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Vol. XIV



The Indian

Interpreter

**A Religious and
Ethical Quarterly**

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY

MADRAS ALLAHABAD CALCUTTA COLOMBO

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Narayan Vaman Tilak: by Professor W. B. Patwardhan, B.A., Fergusson College, Poona	97
Francis Xavier, Pioneer and Saint: by Margaret Macnicol, L.R.C.P. and S.E.	101
The Indian Women's University: by Professor D. K. Karve, B.A.	109
Idolatry and the Christian Approach to it: by the Rev. W. S. Urquhart, D PHIL.	125
The Indian Christian Community and its Future: by Lemuel L. Joshi, M.D., B.Sc., F.C.S.	134

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NARAYAN VAMAN TILAK

By Professor W. B. Patwardhan, B.A., Fergusson College, Poona

N. V. TILAK has passed away and Marathi poetry is the poorer for it. The present decade has proved particularly disastrous to modern Marathi literature. As in the life of individuals, so in that of nations and communities there appears to be an alternation of periods of prosperity and poverty, of ebb and flow. If the eighties and nineties of the last century were a period of an all-round upward impulse that made for sustained and fruitful activity in every field of literature, the present decade of the twentieth century is one of fateful decline. Within the last few years no fewer than a dozen men of distinction in Marathi literature have been carried away. Death appears to be active with a vengeance among the makers of modern Marathi. It was only a few months ago that Mahārāṣṭra wept bitter tears over Govindarāja. Bālkavi, among the poets, and Apte, that was the first and the last for the time being of her novelists, and Limaye, a distinguished name among thoughtful writers. On the heels of afflictions like these came the unexpected death of N. V. Tilak, and it is hard to conceive how Mahārāṣṭra can bear the grievous loss.

Of modern Marathi poets—of those at any rate that flourished during the last forty years—N. V. Tilak was perhaps the oldest. In spite of the vicissitudes—and they were many—that he

had to pass through, his muse was hardly ever silent, and his song flowed with a sweetness that has won for him an assured place of distinction in modern Marathi literature. His position among those who have contributed to make modern Marathi literature was unique in more respects than one. He was one of the pioneers of the new school of poetry. As the Lake Poets in English literature positively and courageously struck out a new path and emancipated English poetry from the rigid fetters of a school that cultivated dignity of diction and correctness of language and emphasized elegance of form at the expense of thought and feeling—at the expense, that is, of the soul of poetry—the New School of Marathi poets hoisted a flag of revolt against the eighteenth century standards of Marathi poetry, sedulously perfected by Moropant and his school and affectionately cherished and cultivated by Marathi men of letters in the first three quarters of the last century. In the fifties, sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century it was regarded as an enviable achievement if one could faultlessly imitate the subtle effects of the long and sustained rhymes of Moropant. Polished elegance of language and harmonies of sound, when combined with clever intellectual surprises, passed for the highest poetry before the advent of Tilak, Keshava Suta and their school. Mr. Tilak was among the first to break away from the trodden path and introduce innovations both as regards metre and conception. He was one of those who carried into effect the healthy influence of the Wordsworthian school, who led Marathi poetry out of doors and taught her to realize the free, open and bracing air of nature, lured her out of the melancholy precincts of asceticism, coaxed her into discarding the yellow robes of renunciation and persuaded her to enter with an eager, bounding heart into the world of rainbow hues and sunny splendour. The New School of Marathi poetry has emerged from the cramping conception that restricted the field of poetry to matters of piety and devotion, to matters of other worldly interest, and has taught poetry to live and move and have her being in this world, in the realities of material life. The waving grasses and smiling flowers of the field, the dancing ears of corn and the nodding heads of trees, the rolling piles of clouds and sparkling drops of dew ; these came to be discovered anew and the might and mystery of the known world lent a fulness and wealth to the new song, never before dreamt of. Mr. Tilak shares the credit with Keshava Suta, though the latter, who is somewhat junior to the former, was the bolder and hardier innovator. The school

to which they belonged brought poetry down from heaven to this world, or rather brought the poetic muse to find her delightful abode as much on earth as beyond it. Like the Lark of Wordsworth, Marathi poetry in their hands came to be true both to heaven and home.

Of the new poets Mr. Tilak was perhaps a harmonious blend of the new and the old. In him the old still lingered while the new vigorously grew. Though not privileged to reap the benefits of university education Mr. Tilak was vastly read in traditional Sanskrit literature and had assimilated much that was healthy and congenial to the spirit of the new poetry. He appears to have familiarized himself with the old poetry of Mahārāṣṭra too, especially with that of Tukārām, Viṭṭhal and Śrīdhar. For throughout his poetic work one hears echoes from the hallowed and hoary singers of yore. This is the more noticeable in his religious poems, his *Abhangānjali* and other poems of devotion. His lay poetry owes more to Sanskrit literature than to the old Marathi poets. His similes and comparisons bear many of them the impress of Sanskrit poetry. Simple and easy-flowing as his diction is, the expressions are most of them quite familiar to readers of Sanskrit and Marathi poetry. They are surrounded with all the fond associations that often form much of the subtle essence of the import of words.

That is one of the reasons why Mr. Tilak's verse does not sound strange and new and unfamiliar; does not come as an innovation even when the subject is new and the thought uncommon. Take, for example, his singularly happy poem, *Sushilā*. The conception is new to Marathi poetry. And yet examine the subtle aroma of associations that envelopes the general tone of the poem, the images and circumstances introduced and the truth will stand forth. He does not make his *Sushilā* pour forth her complaint to a rose or a jasmine but to an asoka tree. That tree has all through Sanskrit literature a special affinity to the woes and wails of the fair sex and has sympathetically listened from time immemorial to many a distressed damsel's heart song. That is how Tilak captures listening ears, how he creeps into the heart of his reader through the subtle fitness of old associations.

The grace and never-failing elegance of Tilak's language and style is another notable feature that endears him to his readers and ensures his place among modern Marathi poets. His lines never jar on the ear. They flow in a smooth succession without fluctuation. Neither in construction nor in rhythm is

there anything against which the reader need stumble. The movement is like the roll of deep waters and the music is like the music of steady winds hovering about a grove of trees. There is never heard in his verse the roar of mighty waves nor the terror of the brooding tempest. There is no tumult, no boisterous dance of wild blasts, no whirlwinds, no thunder, no lightning-flashes. Tilak's verse keeps a steady level in music, in range, in exaltation of thought and emotion. He is a poet of order, of law, of genial health and serene dignity. He moves on a level course, never soars, never sinks, never stumbles, never halts. In thought as in expression he is never quite singular. His greatness is not eccentric. His muse has no giddy flights. He soothes and comforts. He cannot stir, cannot excite and agitate. There is no rush, no reckless sweep in his movement. He is safe to follow, a sage companion and sweet, kindly friend. He would never fume and fret. He would serenely smile and win you over. He would not fight; he would disarm opposition by his dignified humility.

I cannot conclude without a word as regards his religious poetry. Mahārāṣṭra's inheritance in that respect is rich and precious. The saint poets of our land have done far more to humanize the Marathas than any other literary influence can claim to have done for other communities. Mr. Tilak appears to me to have retained hold of this legacy to the last. His devotional emotions partake more of their native soil than of that influence which was superimposed later in his life. The sublime personality of Jesus certainly had strengthened and clarified his conception of what man owes to his Maker. But the fervour of devotion and the enraptured impulse to dance to the tune of the ever-expanding and ever-vibrating harmony of human love linked and wedded to the divine; these were in his blood, born in the soil and of the people to whom even after his conversion to Christianity in the heart of his heart he belonged. There is one thing, however, that the new faith he embraced apparently did for him. It gave him a courage of self-assertion which he could not perhaps inherit from his fatherland. There are certain verses which ring with this self-assertive tone, no doubt, and yet I must confess they sound to me rather a reverberation than original notes.

FRANCIS XAVIER, PIONEER AND SAINT¹

By Margaret Macnicol, L.R.C.P. and S.E.

A MODERN author in a recent novel divides people into 'the Stay-at-Homes,' and 'the Explorers,' meaning by the latter those in whose ears the call of the unknown sounds for evermore, and for whom the spirit of adventure is the very breath of life.

In her recently published *Saint Francis Xavier*,¹ Miss Stewart has given us a winsome and inspiring portrait of one such soul, a true knight of romance, hasting ever onwards to conquer more realms for the Lord of his allegiance. But before he yielded that allegiance he had many a struggle to undergo, and many a cherished ambition to surrender. His nature and his history alike show strongly the influence of the hereditary spirit of his race. He was a Spaniard—or to be more accurate, a Basque—born in 1506 in a mountain fortress on the slopes of the Pyrenees. His family was noble, and they exhibited that curious blending of martial valour and devoted piety specially characteristic of Spain. The people of that Peninsula had spent 700 years in constant conflict with the Moors, a struggle not only for national existence and independence, but also for the maintenance of their religious faith. Hence it came that the idea of the Cross as a battle emblem, and of the path of conquest as the path of evangelization had a reality and a simplicity for the Spaniards that is did not possess for other European nations. As long as this blending of the Cross and the Sword was only in a struggle for religious and national independence its effect on the Spanish character was by no means wholly evil, but when that struggle ended in the final expulsion of the Moors from Spain about 1492, and Spain then embarked on her career of conquest and colonization, this unnatural alliance between the symbols of self-sacrificing love and of brute force took on a much more sinister aspect.

