers a solution to the thorny question of religious instruction

in schools and colleges. He is a strong advocate of direct religious instruction but the variety of creeds and sects in India does not perplex him. He says :—

No insurmountable difficulty ought to be or need be caused by the variety of creeds and sects which, as all men know, exists in India. Let each company of those who maintain educational institutions based upon the principle of forming character aright be faithful to the beliefs by which they wish their own lives and influence to be regulated. Let them see to it that such beliefs have an all-prevailing influence on the instruction afforded in their institutions so that the students who go out from these may be expected throughout their lives to give evidence of the moral and religious temper which their training has inspired. Let not only tolerance but respect for beliefs and opinions different from those under which he has himself been trained be instilled into the mind of every student. In the state of thought which appears to me to be becoming prevalent among the products of modern education throughout Southern India, it is far indeed from hopeless that sentiments like these will animate all who care for their country's well-being, may summon to work for the diffusion of real education, that is to say, of education inspired by moral purpose and directed towards moral ends.

When such views as I am advocating begin to prevail there will be no need of dispute with those who hold that the maintenance of some educational institutions which are secular alone is for special reasons and in exceptional circumstances an unfortunate necessity. Exceptions to general rules must always be allowed for. The one great matter is that the moral and religious element should be conspicuously present in the great mass of the institutions in which the education of the people is carried on. If you work earnestly to secure that this shall henceforward be the case, you must treat as opponents those only who regard an education that is purely secular not as an occasional or temporary neces-

sity, but as a final goal. I would indeed have you to oppose with vigour all men, if such there be, who continue deliberately to hold that everything religious or moral may safely be neglected in colleges and schools and consequently that the moulding of character aright lies outside the function of ordinary education.

During the first ten years of his stay in India, Dr. Miller became associated with the work of the Madras University. His sound scholarship and zeal for education made his presence on the Senate very useful. He was for many years Examiner in English and History. He was created a Fellow of the University in 1867; and in 1871, he was appointed to deliver the Convocation Address. The Address is an inspiring and thoughtful one.

Dr. Miller was a Member of the Syndicate for a long time. And he always took an active and useful part in the deliberations of that body. To use an expressive term of Mr. Cook of Bangalore, "he has been the 'spinal chord' of the Syndicate." He was Chairman of the Boards of Studies in English and History for many years. He served on various committees of the University, and on each of them he left the strong impress of his work. There was no important debate in the Senate in which he did not take part and shape the discussion and in which his

individuality was not deeply felt. He had also the unique honour of delivering the Convocation Address a second time in 1894—"a privilege which he utilised in exhorting those who are to be, in a more real sense than their ancestors have been, the *makers* of India, to strive to attain those strong elements of character which have made the Western nations an invincible power in the world and have a thousand-fold increased their serviceableness in the economy of the race."

In 1882, when Lord Ripon constituted his famous Education Commission, Dr. Miller was invited to serve on the same. The Commission was presided over by Sir William Hunter and the recommendations of the Commission have been aptly described as "the great Charter of Aided Education in India" as will be seen from the brief summary of the recommendations given below. On this Commission, Dr. Miller "worked with all the enthusiasm inspired by a keen sense of the far-reaching issues that hung upon its decisions, not only for this country, but indirectly for other countries also." On this Commission, Dr. Miller was essentially the champion of aided education. In him, not only Mission Schools but indigenous schools and colleges found an advocate.

"But his advocacy of their interests was only subordinate to, and indeed prompted by, his desire to get done the very right thing, both morally and in respect of expediency." Here is a standing testimony to his absolutely disinterested services on the Commission. In Chapter VII, Section 10, paras 519 and 520 of the Report of the Commission, the following passages occur :—

"At the same time we think it well to put on record our *unanimous* opinion that withdrawal of direct departmental agency should not take place in favour of Missionary bodies, and that departmental institutions of the higher order should not be transferred to Missionary management. . . . . It is so manifestly desirable to keep the whole of the future development of private effort in education free from difficulties connected with religion, that the course which we advise seems to us to be agreeable to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the strictest doctrine of neutrality. . . . . The higher education of the country will not be on a basis that can be regarded as permanent or safe, nor will it receive the wide extension that is needed, until the larger part of it at all events is provided and managed by the people of the country for themselves."