¹ By Edith Anne Stewart, London Headley Bros. 12s. 6d. net. 1917.

Francis' youth was spent in stormy times. He was the youngest of his family—the next to him being two brothers, Miguel and Juan, respectively eleven and nine years older than he, the three sisters being older still. The independent little kingdom of Navarre, in which Castle Xavier stood, was making gallant, though, ultimately, fruitless, efforts to avoid being swallowed up in the newly united kingdom of Spain. In this cause Francis' father spent body and soul, and when Navarre was formally annexed to Castile in 1515 he died of the disappointment of his hopes. Francis lived on in the castle with his mother and brothers and a cousin who acted as guardian. Inside the castle precincts there was a chapel and a clergy house full of priests, who conducted frequent services with much zeal and regularity. Outside were the mountain gorges and the wild uplands, and here the boy spent many adventurous days. At home, the talk was all of battles and campaigns, for Miguel and Juan grew up to be soldiers like their father and to take part in further fruitless struggles by Navarre to regain her independence. When these finally failed the fortifications of the castle were demolished by order of the Governor of Spain, and the fortunes of the family steadily declined.

Francis' own ambitions were not of a military order—not that in his youth they were therefore more devout, but he saw the way to fame and prosperity through the Church and not the camp, and so persuaded his family to send him to study at the University of Paris in 1525.

Two centuries earlier that University had been the glory of France and the lode star of students from all over the world. But in Francis' day it had sadly fallen from this high estate; at a time when all Europe was pulsating with the new life of the Renaissance many of the doctors of this University were resisting its influence with all their might, for 'the theological faculty of Paris was the first to detect the link between heresy and humanism.' Erasmus, the reformer, gives us a dismal picture of life in the most bigoted of the colleges there, that called Montaigu—where he himself studied. He writes, 'The beds were so hard, the food so meagre, the labours so exacting, that many youths of splendid promise, after the first years of their sojourn in this college, became mad or blind or leprous, if they did not die. Some of the bedrooms, because they were close to the lavatories, were so dirty and infected that none of those who lodged there came away alive, or without the germ of some grave disease.'

Another student of these days writes to his little cousin, John Calvin, 'They (the doctors of the Sorbonne) so hate all new ideas that they prefer the old wrong way to the new right way. What is strange is that the priests hate good grammar more than they do bad lives.' These doctors fiercely opposed the Reformation, but all the same when Francis entered the College of St. Barbe the number of Luther's followers in Paris was steadily increasing, and for a time his sympathies were with them. St. Barbe was an improvement on Montaigu, but even there the students' life was not a bed of roses. 'The college itself was dark and ill-ventilated, and bounded by narrow streets that reeked with offal. The lectures began at 5 a.m. In 1452 benches had been prohibited, and scholars bidden to sit on the floor . . . on straw in winter and on mown grass in summer, while the regent, rod in hand, lectured from his solitary chair. Here and there a lamp reeked, and round it clustered a knot of students who took notes, or wrote letters to their mothers or their sweet hearts. . . . From time to time the professor would rise, thread his way through the black cloaked figures, and single out a special offender for punishment.'

The Principal of St. Barbe was Jacques de Gouvea, a Portuguese who was wideawake enough to see urgent need for priests and missionaries to go out to the new colonies of Portugal, where men were living sadly lawless lives. He succeeded in renting the college in the interests of John III King of Portugal, and fifteen bursaries were given for missionary students. Francis was far from making one of that number at this time. He worked well at his arts course, it is true, but none the less his tailor's and other bills were so high that his impoverished relations thought at one time of removing him from college—one of his sisters however dissuaded them from doing so. About this time his brothers married, his mother died, his old home was broken up, and Francis must have felt very lonely. It was then that he came under the influence of Ignatius Loyola—the 'God intoxicated cripple'—who was to turn the whole current of his life, and be the means of his conversion.

In that struggle of Navarre for independence, to which we have referred, Loyola had been fighting as a young lieutenant on the opposite side to that taken by Francis' brothers. His leg had been shattered by a cannon ball, and the defective surgery of the day had left him crippled for life. His leg indeed, might be crippled, but his spirit was not, and he determined henceforward

to devote himself to the service of Our Lady—the Virgin Mary—and the Church of Christ. At the age of thirty-three he put himself to school and three years later entered the University of Paris, where he shared Francis' room at St. Barbe's. Another room-mate was Peter Faber, a pure and gentle soul, who had been brought up as a shepherd lad, and for whom from the first Francis had a tender affection. Loyola he at first dreaded, but Loyola loved him and set himself patiently and persistently to win the gay laughing boy, the brilliant ambitious scholar. Francis took his Arts degree in 1530, and entered on his theological course, supporting himself while working for his doctorate by lecturing on Aristotle.

During this time Loyola exerted an ever-increasing influence upon him; he helped him financially when supplies from home ran short, praised his lectures, brought students to his classes, listened with understanding love and sympathy to all his schemes and ambitions. But always such talks ended by Loyola's putting the solemn question, 'What shall it profit a man, Master Francis, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'—a question that Francis at that time could neither answer nor forget. Then Faber offered his whole life to Loyola, to help him in his championship of Christ, and went home to Savoy for seven months, leaving Francis and Loyola alone together. During those months Francis made the great decision, and at the end of them he was ready, like St. Paul, 'to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.'

There is not space, neither is this a fitting place, in which to discuss the Great Order of the Jesuits, the germ idea of which was already forming in Loyola's brain. Like many another mighty movement, its beginnings were very humble. Loyola and six disciples (including Francis and Faber) assembled one day at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, whence they went in procession to a Church outside Paris, and there 'made a vow to serve God and to depart on a certain day for Jerusalem, to give up relatives and all the rest . . . and to go, after our return from the Holy Land, and put ourselves at the disposal of the Pope.' Eventually the pilgrimage to the Holy Land—which would have linked the movement with the old crusades—had to be given up, owing to war between Italy and Turkey, so these knight errants of the Church were at the disposal of the Pope sooner than they expected.

Loyola decreed that the students should finish their theological course in Paris and then the little company should meet in

Venice on a certain day in January 1537. Loyola left Paris in 1535, his disciples in November 1536. They travelled on foot through Lorraine and Germany and across the Alps, 'clothed in coarse and old habits and carrying on their backs their bag of writings and food.' Ice and snow, rain and mud, made their journey most laborious, but they cheered their way with heavenly meditations, discourse, and singing of hymns.

When they reached Venice at last, it was not to rest but to work. In the Hospital for Incurables Francis entered on his apprenticeship to that service of the sick and suffering which was so common an occupation of his later years. In Venice, too, we hear of him as preaching for the first time in uncertain Italian, but with no uncertain conviction, for the constraining love of Christ was henceforward the driving power of his life. For few men has a 'neighbour' been so completely and so simply the first man who may need help, be he near or far, kinsman or alien, and few indeed have come so near as Francis to veritably loving that neighbour as he loved himself. If the narrowness of his theological beliefs occasionally tempted him to regard men too much merely as souls to be saved, much more frequently the width of his God-implanted sympathies enabled him to treat them as human beings with bodies, minds, and spirits, all alike God-given and alike demanding loving care. One particularly attractive trait in him was his passionate love for little children and delight in their company—a trait almost pathetic in a man who had himself forsworn all the intimate joys of family life.

During his stay in Italy Francis was ordained and spent much time in fervent preaching in churches, streets or squares. At Bologna we read, 'he ran through the streets waving his hat in the air and crying, "Come and hear the word of God." He suffered severely from fever, but would himself take almost no rest.'

Loyola and his disciples considered that the time had now come for the official formation of their order. They spent much time and prayer and thought over the framing of its rules and finally submitted them to the Pope for his sanction. He eagerly welcomed these new allies, but the objections of one of his cardinals caused some delay. The order was essentially military in spirit and organization, as the following extract from the Rule shows:

'Whosoever in our society, which we wish to call by the name of Jesus, wishes to become the soldier of God under the

banner of the cross, and to serve God alone, and His Vicar upon earth, the Roman Pontiff, shall, after a solemn vow of perpetual chastity, agree in his own mind to become a part of this society. It is instituted for the perfecting of souls in Christian life and doctrine; the propagation of the Faith by public teaching, by the ministrations of the word of God, by spiritual exercises and works of charity, by the instruction of boys in the Christian doctrine, by giving spiritual comfort to the faithful through the Confession. . . . The appointment of each member's special position, and the fixing and complete arrangement of his duties, shall be in the hands of a General or Head, to be chosen by us (i.e. the society), that a convenient order may be observed, such as is needful in every well-regulated community. . . . The whole right of issuing commands shall be in the General.' Loyola is quoted as saying, 'I do not consider myself to have quitted military service, but only to have transferred it to God.'