A resident of Simla wrote at that time :—

"Both at Calcutta and here, the Rev. Principal Miller of the Madras Christian College, has rendered eminent service. This was expected by those who knew his ability and his influence in Madras ; but no one could have anticipated that he could have won, as he has done, the admiration not only of the accomplished President, but of colleagues, some of whom had views and aims very different from Mr. Miller's.

It is easy to recognise in every line of the recommendations of the Commission the strong impress of Dr. Miller's keen intelligence, far-seeing statesmanship, wide sympathies and genuine concern for the welfare and advancement of this country. Dr. Miller holds these views strongly and gave expression to them in a letter to the Press. Here is an extract from it which shows how much importance he attaches to the extension of the system of grants-in-aid.

The great purpose of the Commission was to show how the principle laid down in the Despatch of 1854 might best be carried out in practice. Its central recommendation for the accomplishment of this end was that whilst existing State institutions of the higher order should be maintained in complete efficiency wherever they are necessary, the improvement and extension of institutions under private management must be the principal care of the Department. Now the extent to which education is healthier and more hopeful in Southern India than elsewhere is largely caused by the effect that has been given to that recommendation there. It has not, indeed, been acted on with much steadiness or continuity. Still, from time to time it has guided practical administration to a not inconsiderable extent. This has been productive of good results, which are visible enough, though I cannot charge upon them or even spoon them here. On the other hand one of the main reasons why education in Bengal has fallen into the condition described by your Correspondent is that this and all other recommendations of the Commission of 1882-83 have been almost wholly neglected in practical administration here.

It may be noted in passing that Dr. Miller

was invited by Lord Curzon to take part in the deliberations of the Conference which sat at Simla previous to the appointment of the Indian Universities Commission of 1902.

The unselfish and useful labours of Dr. Miller were recognised by the Government of India and the people among whom he laboured so long and so faithfully. The Government recognised his educational services by conferring on him a Companionship of the Indian Empire. Dr. Cooper spoke thus about this honour conferred on Dr. Miller :

" Although the address says nothing of the now historical Education Commission, a brief allusion to the part taken by Dr. Miller in it will not be out of place in this connection. The Orders passed by the Government of India in accordance with the recommendations of the commission have justly been designated " The Magna Charta of aided Education in India." The fact, therefore, gracefully recognised by the bestowal of the Order of the Companionship of the Indian Empire, that no single member of the Commission had greater influence in procuring that great charter, would of itself, were there nothing else, be a sufficient reason for holding him in grateful remembrance."

Shortly after the University of Aberdeen, Dr. Miller's *Alma Mater*, conferred on him the honorary degree of L. L. D. And, later on, the University of Madras, in grateful recognition of his valuable services in the cause of higher education

in South India conferred on him the all but unique honour of the degree of L. L. D.

He was appointed the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras—the first time in the annals of that body that a non-official was selected for that high office. He was also returned by the University to the local Legislative Council more than once.

His own Church appreciated his services and wished to reward him, but he refused to receive any honour that would necessitate his absence from the sphere of his labours in Madras. He was appointed by the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1893 to the professorship of Evangelical Theology at the Free Church College, Edinburgh,—an office which he declined. The Free Church Committee in Scotland unanimously resolved to invite their renowned Missionary at Madras to take the Moderator's Chair at the General Assembly of 1895. This is an honour accorded only to the very foremost sons of that Church. Dr. Duff of Calcutta, and Dr. Wilson of Bombay were similarly honoured in their time but probably none has hitherto been called to fill the worthy office at such an early age as Dr. Miller.

His opening and closing Addresses to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in 1896 as the Moderator are well worth reading. He spoke there, as usual, frankly. Speaking of the rather rapid conversion of the "depressed classes" in India to Christianity, he said :

"The desire for freedom from crushing burdens, for elevation in the social scale, for many good things of the world like these, is the mainspring of this movement, as certainly as the longing to pass from slavery into the good land beyond the desert inspired the multitude that went out from the house of bondage. Yet the impression has got abroad that those who are thus gathering to Christ's standard are in the full evangelical sense converted men, in short that we have in India a repetition not of Moses and the Exodus, but of Peter and the day of Pentecost. And no very strenuous effort to correct the false impression is made by those who lead the movement."

"In no land, whether nominally Christian or not, can the Church do her appointed work without cordially recognising that divine power acts as well around her as within her. She is the pillar and ground of the truth ; she is meant to be the central force in all that is done for the salvation of mankind. But she can fulfil this great ideal only by assimilating whatever of truth and goodness the divine compassion works out by other agencies than hers,—only by accepting the servant's place,—only by confessing sadly that in proportion to her opportunities she had failed more shamefully than even the votaries of the systems from which she is tempted to turn away with self-sufficient loathing and contempt."

Though Dr. Miller did not take a very active part in the political activities of the day, still he

identified himself with public movements in Madras whenever the importance of the occasion demanded it. He gave valuable evidence before the last Public Services Commission. Years ago, when there was a great Mass Meeting held at Madras to protest against the annual exodus of the Government to the Hills, Dr. Miller condemned the action of the Government in unmistakable terms. His joining in that emphatic protest gave weight to that movement; and his name was referred to in that connection in the House of Lords as that of "the well-known schoolmaster of Southern India." In 1891, Dr. Miller presided over the public meeting held at the Victoria Public Hall to urge that immediate steps should be taken towards improving the sanitary condition of the City. His address on the 'Cost of Progress' was a warning to thos who think the way to the land flowing with political milk and honey, short and easy.

Towards the close of the year 1891, a movement was set on foot to erect a statue of Dr. Miller in Madras. And in a comparatively short time the money was subscribed for and in 1901, the statue was unveiled by Lord Ampthill.

The statue is an excellent likeness of Dr. Miller

and is erected on a granite pillar, in front of which is the following inscription.

William Miller, L.L.D., D.D., C.I.E.
(*In hoc singo.*)
Madras Christian College.
Erected by
Public Subscription,
A. D. 1901.

On the right hand panel of the pedestal the inscription runs as follows :—

"A missionary teacher, known alike for his piety and public zeal, whose services in the cause of higher education are probably unsurpassed in India."—Lord Napier in the House of Lords.

In addition to his regular arduous work, Dr. Miller found time to write some books which reveal in a wonderful degree the strength and the versatility of his intellect. His "Shakespeare's Chart of Life" is a valuable contribution to Shakespearean criticism. And though many may not agree with the Doctor in all his conclusions regarding the moral purport of the four great tragedies of Shakespeare, few will deny that these essays are the fruit of patient and intelligent study of the "master mind of all the ages." And no *Indian* student of Shakespeare can afford to neglect this stimulating interpretation of Shakespeare.

He says in the preface to the book :

"My hope is that some of those whom I have had always before me while I wrote, will receive something of that impulse towards truth and goodness which I believe the four great tragedies to be fitted to inspire."

Dr. Miller has great faith in Shakespeare's power over his readers.

"Few things are better fitted to enlarge the mind or elevate the thoughts than to come fairly under the influence of one of Shakespeare's greater plays."

Nothing more can be done here than to merely point out the lessons which Dr. Miller wishes us to draw from these four tragedies of *Lear, Macbeth, Hamlet and Othello.*

Dr. Miller's study of "King Lear" is about the most interesting to Indian students. For, therein, he seeks to show how the tragedy of 'King Lear' will be repeated in India unless we profit by the lessons taught or rather suggested therein.

The question rises of the time at which in any given society—the India of our own day for example—the principle of correlated authority and obedience may fall into the background and when forces at work within the society itself may be safely trusted to. On both sides there is danger. Fatal disorganisation is the sure result if force be withdrawn before 'love' has gained sufficient power. . . . . But fatal disorganisation is the equally sure result if the dominion of bare authority be maintained too long. In a country situated as India is at present, this is the side on which there is the practical temptation to err. . . . . When rulers are men of ordinary calibre and but ordinary insight, there is pressing danger that they will be extremely slow to transfer any

of their power to others, or rather perhaps that, while laying aside some of it in appearance, they will struggle to retain every particle of it in reality.

How amply the history of India during the last few years has justified Dr. Miller's fears in this direction!

Again,

the transition from the first stage of civilised society to that which ought to develop out of it can be safely made only when that public spirit, that postponement of self to the common good, that devotion to the great ends that society subserves which Shakespeare sets forth as love, has place and power in the everyday machinery of the community.

How true all this is of contemporary Indian political life!

For those who, from pure motives, desire to help in bestowing a large life and a freer rule on India, it is not enough to see what the time requires and what opportunities it affords; nor yet is it enough that they be willing, at whatever sacrifice of rate and popularity, to speak the right and do it. It is further needed that in regard to everything, and chiefly in regard to patience, they conform to the laws by which this whole frame of things is governed. Edgar, not Lear, must be their model.