It was at this time that Ignatius and his disciples had a letter from Gouvea—the old Principal of St. Barbe—asking if they would undertake a mission to India if it were offered them by John III of Portugal. They signified their willingness to do so if the Pope would send them. 'In offering ourselves to the Pope we have declared that we are ready for anything which he may have for us to do in the name of Christ The distances which separate us from India and the difficulty of learning their languages would not daunt us. To do anything which will help Jesus Christ, that is our business.' In the end Francis, Rodriguez and another priest were sent to Portugal to await the sailing of the ships for India, and to enlist the sympathies of the king in the new order.

Those were not the days of weekly mail steamers and Francis had to wait ten months in Lisbon before the yearly fleet set out for India. They were crowded and busy months for him, for he preached, confessed penitents, taught the gay courtiers and pages (turning a number of them into priests or missionaries) and arranged for the establishment of a college in connexion with the new order. As his biographer says, 'He was already on active service, and henceforth always would be, so long as there was within a day's journey of him one soul who did not know Christ Jesus.' At last, in April 1541, he, along with two other missionaries, set sail for India on board the ship of the new Governor D'Souza, who was going out to take over charge in Goa.

For those of us who have ventured to indulge in a little mild grumbling at the dangers and discomforts of sea-travelling in recent years, it may be salutary to recall what a voyage to India meant in 1541; even on board a Governor's ship. We read, 'Except for the richer travellers, there were no cabins, no sleeping accommodation, no shelters of any kind at all; and the few cabins which did exist had about as much space and ventilation as coffins. The food was scarce, and soon much of it became bad. The water was scarcer still, and was presently so putrid that one historian tells that it could only be drunk in the dark, because of the number of distracting creatures in it. Another writer describes how the passengers put a handkerchief across the mouth before drinking in order to catch the filth. Disease was, of course, rampant, and there was little provision made for its prevention or cure, or even amelioration. There was one official box of medicine, which in a few days was empty. Added to these perils and sufferings within were the terrors of the uncharted seas. Little was known of the times or regions of storms or calms, and the ships were unfitted to combat even with what was known.'

Francis was allotted a place at the Governor's table, but he preferred to eat with the crowd, and when food was sent to him from the Governor he gave away almost the whole of it to the sick. So, too, he gave up his cabin and his bed to the sick, and slept on a coil of rope with an anchor for a pillow. He became very ill and was sea sick for two months—yet he writes from Mozambique that he had preached every Sunday. (Do we need any further proof that he was hero as well as a saint?) A terrible epidemic of scurvy broke out on board, the gums of the patients became so ulcerated and sore that they could not eat, and some died of starvation—their attractive diet consisting of 'salt meat,' 'often times musty biscuits', and 'stinking and corrupted water'. Thereupon Francis threw himself into the work of nursing. 'He heard confessions . . . cleansed the sick men's bodies, he washed their linen, he dressed their meat, minced it small and fed them with his own hand. He ministered physic to the weak, he most lovingly cheered up those who were sad, and put those who were out of heart in hope of recovery both of body and soul.' Moreover we read of this versatile servant of all men for Christ's sake, that 'he played cards with the young rakes on board, and soon became their boon companion, and, for the time at least, brought them on their knees before the

beauty of holiness; their ribald songs died down, and many years later we hear of the hymns still being sung on the Portuguese ships which Francis Xavier had them all singing before they passed Madeira.' The biographer adds, 'A curiously modern trait which we discover at this time is his absolute refusal to drink wine.' 'A priest,' he said, 'should drink nothing but water; this beverage does not excite evil passions, nor defile speech, nor reveal that which should remain hid.'

The ships were becalmed for forty days, and did not reach Mozambique—which bore at that time the sinister nick-name of the 'Portuguese Cemetery'—till September 3. Here they were forced to winter, and here Francis continued his ministrations—in matters both temporal and spiritual—to the sick and dying. Concerning this he writes: 'As for the fruit God knows about that, for He does it all.' He was struck down with fever himself and nearly died, but soon was up and at work once more. In the end of February he sailed for India with D'Souza—leaving his two companions to follow with the next ships. They made some stay at Melinda, on the east-coast of Africa, and a longer pause at the island of Socotra, from which place Francis sent home an interesting account of the Nestorian Christians whom he found there. He finally reached Goa on May 6, 1542—more than a year after leaving Lisbon.

THE INDIAN WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY

By Professor D. K. KARVE, B.A. ¹

THE outstanding features of the Indian Women's University are: firstly, the restoration of vernaculars to their natural position both as media of instruction and subjects of study; secondly, the reliance on self-help; and thirdly the suitability of the courses of study to the needs of womanhood.

In regard to the first, I think that the fundamental fault in our system of education is the use of English as medium of instruction. Everybody will have to admit that it is unnatural. There is no country in the world in which such an unnatural system is in vogue and even in India it cannot be tolerated decade after decade, and I do not think that such a system would be tolerated in any country even a year longer than it is absolutely necessary. I admit that when secondary and higher education began to be given in India it was necessary to use the English language as the medium of instruction, but I do not think that it should be so for all time. I am of opinion that if a beginning had been made twenty or thirty years ago in half a dozen Indian vernaculars by those who are responsible for the education of the people by this time all difficulties would have vanished. In the present system command over the English language is made much of and acquirement of knowledge which is the goal of education is sacrificed to it. But with all the efforts that are made to acquire command over the English language, what is the result? College professors say that students come raw to the college, their English is weak and they cannot follow lectures. Examiners say that the English of candidates is very weak. When graduates are employed in offices, the superiors say that they cannot make a decent draft. My opinion is that what is impossible and unnecessary for an average student is being attempted and the result is but quite natural. The best remedy is that education up to the ordinary degree in arts should be given

¹ A lecture delivered in the John Small Memorial Hall, Poona, on August 9, 1919.

through the medium of the vernacular and the sooner we begin the better.

It is not enough to make vernaculars the media of instruction, but they must be studied as independent subjects. Study of the vernacular occupies an important position in the scheme of studies in the University.

Many would ask the question whether vernaculars are fit to occupy such a place. My answer to that question is in the affirmative and my argument in support of my answer is that many Indian vernaculars are now made subjects of study in several Universities. But supposing they are not fit, the best way to make them fit, in my opinion, is to give them that position. Some people stretch the question of vernaculars too far and make it look ridiculous by advancing that, like Indian castes, Indian vernaculars are numberless and that it is absurd to think of numberless Universities to make all these the media of instruction. In the face of this opposition, I would like to ask these people to think whether it is possible to bring this vast Indian continent to adopt a single language. I do not mean to say that the claim of every dialect can be recognized. There will be a struggle for existence among the vernaculars. Those that have ancient literature and show signs of vigorous growth in spite of want of patronage and the devotees of which are exerting themselves in a spirit of self-help and self-sacrifice to raise their status deserve to be made media of instruction and subject of study.

Before taking leave of the question of vernaculars I would like to say that public opinion in high quarters has begun to change in the right direction and efforts are being made to restore some vernaculars to their natural position. The Gurukula academy of Kangri, Hardwar has been working in this direction making Hindi the medium of instruction for the very beginning. The Usmania University of the Nizam's Dominions that has made Urdu the medium of instruction has ample resources behind it and I hope the experiment will become a signal success. There is another effort in that direction. The Hindi Vidyapitha or the Hindi University was inaugurated at Allaha-bad under the auspices of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelana on November 14, 1918. They have instituted free examinations named Prathama, Madhyama and Uttama. History, mathematics, and science are included in the curricula but they have gone to the other extreme of excluding English altogether. I may give my

emphatic opinion that, circumstanced as we are, English is absolutely necessary in the course of higher education. Even in the Japan Women's University English Language is a compulsory subject of study in colleges. It is the English language that has given us United India, and we shall be able to preserve that unity through the English language only. To know English so as to be able to read and understand English books and newspapers and to follow lectures on general subjects is one thing and to have command over that language so as to be able to use it with facility and to learn all subjects through its medium is another thing. The first can be done with much less trouble and strain and that has to be done in the interest of the nation. Higher education must leave the doors of knowledge wide open to its recipients and this can be done only through a European language, for some time to come at least. So English must be a compulsory subject of study but not the medium of instruction. I think that the National University ought to exert itself in the matter of restoring Indian vernaculars to their natural status but it does not appear that it is doing so. Public opinion must grow stronger and stronger and before long we must induce Government to try experiments of the kind.

The second outstanding feature of the Indian Women's University is independence and reliance on self-help. However well-intentioned our Rulers and European friends may be we are likely to know our requirements much better and are more competent to decide what is good for us, especially in the case of our women. We therefore wish to have quite a free hand in this matter.

There is another reason why independence is wanted. Government machinery grinds very slowly. We have the experience of the Hindu University which took eight years before its work could be started. Besides if we had approached the Government and if they had put in a money condition, the fate of this scheme would have been sealed. The Hindu University was asked to produce fifty lakhs in cash. If we were very mildly treated and asked to produce only five lakhs, it would have been impossible to collect that amount for such a neglected cause. As we are independent we could begin without a single rupee and then approach people for help.

In this connexion Sir Rabindranath Tagore's opinion is very valuable. When I sent him the whole scheme, he wrote, 'I agree with your arguments given in the printed circular both

for the necessity of such an institution and also the urgency of starting it without passing through the elaborate process of delay in order to secure Government recognition. It is far better that you should win it at the end than pray for it in the beginning.'