Finally,

Those who are to give effective help in the transition of India into a new stage of political and social life and thus take high rank among the peoples of the world, must be prepared to pay the price not only of loss of popularity—that is but a small thing—but of real trouble and real suffering. They will suffer for mistakes which they are sure to make themselves. They will suffer for the mistakes of others. They will suffer from the hatred which their very devotion to unselfish ends is

certain to inspire in those whose motive is self-interest, or love of applause, or love of power. It is only by treading the path of suffering that 'love' can combat the evils of its time and vanquish them.

And Dr. Miller concludes this suggestive study of "King Lear" thus:

If my readers will study this great drama once more, bearing in mind, the common but all-important morals which I have tried to point for present use, it may not be in vain for India, any more than for themselves, that they have come under the influence of 'King Lear.'

In his study of "Macbeth," Dr. Miller points out that evil of any kind, when it is yielded to, works out suffering and sorrow, not through any special intervention by the Ruler of the world, but in virtue of the world's inherent constitution and that evil does this as certainly in the case of good men as in that of bad men and that the final issue of the suffering and sorrow which any submission to moral evil causes depends on the character of those on whom such suffering comes. "Macbeth's career, when viewed aright, is a solemn reminder of how true the saying is that the corruption of the best is of all things worst:—*Corruptio optimi pessima.*"

In "Hamlet and the Waste of Life," Dr. Miller attempts the rather bold task of adding one more commentary to the innumerable commentaries on

that play. And it must be conceded that his criticism is certainly original. "As we make acquaintance with Hamlet, we come to see that, in spite of much that is noble and in the very highest sense good about him, he wants that sense of duty which is often strong in natures which not only in intellectual but even in moral equipment are greatly inferior to his." "Than the earthly history of Hamlet there can be no sterner lesson of the result of duty, amid whatever difficulty and with whatever appearance of excuse, being left undone."

"On the part of Indian students, there are special reasons for concentration of their thoughts on Hamlet. In him they may, in no small measure, see themselves. . . . . To say the least, their need is conspicuously great to lay to heart the lessson that a man may possess wealth of mental and even of moral power, may think many a lofty thought and cherish many a noble feeling, and yet, because the sense of duty is weak in him or wanting, may be in deadly danger if so failing to fulfil the purpose of his being that his wasted life will be.

Cast as rubbish to the void,
When God has made the file complete."

His last study of Shakespeare in this series was that of Othello which he styled "Othello and the crash of Character." "It is a leading thought in all tragedies and accordingly in 'Othello', that evil of any kind, evil which perhaps in common esteem is small, works ever in its proper nature towards some great catastrophe." Again, "the catastrophe to which evil tends, when it has once got scope to work, is terrible in proportion to the goodness of the person on whom it has succeeded in taking hold."

It will be seen from the few and detached extracts given above that these studies in Shakespeare form a not invaluable contribution to modern Shakespearean criticism.

The only other work of Dr. Miller's which we need notice here is "The Least of All Lands"—a treatise on the topography of Palestine in relation to its history. The book is an attempt to show how Palestine, in spite of its being the least of all lands, has exerted such a great influence on the course of human history. He shows how there is much that is inspiring even in the outward aspect of the country, how it is well fitted to promote the moral training of its inhabitants and how in its history it has been the home of

freedom. And a considerable portion of the book is devoted to a review of the map of Israel and the Philistines.

Dr. Miller is no narrow-minded and hide-bound Missionary who refuses to see anything good except within the four corners of the Bible. He is a devout Christian and a zealous missionary. But his Christianity is a broad and catholic one which permits him to recognise that there is good in other systems of religion also. This attitude of his may have already become evident to the readers from some extracts from his speeches given above. But he gave emphatic utterance to this view of his in his lecture on "The place of Hinduism in the story of the World," which he delivered at the Anderson Hall in 1895.

He begins this lecture by pointing out that "it is well that the subject which I bring before you now should engage the thought of all who love India and more particularly of India's sons." He concedes that Hinduism "makes no profession of being a guide for the thought or the life of all men. It stands avowedly apart, content to belong to this land and allowing that other forms of belief and rules of life are good for men of other

lands." He thus recognises the essential tolerance of Hinduism.