Though independence in framing courses of study and rules and regulations is absolutely necessary and has to be preserved at any cost, yet the extreme importance of Government sympathy and help must be recognized at the same time. The interference of constituted authority may act as a drag; but sympathy and advice from highly placed Government officials would go a great way to advance the cause. No doubt we must go on with our work without waiting for these things to come, but at the same time we must recognize the value of this element. We have all along been conscious of this consideration, and we have tried to win their sympathy. It was very kind of the Government of Bombay to have made a reference to the work of this University in the quinquennial report of the Educational Department of this Presidency early in March 1918. A paragraph on page 19 of that report reads thus :

'Professor D. K. Karve, late of Fergusson College, has already launched an ambitious scheme for an Indian University for Women with the active sympathy and co-operation of men like Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar and the Hon'ble Mr. R. P. Paranjpye. The aim seems to be to give higher education to women through the vernacular (at the outset apparently, through Marathi only) and to adapt it to their special needs. The movement is entirely on independent lines, and does not seek recognition or aid from Government.'

The Government Resolution on the report (see page 9 of the above-mentioned report) refers to this University in the following terms :

'Finally mention must be made of Professor Karve's scheme for an Indian University for Women, the future of which will be watched by His Excellency in Council with the keenest interest and deepest sympathy.'

His Excellency the Governor of Bombay has lately expressed his desire to help those who are helping themselves and I hope this University will be able to enlist a large measure of sympathy from him.

The third feature is the suitability of courses of studies to the needs of womanhood. This will be clear a little later when I give an outline of the scheme of studies.

Although the conscious work of the Indian Women's University began only four years ago the real foundation of the University may be said to have been unconsciously laid twenty-three years ago at Hingane Budruk four miles away from the city. If that work of the Hindu Widows' Home Association had not advanced and if the Mahilashram or the Widows' Home High School had not been completed it would have been impossible to give practical shape to the idea of the Women's University. About the time that the scheme was laid before the public, my friend Mr. M. K. Gadgil made a splendid offer of Rs 10,000 at Rs 1,000 per year for a college on new lines, and the managers of the Widows' Home were encouraged to take the great responsibility. No college could be started before the courses of study were framed and no persons were better qualified to do that work than the Senate of the would be University. The Hindu Widows' Home Association was an organized body and its Committee formulated a simple scheme to bring the University into being and placed it before the general meeting of the Association. The meeting accorded its sanction to it, appointed a Provisional Committee with myself as Chairman and Mr. Gadgil as Secretary. The General Association placed at the Committee's disposal my services for any length of time and those of three lady workers for a month to go about and enlist members for the electorates. Thirty-five important towns in different parts of India were visited by us during the period of one month and over one thousand people were enlisted in the Graduates' and General Electorates. Of these 264 graduates who had either a higher degree or had ten years' standing expressed their willingness to be fellows and names of these were sent to the voters whose votes decided the election of Fellows. After that the Agenda paper was sent to the Fellows in good time and the first meeting was held on June 3, 1916 in the Fergusson College at which this University was formally inaugurated and important matters connected with the University were considered and decided in three sessions of the meeting. The sympathy and co-operation of the veteran worker Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar and of the Hon'ble Mr. Principal R. P. Paranjpye have been invaluable. Several other gentlemen and among them some Professors of the Fergusson College spared no energy to put life into this organization. Forty-three Fellows out of sixty attended this first meeting of the Senate. Several Fellows came from long distances. The Hon'ble Mr. Shrinivasa

Sastri and Mrs. Cousin came from Madras, Principal B. Sanjivarao from Mangalore. Messrs. Dixit and Sardesai from Baroda and Mr. P. K. Telang from Benares and several from Bombay and places in the Deccan.

With the sanction of the Senate the first Entrance Examination was held and the first year's college class was opened. A few dates will give an idea as to how quickly the work was carried through. If it had not been done so quickly, June would have slipped away and the beginning of the University would have had to be postponed for one year by which time all enthusiasm would likely have cooled down.

After the establishment of the first Senate, the Provisional Committee handed over the charge of all affairs of the University to the constituted authority. Since then meetings of the Senate are being held regularly every June and the college has been adding on a higher class every new year. A Training College for women to prepare teachers for Primary schools was also started by the Hindu Widows' Home Association, and it is conducted under the direction of the Women's University. The Arts College and the Training College have now the full number of classes.

There are now four departments working at Hingane-Budruk. The Primary School, the Mahilashram or the High School, the Mahila Pathashala or the Women's College and Adhyapikashala or the Training College. There are nearly 250 students in all. Of these sixteen are in the Arts college, forty in the Normal School, 100 in the High School and the remaining in the Primary School. Students and families of teachers form a snug little colony there. The buildings are worth Rs 1,60,000. There are about twenty teachers on the staff of whom four are M.A.'s and five B.A.'s. The first graduate of the Women's University who received a degree at the first Convocation held on June 15 last at the hands of the Chancellor of the University Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, has joined these institutions as a life worker. One happy feature about most of the graduates on the staff is that they are life workers of the Hindu Widows' Home Association, and they have therefore a life interest in the Association and the University. They are working in a spirit of self-sacrifice and all hope of success both of the institution at Hingane-Budruk and of the University is based on this feature of the workers which is common to many institutions in Poona.

This University has taken upon itself responsibilities similar to those of other Indian Universities. Principally it is an

examining body. It will lay down courses of studies, will arrange to hold examinations and grant certificates, degrees and diplomas. It will also arrange to inspect schools and colleges recognized by and affiliated to it. But a distinguishing feature of this University is that it has been giving and will give money grants to such institutions from its own funds. So far nothing more is contemplated.

The University has instituted five examinations for the present. English is left optional in the secondary course. Those who do not go in for higher education, may or may not have English. This is the only difference between the Vernacular Final and the Entrance Examination of the University. For the entrance as well as the first year, the second year, and the Degree Examinations, we have got four necessary subjects of study : 1. Vernacular ; 2. English ; 3. History, and Administration ; and 4. Domestic Science and Hygiene. We give more attention to English than is generally given to a second language. This University has no other second language among compulsory subjects. In regard to History and Administration, what is required is general knowledge of English and Indian History, for the Entrance Examination. A period of Indian History and Indian Administration are appointed for the first year, expansion of British Empire and British Administration are to be studied for the second year, and Sociology for the Degree Examination. In regard to Domestic Science and Hygiene elementary principles are to be studied for the Entrance Examination. For the First Year Examination, elementary Biology and a somewhat advanced treatment of Hygiene are required. For the Second Year a little more of Biology and elements of human Physiology and Higher Hygiene are prescribed and, for the G.A. Examination Psychology, and study of the child mind are to be done. Besides these four necessary subjects one optional subject is to be studied in the higher course during the whole period. In addition to the voluntary subject prescribed in our Indian Universities we have in our list of voluntary subjects vocal and instrumental music, photography, and painting, comparative religion and theory and practice of education. For the Entrance Examination, besides the four necessary subjects in common with higher examinations, there are four other necessary subjects called certificate subjects and two optional subjects to be selected from the prescribed subjects under this head. The University does not hold

any examination in the certificate subjects, but the head of the school must certify that the candidate possesses the required knowledge of these subjects. They may be finished a year before the Entrance Examination, so that the pressure of study may be distributed over a longer period. These four subjects are: 1. Arithmetic; 2. Sanskrit; Persian or Arabic; 3. Needlework; and 4. Drawing or Music, Instrumental or Vocal. The last three of these certificate subjects are included in the list of optional subjects along with Hindi language, Science, etc. Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic are prescribed as certificate subjects for the simple reason that they will help the study of different Indian vernaculars. If Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic is selected as an optional subject the student is expected to know as much as a Matriculate does. As a certificate subject the course is more elementary. This University has designated its First Arts Degree by the letters 'G.A.' meaning Graduate in Arts for two reasons. One is that in the case of women the designation of 'Bachelors of Arts' seems inappropriate and the other is that it is better to have a distinguishing designation in the University which has made a distinct departure from the established routine. This will also prevent any misleading as regards qualifications of our graduates.

The object of examinations must be to see if students are ready for a higher stage of studies and must not be a bar to their progress. In this University this object is secured by giving special facilities to students. If a student fails in one subject only at any examination, she is allowed to appear in that subject only next time. If she fails in more subjects she will be exempted from those subjects in which she gets not less than forty per cent marks.

The courses are so framed as to finish the primary and secondary education together in nine years and the higher education in three years, so that if a girl begins her vernacular alphabet, when she is six years, she may pass her Entrance Examination at the age of fifteen and be a graduate at the age of eighteen. It is also kept in view that the general information and cultural value of an entrance girl are not less than those of a Matriculate and those of the graduates of this University are also on a par with the ordinary graduates of other Indian Universities.