He rightly points out, "whatever be the merits of Hinduism at the heart, countless evils, countless abuses, have got entangled with it which are eating away the best elements of good from the social life which it regulates and the characters which it forms." But he is fair enough to add :

"Be the inner merits of the Christian system what they may, that system as practically exemplified in any land or age has ever been full of error and has done evil as well as good to such as cling to it sincerely. Those who will be most angry with me for saying so yet make it an essential portion of their creed that for the larger part of the Christian era the whole Church was overmastered by deadly error, while those who deny that this was so are equally convinced that the most vigorous portion of the Church is being misled by deadly error now. Every section of Christendom believes in the corruption of all sections except itself. So true it is that the ideal of a system, be it Hinduism, Christianity, or what you please, is one thing and its practical exemplification as an active force, another."

And, after pointing out the unreasonableness and injustice of comparing the excrescences of Hinduism with the superior ideals and teachings of Christianity, he goes on,

"Our only question for the present is: Has India, like Greece, like Rome, like Israel, anything good which has grown up specially in it,—anything which bears its lesson with it for every race on earth,—anything which belongs of right to the moral story of the world? It is only in most meagre outline that I can answer the question I have raised. But my answer is, India has some

thing, has much, which though developed in her isolation, is meant to be available, and ought now to be made available, for mankind.

India has her ideal, and whatever be the weeds which hinder its bringing forth fruit into perfection, it is an ideal of which the world has need. The chief characteristics of this ideal may be hurriedly defined. There is the thought of the irresistible power that dwells somehow in the universe, a power which man can never change, to which it is his only wisdom to submit. There is the thought that God, that the divine, is not merely over all but in all, that the whole being of the world and those who dwell in it is the expression of divinity. There is the thought that all men, or all men within the Hindu pale, are inseparably linked, are responsible for one another, must in no circumstances part from one another. Such are the main thoughts with which Hindus amid many changes, not only in forms of Government, but in custom and ceremony and creed, have looked out upon the world for a hundred generations. Such are the thoughts that have made them what they are.

Hinduism has not elaborated the thoughts of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. These words have for some few years been widely current here ; but it is from another source that the ideas come of which they are the proper dress. Yet Hinduism has originated the ideas which I suppose that these words are used by Hindus to express. It teaches the *Omnipenetrativeness* of God. It teaches the *unitedness*, the *solidarity*, of men. These also are lessons of which the world has need—lessons that if they be assimilated will widen the outlook of our race and help it on towards its divinely appointed goal. The very fact that I can find no common English words to set forth these thoughts is the clearest proof that the men of the West have need of them."

And, it is a significant fact which does little credit to the mere missionary zeal of some Christian Missionaries that, for giving utterance to

such views as this, for his having said that Hinduism has also an ideal to give to mankind, Dr. Miller was severely, and in some instances vulgarly criticised, and one critic went so far as to call him a "traitor." But, despite all this local calumny and rancorous criticism, the great Free Church Assembly of Scotland conferred on him, as we have seen, the high and honoured office of Moderator.

His observations on the Indian unrest are characterised by the same note of sympathy for the new-awakened aspirations of India for Self-Government:—

"*I am heartily glad,*" *says he,* "*that there is unrest in India.*"

I suppose that the desire for what is called "Swaraj" means the desire that those Indians who are fitted for the task should have a larger share than at present, and a share steadily becoming larger as years roll on, in the management of all the affairs of India, so that India may some day be fitted to be an organic and more or less separate member of a free and far extended Empire, or fitted even to stand by itself among the nations, if such independence should at any future time be found to be desirable. I am convinced that this or something like this is a definition of "Swaraj," that will be accepted by you all. To most of you I need hardly say that if this is the meaning of "Swaraj," I cordially sympathise with it. But if anything like this be the ideal aimed at, sensible men will set themselves to inquire what means must be employed, what difficulties must be overcome and what time must be expected to elapse before the ideal can

be attained. It certainly can never be attained through mere aspiration for it, or mere talk about it however eloquent or exciting that talk may be. The laws by which the world is governed must be taken into account by those who wish to gain any end in actual practice.

Writing on the same subject later he says :—

I venture to cherish to hope that this new movement is no mere short-lived political agitation, but the first faint working of permanent moral forces destined to have their right effect on things industrial, things social, things educational, things religious, and things of all diverse kinds. I cherish, indeed, the hope that it may be instrumental in making India what the God of all the nations intends it to become.