In this University all authority is centred in the Senate which consists of sixty Fellows elected by six electorates. The

first of these electorates consists of the Governing Bodies of schools and colleges recognized by and affiliated to this University; fifteen Fellows are allotted to this electorate. The second electorate which is constituted by patrons contributing Rs 1,000 or more to the University, elects ten Fellows. The third is the Graduates' electorate formed of Graduates of Indian or other Universities, contributing Rs 10 or more annually or giving a donation of Rs 300 by instalments in six years if they choose to do so. This elects fifteen. The fourth is made up of ladies who have passed the Entrance Examination of any University and who contribute Rs 5 annually or make a donation of Rs 150 in six years if they like. This is called the educated Ladies' electorate and it returns ten Fellows. The general electorate is the fifth, consisting of persons paying Rs 5 annually or giving by instalments Rs 150 in six years. This elects five Fellows. The last is the meeting of the Senate itself which elects five; making in all sixty. The first Senate which was formed in 1916 worked for three years without any change. From 1919 it is so arranged that twelve Fellows should retire every year and their seats should be filled by elections, retiring Fellows being eligible for re-election. In this way the whole body of the Senate becomes renewed every five years. The first election of this kind took place in April last. Nearly 2,000 electors from different electorates were eligible to vote, the condition of eligibility being that a person must have paid his subscription for the year previous to the year of election. The University has been exceedingly fortunate in having Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar as its Chancellor and the Hon'ble Principal R. P. Paranjpye, the Vice-Chancellor. The Senate is an All-India Representative body. Its electors are spread all over India as will be seen at a glance at the list of the electors, and its Fellows come from different parts of India. Three of its members belong to Madras Presidency, two to Mysore State, one to Bengal, one to Punjab, two to Central India, two to Baroda State, two to Sind, twelve to Bombay and Gujarath, one to Karnatic, and the rest from Poona and Deccan. Among the Fellows there are six ladies. According to professions there are twenty-four retired or working Professors of Colleges, thirteen Head Masters or Inspectors of Schools, eight Doctors, eight Lawyers, and seven others. The Senate appoints the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar. These with seven other Fellows and Principals of recognized Arts Colleges (*ex-officio*) form the Syndicate. It also appoints

trustees and auditors of the University. The Syndicate looks to all the practical work of the University—holding examinations, preparing the budget estimates and agenda papers for the meetings of the Senate, holding annual elections of Fellows, etc.

The University has no building of its own. The Senate and the Syndicate meetings are therefore held at the Fergusson College, but the University Office is at Hingane-Budruk.

I have already told you that the University was started without any money. Money was essential but we did not wait for it. We decided to pull on what little we would get. We had faith in our educated middle class that it would not fail us in the hour of need and experience has shown us that our confidence was not misplaced. This University is a popular University in one sense in which perhaps no other University in the world is so. Its funds though meagre, are collected mostly in dribbles from the middle and lower middle classes. So far all donations coming from the members of the electorates have been put into the permanent fund, while the interest on this fund and the income from the annual subscriptions go towards the current expenditure. To-day the University has a permanent fund of one hundred and twenty-five thousand rupees in the form of three and a half per cent Government paper which will produce an annual interest of Rs 4,500 while the annual income from subscriptions comes to Rs 10,000 only. It will be seen from these figures that the financial condition of the University is exceedingly unsatisfactory. For the extensive work which ought to be the legitimate end of such a University even a crore of rupees would be too little. But there is no use grumbling. We would have pulled on even if our funds had been only half or even a quarter of what we now have. Our funds are growing very slowly. No one has given a donation larger than Rs 1,000. Only one single exception has occurred lately of a splendid gift by a common man which was announced lately in the newspapers a few days ago. We hope we shall have a substantial addition of Rs 15,000 to our permanent fund in a few months and of another Rs 15,000 at a future date. In the matter of collecting funds we have to work against odds but in these circumstances what is necessary is sincerity and steady work and the rest would follow. One thing to be regretted is that we are not as strong in having workers in this field as we would have wished. But in this particular, too, it is no use waiting. The few that there are have to do their best and I hope they will do it.

It must be remembered that the funds of the University are quite independent of the funds of the Hindu Widows' Home Association, which conducts institutions at Hingane-Budruk. The University only gives grants to the Women's College and the Normal School. These institutions received Rs 1,000 during the first year, Rs 3,000 during the second and Rs 6,000 during the third year. For the current year Rs. 7,000 are sanctioned. It is contemplated to give grants to high schools that have already been affiliated to this University or that will hereafter come to be affiliated. Thus in the course of time affiliated high schools and colleges in any part of India working on the lines laid down by this University will be entitled to equitable grants from its funds.

It must be admitted that the measure of success that has attended our efforts so far is but small. The University produced only one graduate and there are only sixteen students that are getting higher education in the college affiliated to this University. However, to enable you to form a proper estimate of the value of this success, small though it is, I must give you an idea of the public opinion when the scheme was taken up and of the difficulties that confronted us and had therefore to be overcome. The idea was first placed before the public in the Presidential Address to the National Social Conference held at Bombay at the end of 1915. A small informal meeting was subsequently called at the Fergusson College of about twenty people to consider the proposal of a Women's University and to give it a definite form. About one-fourth of the members present at this meeting were expressly against this idea and they thought it was too premature to think of any such thing. Another one-fourth were silent showing by their manner that they concurred in their view with those who opposed the scheme, but they did not like to put forward a strong opposition. The third one-fourth were merely lukewarm. The remaining one-fourth only were favourable to the scheme. There was one circumstance in my favour, namely that my past work had produced in several people confidence for me and though they had grave doubts about the success of the venture they allowed me to have my way and gave their consent. Another favourable circumstance was that though most of the highly educated people who move on a higher plane and whose opinion carried weight in the higher circles were against the scheme a majority of the graduates and other educated people had a sympathy for the scheme and were ready to help it to what

little extent they could. Among the highly educated people who were against the scheme there were two types. One type was of those who considered the suggestion good enough but they thought that the proper time for it was far too distant and it showed want of common sense to take it up for practical work. The other type thought that the scheme was fundamentally wrong and it would do harm to the cause of women's education. I myself could see the difficulties before me and wish that a fitter man would come forward and I was not sanguine about the result. But I was doubtful whether such a person would come forward to undertake the difficult task in the next few years on account of the chance of failure and the consequent fear of losing his reputation. If I was to take it up, I had to do it immediately as I was growing old, and it was no use taking it up when my energies failed me. I knew that in attempting to take this leap I was very likely to come to grief. I had distinctly said so in that meeting. These considerations made me rush headlong into the work with a hope that help would not be late in coming. I have already told you the two types. I shall take two prominent individuals representing these types. The representative of the first who has special regard for me had read the scheme a few days before I gave it out before the Conference. He then wrote: 'Before his mind's eye he finds floating a Women's University evolving out of his school. He aspires to make Hingane the centre of all work for the uplift of women. A Women's University is certainly the normal course of evolution for Women's Educational Institutions. But, if we may venture to give a word of caution, we will say *festina lente*—hasten slowly—is still fit to be the guiding principle of conscious evolution. His little hostel in the city with two or three widows took twenty years to become a full high school. That school has yet to pass its first Matriculate. A large number of women and men of a very much higher calibre than he has just now got are required to launch out into a new and more ambitious scheme. We are sure that his institutions will certainly produce them in time. The foundations have been securely laid and the super-structure may take some time to rise.'

The representative of the second type who knew me well and who is known for fearlessly expressing his well-judged opinions is the editor of a newspaper highly respected not only in India but outside and for whom I have a very high regard. He wrote in one of the issues of his paper:

'The immense personal devotion and sacrifices which enabled him (Professor Karve) to make the Hindu Widows' Home, at Poona what it is to-day are bound to make any project which he conceives, if not a success, at least a serious distraction hampering progress along established lines. We do not think that the scheme would succeed. It certainly does not deserve to succeed. What it may do is to lead to divided counsels and to further postponement of progress along established lines. We can only hope that the diversion created by Professor Karve's scheme will be over by the time the war comes to an end, when Government may be expected to do something.'

In another issue he wrote: 'It is because we are sure that notwithstanding the professor's excellent intention the new project will act as a stumbling block in the way of women's education, that we have felt ourselves constrained to express our disbelief in it in unmistakable terms.'

Besides this direct reference that paper often gave extracts of adverse criticism of this scheme that appeared in other papers and magazines. There were many people who thought similarly. A friend characteristically remarked when consulted that his heart was with me but his head was with the editor of the paper. He would not join the movement as a member though he offered pecuniary help. It was in this state of public opinion that the work was to be pushed forward. At Madras I put up with a friend who has regard for me. He was simply astounded to find me actually launched on this impracticable scheme and making the attempt to enlist the sympathies of Madras people. Noticing this attitude, without waiting until his sympathy was enlisted, I proceeded to work, of course with the help of a gentleman whom my host asked to take me to several people at Madras. The first gentleman I saw was Mr. Kasturiranga Ayengar, the Editor of the *Hindu*. He sympathized with me and put down his name as a member of the Graduates' electorate. We saw more people and by the evening we got half a dozen members. When my host came to know of the result he put down his name and my work in Madras and several district-towns that I visited was exceedingly satisfactory and that encouraged me very much. My work at Calcutta was very disappointing. I lectured to an audience there and at the end of the Chairman opened a sort of debate, and if any impression was made on the audience, it was all gone. I do not remember whether I made any attempt to reply but even if I did it was

futile, and my plight was simply pitiful. At the close, however, one little thing happened and that cheered me up. When most of the people had dispersed, a Sindhi gentleman who was a Professor in a College came forward and got himself enlisted in the Graduates' electorate. In the next two days that I stopped at Calcutta I visited several people and got about a dozen members in the Graduates' and General electorates. At Delhi I had an interview with a highly influential member of the Legislative Council, a well-known nationalist worker, who could not see his way to extend his moral support to this scheme. The work of touring had to be done hurriedly and in one month, I visited fifteen places from Madras in the south to Jalandar in the north enlisting whatever sympathy was offered. The task before us was formidable. We tried to do as much as we could. We went along gathering sympathy and help wherever they were found.