It has been already mentioned how Dr. Miller has been forced by ill-health to leave India for good and how even from his distant home in Scotland he is still evincing an interest in everything which concerns the welfare of this ancient land. The best evidences of this are his messages to the former students of the Christian College who assemble on the College day, extracts from which are interspersed in this sketch. Besides this, as Dr. Russell puts it, " though advancing years and his great labours have told upon Dr. Miller, he still not only interests himself in the work here (in India), but as we have had recently visible proof, he does so to some purpose." It is the prayer of every former and present student of the College and of every one who is interested in higher edu-

cation in India that Dr. Miller may be spared in health and strength for years to come that he may exert himself, even as he is doing now, in the interests of the rising generation of South India.

Perhaps this is the best place where the question may be asked—What is the secret of this wonderful power which Dr. Miller has been and is exercising over the thousands of students who have had their education in the Christian College? But it is not easy to answer the question.

But it is given to few, as it has been to Dr. Miller, to earn in such ample measure, the generous appreciation of their fellow-men which after all, is the greatest reward which a man need care for, next only to the approbation of his conscience.

Why is this? Let Dr. Miller himself answer. "Why is all this but because under the cover of many faults and failings, you have had the wit to discern an unfeigned affection for you and a genuine purpose to use all the means I can to promote your highest welfare?" In thus paying a compliment to the shrewdness of the people of South India, Dr. Miller has in some measure told us the secret of his influence. And there is no

doubt that he has laboured long and faithfully for the sake of India.

But the lessons of history will not have been learnt aright, if students thereof do not know that " unfeigned affection " and "genuine purpose" do not always by themselves, and in fact very seldom, guarantee the popularity of any man. It is a sad truth, but it is a truth, that misapprehension and obloquy have ever been the share of many a man who has unselfishly laboured even as Dr. Miller. Then the explanation of this phenomenal popularity of Dr. Miller must lie elsewhere than here.

Some attempt may be made to point out the chief characteristics of the man which ensured for him such wide, almost universal, popularity.

For one thing he loves India, not merely as " the richest jewel in the British Crown," but as a country which has a great past and, so please God, a greater future before it. He said of Madras, sometime ago.

> " I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
> Amidst these humble corners to lay me down
> To husband out life's taper at the close,
> And keep the flame from wasting by repose. "

And it is no exaggeration to say that the most poignant way in which the partial loss of his

eyesight affects him is that it has thwarted him in the carrying out of his fully intended purpose of spending the evening of his life amidst the people whom he had learnt to love and who had learnt to love him.

And he had full confidence in the glorious future of this land. In the fine peroration to his second Convocation Address, he uttered these prophetic words :—

"I cannot lift the veil that hides the future. Nevertheless, I am sure that if life's burden is wisely borne and its commonplace duties patiently discharged by you and by the generations to which your character and influence will of necessity be handed down, there will yet arise in this land of yours some community or race, some city or institution, something (I know not what) in which men's thoughts will find noble utterance and from which their energies will flame nobly forth, something that will make India a leader in the march of mankind towards its appointed goal."

Again, in another place, he says with true pathos, addressing the former students of the College,

"I ask you to remember me in coming years as one who knows well that he has not done all that he should have done, or been altogether what he might have been among you; but also as one who has tried to do the work which he felt fitted and called to do for your good and *for the good of India.*"

It is small wonder, then, that having this unmistakable love for India, Dr. Miller has

easily captured the hearts of the grateful people of South India. But there were other elements which contributed to his success in this direction.

As has been remarked before, he was not a hide-bound Missionary. He had the insight to see that there were possibilities of good in other systems of religion than his own. This did not make any the less a Christian of him. On the other hand, it enabled him to speak from a vantage ground to followers of other religions. And it is due to the few missionaries of his stamp that Jesus Christ has come to be recognised in the way he has been in India. A Hindu or a Mussulman is very sensitive about his religion. But it speaks volumes of the broad-mindedness of Dr. Miller that the hundreds of students who passed through the walls of the Christian College had never any difficulty of moving with him on the most intimate of terms and also of discussing with him in the most confidential manner, the deepest issues of life. It was thus that Dr. Miller was enabled to exercise that strong and stimulating influence on the character of the succeeding generations of his students, grateful testimony to which has been borne by them times out of number.