Occasionally I did come across very sympathetic people who cheered me up and then I worked with greater enthusiasm. I must mention here letters from Mr. Herbert Fisher who is now Minister of Education in England and from the late Sir William Weddurburn. Mr. Fisher was Vice-Chancellor of the Sheffield University when he worked in India as a member of the Public Service Commission, and he had paid a visit to the institutions at Hingane-Budruk in company with Sir M. B. Chaulbal. Here is what he wrote :

'The establishment of a University for Women would put the crown upon the noble work which you are doing in India for female education and from the bottom of my heart I wish you every success. Doubtless you will meet with obstacles, but these your moral courage will assuredly overcome. May every success attend your efforts.'

I never had any occasion to know Sir William or to write to him. I enquired of his address and wrote to him in the matter of Miss Everett's will. Of course I also sent to him reports of the Widows' Home and the Women's University. After replying to my enquiry, he wrote : 'As I should like to be associated with the inception of the independent Poona movement for the higher education of Indian women, please accept enclosed cheque for Rs. 300 to be applied in such a way as you may consider most useful.' In another letter written to a gentleman who had incidentally communicated to him his adverse opinion he writes : 'I confess that my sympathies are with Professor

Karve's gallant attempt to found a Women's University. It may be a forlorn hope, but no stronghold is taken without such an attack, and as the attempt is being made I would gladly see it supported by all enlightened friends of women's higher education.' There is another thing about him which touched me most. He carefully read the reports and papers that I had sent him and wrote an article on 'Indian Women's University' of over a column and a half in length tracing the development of the Women's University from the Widows' Home and published it in the paper *Jus Suffragii* and sent me a copy of it.

As the volume of work and the number of sympathizers increased, public opinion began to be modified. The representative of the first type wrote two years later after giving an account of the University for Women. 'The University is a unique organization and the whole of India will be benefited by the success of the experiment.' The representative of the second type wrote in his paper after about a year and a half, 'We are glad to join in the welcome accorded to Professor Karve's Women's University and in the hope that the experiment will prove a success. The need for facilities for women's education is so vast and pressing that it is foolish to pin our faith to any one plan and method. Numerous and repeated experiments are necessary to determine what the best and most suitable scheme is in the conditions of the country.' My friend whose head had been with this editor was persuaded to become a member of an Electorate. Several other people, of a similar frame of mind, were subsequently convinced and they became members.

The Indian Women's University has been making a slow but steady progress indeed but I am still dreaming dreams and building castles in the air. Let me say here that I am not at all confident of the success of this movement. The experiment may fail even yet. Some people thought that the attempt would be a huge failure and perhaps there are a few who think even now that it is so at the present moment, and would come to be seen glaringly in that light some time later. There is a corner in my own mind where lurk doubts and fears of such a deplorable result. However this does not prevent me from entertaining high hopes about the prospects of the movement. I hope to carry the torch of my mission from one end of the country to the other. I wish to visit all district-towns in British Indian States in order to impress upon people the need of such a University. I have before my mind's eye the work of establishing the

medical faculty in this University. Facilities for that education on the lines of this University are a sad want. This faculty will become an important feature of the movement. The natural development and expansion of the movement must culminate in independent Women's Universities in different provinces with different vernaculars. Till such a time one Central University must try to do what it can for all India. I hope to see with my own eyes some high schools and colleges one for each vernacular in different provinces. This may or may not happen during my life time, but I have a cherished dream of exerting myself with the help of graduates turned out of the Women's University for a school and a college in Hindi Provinces if local workers do not come forward to work in that direction. Ladies and gentlemen, I have done. Success or failure has never been a consideration with me. Strong faith in a cause, which I think it my duty to help forward, takes hold of me, I become identified with it, and then I am not myself. Call this trait by whatever name you like but it is there. At present this work is foremost in my heart, and I wish it keeps its hold on me for many years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, kindly excuse me for singing my own song. Allow me in the end to offer to you my hearty thanks. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Macnicol for giving me an opportunity to speak on a subject which is dear to my heart. I am no less thankful to the Hon'ble Mr. Covernton for having complied with our request to preside at this meeting at great inconvenience to him and among many engagements. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the great patience with which you have heard me.

IDOLATRY AND THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO IT

By the Rev. W. S. Urquhart, D.Phil.

THE word idolatry is, as a rule, used as a term of reproach to a far greater extent than the term idol-worship. We shall not, however, emphasize this distinction but shall use the two terms as pretty much interchangeable. Reference to the distinction may, however, serve the purpose of reminding us that we should not at the outset take it for granted that 'idolatry' is nothing else than a term of reproach, and that every element in it or connected with it is worthy of condemnation. We are dealing in this paper with 'approach' and not with 'attack', and our first attitude must be that of the open-minded critic who is not in a hurry to condemn.

Yet while giving due value to all desires for fairness of treatment, we must admit that idolatry usually signifies a religious attitude of which we disapprove, and that there is good reason for this disapproval. Our adverse judgment is not a new thing. All down through the ages religious reformers of every nation and race have set themselves in opposition to idolatry. In the Scriptures of the Old Testament this opposition is set forth in uncompromising terms in the Second Commandment, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.' And whenever the meaning of this commandment is forgotten, the worship of idols is met by the denunciation and sarcasm of the prophets. 'They that make a graven image are all of vanity.' And you remember how the hap-hazard character of the production of the image is described. A log of wood is taken and part of it will be used for cooking purposes and another part—it matters not which—will be used for fashioning a god. The manufacture is carried on with much care and trouble and with the use of many instrumented and in the process the workman becomes hungry and thirsty and has to eat and drink—leaving the god *unfinished*. At last the work is completed, and, behold, it is a god. 'He falleth

down unto it and worshippeth it.¹ A passage like this leads us to the root of the offence in idolatry. The emphasis is throughout on human activity, on human creation, on the laboriousness of the process and the weakness of the workman. An idol is a created thing and to worship a created thing is idolatry—that is why idolatry is wrong. It means putting the creature in place of the creator and worshipping the creature instead of the creator. And the mistake appears to be more glaring when we remember the limited character of the workman. Physically this strength has always to be renewed from supplies derived from without and he requires to spend so much of his energy on the provision of his food that he can afford only a remnant for the construction of a god.

So we shall expect to find that the idol product will be something which bears upon it the traces of human origin, and as religion consists essentially in discovering one's dependence on a power beyond oneself the idol will thus fail to meet the fundamental requirement of religion. Instead of leading us outward and upward to a power on which we may depend, it turns out to be something which depends on us. The idol is, no doubt near to us, but it is near only because it is one sided, because it is connected with us alone. It does not establish the larger contact with the divine which we look for in all religion. The fact is that it is *too* near. It is the result of movement on the line of least resistance. Religious search always implies a certain amount of effort and a straining beyond the immediate data of sense. We must always therefore look with suspicion on the religious aspiration which finds its satisfaction within the data of sense merely. We human beings are compounds of matter and spirit, and both of these elements make their appeal to us. It is certainly easier to listen to and answer the demands of the material, but to do so is to pass to a lower level, to attempt to satisfy ourselves with that which is less than the completeness of humanity. But religion is meant to elevate and we cannot elevate ourselves by going downhill.

Further, just because the idols are subjective, artificial and arbitrary constructions of human beings, they must remain inadequate for the purpose of symbolising the divine. They partake of the limitations of the human mind. As a matter of fact we find in the study of idol worship that now one quality

¹ Isa. xliv.

and now another quality of the divine are typified by the idol, but that nowhere is there an attempt to portray the fulness of personality. Power is embodied, destructive and creative energy are indicated, but the different qualities remain for the most part in separation from one another and when we are worshipping one we are to a large extent shut out from the worship of the other. The divine is thus prevented from laying hold on the whole of our nature and can appeal only to parts of it. Of course inadequacy is a defect which accompanies all use of symbols, but the peculiarity of symbols which take the form of idols is that they attract too much notice to themselves, and do not allow us readily to pass beyond them. We are pleased with them because they are our own and we are too easily content with their poverty. All good symbols ought to open out for us a view of something far wider than themselves, but idols narrow our view to the meagre number of qualities which they immediately represent.

Another aspect of idolatry which merits condemnation is what might be called the separatist character—the local and provincial character which belongs to it. Each man or each family or each unit has a particular idol and the worship of it divides men into groups. The idols are not common possessions. They represent an exclusive view of God and the idea that God is the special property of a tribe, caste or sect. (We should carefully notice in passing that all such separatist ideas in religion are pagan and idolatrous in their origin, and we should be very careful lest we admit them into the Christian Church). In an Indian book, e.g. we come across such a passage as this ‘Two neighbours celebrating the same rite at the same hour must choose spots so far apart from each other that the sound of the prayer of the one could not reach the other.’ An impression of loneliness is often produced by idol worship, and yet God is the Father of us all.

In our approach to idolatry then we must take account of such considerations as I have just indicated. We must remember that idols are artificial human constructions, that their influence is downward rather than upwards, that they are inadequate for symbolizing the divine and shut us out from a fuller view and that they separate us one from another. The truer view is that religion is something in which we surrender the human to the divine, in which we must struggle upwards rather than downwards, in which we must look beyond the symbols we use, in which we must unite with our fellowmen in the worship of our common Father.

Yet in all our critical approach we must remember that though the defects we have mentioned are most obvious in the case of those who are frankly and openly idolators, we are by no means warranted in looking down upon them from a superior height. Even those who call themselves Christian may be idolators. And the Christian Church has not yet been able to shake herself entirely free from the idolatrous ideas and practices which sullied the purity of the primitive Church and which have exercised a demoralizing influence, in all the succeeding centuries. We must remember also that there is a subjective as well as an objective idolatry, and that whenever we devote ourselves to the fulfilment of wayward desires we are worshipping a creature of our own instead of God the Creator, whenever we elevate rites and ceremonies of human devising and particular methods of worship to the rank of religious principles, there we are idolators. We are worshipping our own plans, our own methods of worship instead of God. Again we must be on our guard against the degrading tendency of idolatry. Missionaries, especially in the early days of Christian missions have sometimes been tempted to indulge in elaborate and gorgeous ritual in order to attract those who were accustomed to idolatry. The numbers of adherent may have been increased by such methods, but the strength of the Christian Church has been lessened and the Christian Church in India to-day would be far more effective an agency to-day if many of her members had not baptized their idolatry with a Christian name. We must be careful that our approach to idolatry does not become surrender to it. Do not think, however, that we must therefore go to the opposite extreme and dispense with the use of symbols. Symbols I hold are necessary, and regularity of worship which the symbols help us to secure, but symbols are after all a means and not an end and if we make them an end in themselves we become idolators. Again if before condemning idolatry in others we would root it out in ourselves we must remember constantly that the causes which keep the different sections of the Christian Church apart from one another are the idolatrous elements of which we have not yet got rid. If we find it difficult to unite with our fellow-Christians in the solemn and sacred services, there is idolatry somewhere amongst the sections which remain apart. If our worship were purified from all pagan influences it could not possibly be separatist, simply because God is the Father of us all and Christ is the Saviour and Master of us all. Let us make this matter a subject

of prayerful consideration if we would seek [the true welfare of the Church of Christ in India.

In all our approach to idolatry let us take as our motto the words of Christ, 'Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye and then thou shalt see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.' I now pass to ideas connected with idolatry in which there is an element of truth. After what I have already said I do not think I run much risk of being misunderstood. I do not mean to commend idolatry because of these ideas, I mean rather to indicate that the idol worshippers are groping vaguely after a certain truth and that what we ought to do is to aid them in their search for this truth and not drive them back by stern and unrelenting criticism.

The truth which I find at the basis of idolatry is a sense of the nearness of God and a craving for a more adequate realization of that nearness. To a certain extent it is the same truth as that which is at the basis of Pantheism, the feeling that God is everywhere and that there is nothing which is not God. The idol worshipper takes his bit of stone or wood or precious metal and may argue that because God is everywhere therefore God is in this particular stone or piece of wood. He is right in thinking that God is everywhere but he is wrong in thinking that God is confined to the particular object to which he is addressing his prayers. He has caught a glimmering of the truth expressed by the Apostle Paul that God is not far from any one of us, but he has not realized the warning of the same Apostle that the Creator of the world and all that is therein dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands. Let us emphasise for the idol worshipper the truth that God is everywhere, but let us also remind him that, just for this very reason we cannot confine him to one particular place or to one particular object. He is near to us here but he is also beyond our narrow limitations. 'Though I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,' we cannot escape from God. Let us remind the idol worshipper of the teaching of our Lord in His conversation with the woman of Samaria that we 'shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.' God is here, but God is also everywhere and the 'here' must open out into the 'everywhere' if we would lead the idol-worshipper to the higher truth. Again and again the idol worshipper has grasped the value of symbols or embodiments of the divine. He refuses to be

content with any abstract conception of God He has no use for philosophical abstractions. Religion if it is to mean anything to him must be concrete. We can sympathize with him in this attitude, for we also refuse to regard God as a mere idea. We demand that He should be conceived as a power real and active in the world that he has made, but we point out also that there is a great risk in the use of symbols, especially if the symbols are too concrete, and too much a part of our every day life. The risk is that we do not get past the symbol to that which it symbolises. The symbol becomes in itself all sufficient, especially if we attach to it magical qualities such as all superstitious people are ready to assign. This is just the risk which the idol-worshipper has failed to guard against. The symbol comes to stand between him and God instead of leading him upwards to God. We must show him that symbols are indeed necessary but that the symbols which are religiously valuable must open out and elevate. If he finds that he cannot get beyond the symbol, in his case the idol, then he ought to become suspicious of that symbol and seek for some other means of approaching God.

This leads us to another point. The idol worshipper may argue, implicitly if not explicitly—that because God is everywhere, therefore the worshipper may select anything he pleases to represent God. Anything may be made into a symbol of the divine according to the peculiar preferences of the worshipper. But though God is everywhere in the world it does not follow that He is identified with the world, or that He reveals Himself in every part of it in exactly the same degree. God is above the world as well as in it and there is a selection on the part of God. He has chosen some things in the world as more suitable for the expression of His nature. Not the particular things of nature so much as the laws of the great processes which sweep through nature, not every insignificant animal but the higher animals and the highest of all. There are grades of being in the world which God has made, and the higher realities reveal him better than the lower. Correspondingly the selection of the worshipper must not be arbitrary—it must follow the selection of God. It must not fasten on the lower and disregard the highest. It must look for the manifestation of the divine not in the inanimate material things but in the things that have life, and in the beings that have the highest gift of all, namely intelligence. For guidance in this selection we may appeal to the idol-worshipper himself and to his own nature. Ask him what is the highest he knows;

Idolatry and the Christian Approach 131

ask him if a piece of wood or a stone is really higher than his own human nature. If he is candid he will have to admit that it is not, Ask him then if it is not foolish to attempt to express the highest by means of what is less than the best he knows. If he must have a symbol—and we have agreed that he must—why should he not choose one which is more adequate than a mere inanimate object.

Further there is a Divine selection also in the moral sphere. God is the Ruler of the world as well as its creator, and He is ruling the world in righteousness. Throughout the ages there is an increasing purpose. More and more in human life and in history God's purpose of goodness is being revealed. The revelations of God have been proceeding from better to best, until in the fulness of time Christ has come. This objective development of morality has its counterpart in the human soul in that natural morality of which Paul speaks, according to which the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law. More simply there is even in the primitive consciousness a sense of the distinction between right and wrong, and on the basis of this we can ask the idol-worshipper himself to make distinctions. We can appeal to him to apply his own conscience to the object of his worship and ask him whether his god is the embodiment of the highest morality which he knows. If he admits that it is not and if he still continues to worship it, he is without defence and we ought to be able to lead him to the higher demand for a God of righteousness. Thus we must induce the idol-worshipper to apply a standard to his idol worship—a standard of importance and a standard of morality. A great deal is made in Indian thought of the conception of *bhakti* or devotion. It is argued that if we can only call forth devotion it does not much matter what the object of our devotion may be. Consequently we may make anything the object of our devotion and still derive religious value from it. Surely we can point out from practical experience that the character of the men whom we admire does make a very considerable difference to our character and we can apply the same principle to idol worship and insist upon the folly of being content with mere vague characterless devotion.

Finally, we may consider the claim of simplicity which is made on behalf of idol worship. Here again we agree that religion must be simple so that even the ignorant may understand it, but we do not agree that idol worship is the only form of simple religion. We join issue with the educated men of the

country who give an external approval to idol worship, who while not indulging in it themselves, yet urge that it is necessary for the lower classes of the population and all that these classes are capable of. We contend that religion is democratic and not aristocratic, and that it is not a matter of book learning which is possible only for those who have had opportunities of culture. All men have the power of appreciating what is essential in religion, and a personal revelation of God is possible which shall appeal both to the ignorant and the learned. We do not wish to divide people into two classes in the matter of religion, but so long as idol worship is persisted in these two classes will remain. The only possibility of unity in religion is to discover a revelation of God which the educated will not despise and which yet will be intelligible to the common people.

Again the idol worshipper loves his idol because he believes that it helps him. But we may ask, in what way does it help him. Is it material or moral and spiritual help that he expects from it. If it is only the first then his worship cannot be defended on religious grounds. We may try to elevate his ideals and make him dissatisfied with the help that is only material. We may further point out that even this material help is extremely uncertain and that his belief in it is based upon superstition rather than upon satisfactory evidence. In the crises of life his idol fail him will and in the higher strivings of the spirit it will give him no aid whatsoever.