Reference has been made in an earlier part of this sketch to the unbounded and genuine love which Dr. Miller bore to his students past and present. It is not possible to any but those who have come under its influence, to describe the nature and the extent of this love. But his old boys are never tired of drawing attention to this aspect of Dr. Miller's character as the one which ensured for him such wide popularity. His love is not prompted by any mere earthly motive. It is spontaneous and over-flowing. It was not long before he came to realise that the Indian youth had many qualities for which he might be loved, that there were great and glorious possibilities before him if only he be properly trained, and that the influence which was most likely to ensure that proper training was that of love. And he did not patronise while he loved. He was ever willing to treat his students on terms of intellectual and moral equality. As all strong natures have Dr. Miller has a large heart. But he found constant exercise for it among his students. Had these students not reciprocated this love, the story may have been otherwise. Perhaps not. As it was, Dr. Miller found his students ever appreciative of his attachment to

them. It was this love which found its manifestation in the thousand and one acts of kindness towards his students. And indeed almost every student of Dr. Miller's has some story or incident to relate of his interest in him. And it is this love which still ensures that the welfare of his students and their country have such a dominating hold on Dr. Miller. No wonder then that he is so popular among his students and, what is more, so influential with them.

His love was manifested in deeds as well as in words. His private benefactions to the College have been referred to. He was also generous in helping many a poor student. Thus it may be said without any exaggeration that he placed his intellect, his energies, and his wealth at the disposal of his students. And however weak average human nature may be, it is yet generous enough to appreciate sacrifices made on its behalf.

But to be the head of a growing and popular institution, and to direct its progress aright, it is not enough that a man has a good heart. He must have a wise head too. And Dr. Miller has this in abundance. It has been said of him, that if he had found his vocation in Britain, he will have become a Cabinet Minister. There is

no doubt, at any rate, that he displayed remarkable qualities of statesmanship in the many crises through which the College passed. He had to deal with very difficult and different forces—the Orthodox Hindu Community, the prancing and aggressive Missionary, the enthusiastic student-reformer, the not always sympathetic Educational Department, the often indifferent Government, and the exacting authorities in Scotland. It speaks volumes then for his statesmanship that, amid all these contending forces, he was able to achieve his noble purpose of making the Madras Christian College what it is to-day. And the tendency to hero-worship which is to be found in every man cannot help paying its homage to this remarkable man.

But all these had been of no avail, if Dr. Miller had not believed in his work. As it was, Dr. Miller had an abundant and growing faith in the work which he was doing for the people of South India. As has been pointed out above, he firmly believes that India has a great and glorious future before her. He knows that India is passing through a period of transition and that the nature of her future depends very much on how those who have now anything to do with

India, discharge their duties. He knows further that the young men of the country who have come under the influence of western culture have it very much in their hands, to make or mar that future. And he is rightly anxious therefore that they should be made cognisant of the heavy responsibilities that lie on their shoulders. He always tried to educate such of them as came under his influence to a due sense of their responsibility and to equip them with the necessary intellectual and moral vigour to discharge those responsibilities aright.

Thus he was no mere pedagogue. A good and efficient teacher as he was, he was ever conscious that he was helping, through his students, to bring about the regeneration of this ancient and famous land. And this is the secret of his unbounded enthusiasm for his work among the students of South India and the consequent popularity he achieved among them.

It may be possible to point to other traits in the character of this good and great man. But those which have been referred to above seem to have been the chief instruments in bringing about that strong attachment between Dr. Miller and his students. Herein perhaps lies the

explanation of the wonderful influence which Dr. Miller has been and is exercising over his students and which he has always used to subserve the noblest ends.

The time has not yet come—may it long be postponed—when Dr. Miller's work has to be weighed in the scale and a verdict pronounced upon it. But his active work in India must be said to have ended. And of his work in India it may unhesitatingly be said that it has been a success, to the extent that any human endeavour can be a success. It may be almost a truism to say that India has a great future before her. When that future comes to be realised and when the historian records the influences which have brought about that future, he must devote a long page to the work done by the generations of men trained on Western lines. And in that page there must be a large space found for the work of men like Dr. Miller who, amid many difficulties, have contributed to the spread of this stimulating culture from the West. Then, surely the people of South India may well congratulate themselves that William Miller, born and bred up in the northernmost county of Scotland, should have decided in the year of grace 1862, to

come out to India as a missionary. And Dr. Miller may then fully congratulate himself that it has been given to him to do something towards the realisation of the destiny which awaits India. May we not then trace the hand of God in having made India Dr. Miller's field of work?

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