The conclusion of the whole matter is that we go to meet the needs of the idol worshipper bearing with us the message of the Gospel of Christ. Christ can save him from the dangers of idol worship and meet fully the needs which the worshipper has been vainly trying to satisfy by means of bowing down to wood and stone. Does he desire to feel that God is near, then Christ can satisfy him as Immanuel, 'God with us'. Does he yearn for a God in concrete presentation, then he may be told that in Christ God became incarnate and dwelt among us—a revelation of God near to our humanity, but which yet is not beneath humanity. Christ comes near to us and yet lifts us up, giving reality to our highest moral ideals. And however ignorant we may be as regards this world's knowledge, we yet may understand the meaning of Christ. We are not condemned to occupy a lower place and look up enviously towards those who are enjoying religious privileges from which we are shut out. Christ is the revelation of the one God who can draw near to the simple child-like heart,

Idolatry and the Christian Approach 133

and yet, with His treasures of wisdom and of knowledge, satisfy also the most intellectual. Does the idol worshipper feel his weakness and his need of divine help? Christ comes to him as the strength of God, who has never failed any one who has trusted in Him. The idol worshipper may come to Christ and find in Him all that he needs and without fear may cast aside his idols. And we also may cease from that worship of false gods to which we are still prone and through Christ enter into the one fold of the one Shepherd.

THE INDIAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND ITS FUTURE

By Lemuel L. Joshi, M.D., B.Sc., F.C.S.

THE Indian Christian community numbers nearly forty lakhs and is rapidly growing. It is the third largest community numerically. It is well known that the community has been steadily absorbing the aboriginal tribes and the depressed classes. This process has been accelerated by the Mass Movements, which render the social and the economic problems very intricate and complex. It must be also remembered that the majority of Indian Christians live in the villages and not in the cities.

The percentage of literate is 16·3 as compared to 5·5 for Hindus and 3·7 for Muhammadans. This makes the Indian Christians three times more literate than the Hindus. It is however sad to face the fact that nearly eighty-four per cent of Indian Christians cannot even read and write. In Madras we are told that there are hundreds of University graduates and in educational matters the Indian Christian community compares very favourably with the most advanced Indian community, namely the Brahmins. This cannot be said, however, when we turn to our own Presidency. The progress of higher education has been very slow. The facilities for obtaining higher education in places like Bombay and Poona—particularly for boys—are very meagre. During the last twenty-five years hardly a dozen men have been able to join the ranks of the 'learned professions'. The time has now come for us to look into this matter carefully and find out the practical means for the satisfactory solution of the *educational problem*. There is no doubt that *poverty* is the main obstacle in the way of obtaining education. India is a poor country. As stated before, the bulk of Indian Christians come from the so-called depressed classes and are consequently the poorest of the poor. Conversion to Christianity has deprived many of their hereditary occupations. In the case of a few converts from the well-to-do classes it has resulted in the sacrifice of all their worldly possessions. Under these circumstances many of the converts have

been obliged to work as teachers or preachers on salaries lower than what are usually paid to butlers or cooks or office peons! It is impossible for such people to provide for the education of their children.

Failing to secure adequate education the second generation has to be content with what little they can earn to keep body and soul together. It is easy to see that the entire problem works out in a 'vicious circle'. One sometimes wonders at the advance made by many members of the community in spite of the disabilities under which they have had to work out their salvation. I believe that the future of the community depends to a great extent upon the satisfactory solution of the *economic* problem. To-day in India, as elsewhere on all the continents, the struggle for existence is keener than ever, and the 'survival of the fittest' is as true of communities and of nations as it has been in the biological world. The time has now surely come when the Indian Christians of this Presidency as well as those missionaries who are really in earnest to build a strong Indian Church on the basis of self-support, must face the problems social and economic, political and religious—study them in the spirit of sympathy and hasten to apply appropriate remedial agents in time to save the community from ruin and extinction. *The most urgent need of to-day is the provision of adequate facilities for the promotion of education*—I mean education in a larger and broader sense than is usually understood. College education is no doubt important, but in view of the prevailing economic conditions, it seems to me that the Indian Christians need *Technical and Industrial education* in all its branches—agriculture and commerce with its numerous departments, chemical industries and engineering—electrical, mechanical, mining and sanitary engineering. In all these departments there is a demand for trained men to-day—men with brains and who are not ashamed to work with their hands. Among suitable occupations for Indian Christian girls are sick-nursing, millinery, needlework of all kinds, weaving, laundry work, horticulture, poultry-farming, dairying and dairy-farming, cooking and other domestic arts. I understand that it is much easier to secure a Biblewoman or a school teacher than a trained cook or a girl who knows any household work! It is not uncommon to find girls who have spent most of their life in boarding schools and who have not the remotest idea of cooking and other essential domestic arts! I daresay that there are boarding schools where the domestic arts

are taught systematically. There is considerable room, however, for improvement and expansion. The case of each girl should be studied with regard to individual taste, abilities and aptitude and then a suitable occupation should be selected in which she should be given the best possible training. In the country-districts it may be worthwhile to establish a model farm where horticulture, canning and preserving fruit and vegetables, dairying and poultry-farming could be taught both to boys and girls and which could be run along business lines. Among the various professions and arts open to boys may be mentioned carpentry, smithing, pottery, watch-making, tanning, oil-industry, mechanical, electrical and other branches of engineering, photography, agriculture, motor and railway-work, banking, insurance, export and import trade, and many other callings too numerous to mention. There is a great demand in India for trained men to work in the factories, workshops, docks, mills, foundries, mines, and chemical works. *The need of Industrial Missions for India is a very urgent one.* The work of the Basel Mission in the South is well known to you. Here in Western India, in the cities as well as in the country-districts, we need experts from Europe and America to help the people to develop their material resources and to train them in different industries and in agriculture. There is a great field for the lay missionary, the Christian merchant and the consecrated farmer. In any scheme for the improvement of the economic conditions of the Indian Christian community two points must be borne in mind :

- (1) It should teach them self-respect and self-reliance.
- (2) It should enable them to appreciate the dignity of labour and practice business honesty.

It is a strange fact that a convert from the labouring class often has false notions regarding manual work which now seems repugnant to him. He considers it more respectable and genteel to work as a clerk on Rs 20 per mensem than as a mechanic on five times that amount! Scholarships and studentships properly organized and judiciously distributed will help a great deal. Employment bureaus are also necessary. Co-operative Societies could be worked with success.

Our efforts should be based upon a careful survey of our present economic assets and their potential value. One of the first requisites of production is the *acquisition of land* for the village Christians. This can be done by organized effort and by approaching Government for the assignment of waste lands. As

regards capital, it is not necessary to have much to start business on a small scale. Here in Poona I know of an Indian Christian who started on a small capital and is now a flourishing merchant. Another very important asset that we have is in the organization of the Indian Christian community. We have the individual congregations of Christians attached to different churches. Then we have the Indian Christian Associations which do not recognize any sects or denominations and whose aim is to unite all Indian Christians in a common brotherhood. The various associations throughout India and Burma have been recently organized into an All-India Conference of Indian Christians which meets once a year and whose object is to watch over and promote the interests of the community 'by loyal representations to Government, by promoting co-operation and uniting the community, by fostering public spirit and developing the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the community'. The Conference has an 'Industrial Committee' which has issued a statement to the effect that the provision for industrial and technical education of Indian Christians is very inadequate; there are very few 'mission' institutions in which such education is provided. The consequence is that most Christians being under mission tutelage very few are able to take advantage of technical education. The few Government and public technical institutions are not situated in centres of considerable Christian population and as, further, very little is done to make known such facilities as do exist to the members of our community, very few are able to take advantage of technical and industrial education. Further the most glaring defect is that there is no provision for the training by apprenticeship of any one belonging to the 'middle' classes. The hostels that are provided in places where apprentices are taken are utterly unsuitable for these classes. The second conclusion that was arrived at was that the nature of primary and secondary education generally is defective from the point of view of giving an incentive to pupils to go into technical and industrial occupations. Mission institutions which might have been expected to give the lead and set the example in the matter are as defective in this respect as public institutions. Vocational education was practically absent and manual instruction classes were very inadequately provided. The third conclusion arrived at was that there was a great industrial awakening before the country. Unique opportunities will be forthcoming soon. Stupendous schemes are being quietly prepared, both

educational and industrial. It is necessary for the Indian Christian community to be alive to the situation. The proposals put forward by the Industrial Committee are based on these conclusions.

The following resolutions were carried by the All-India Conference :

‘ That a letter be addressed to the Secretary, National Missionary Council, requesting a Joint Committee with members of the Industrial Committee of this Conference with their Industrial Committee with a view to consider—

(1) the establishment of technical institutions and agricultural schools in suitable centres throughout the country ;

(2) the provision of suitable hostel accommodation in centres where industrial training could be obtained for all classes of suitable young men ;

(3) the feasibility of introducing manual instruction classes and vocational education more widely in primary and secondary schools under mission management. ’

An attempt is being made to establish Provincial and District Economic Boards in connexion with the local associations and I would urge on all missionaries to co-operate with us in our efforts to help ourselves. The Bombay Indian Christian Association have recently appointed a ‘ Scholarship Committee ’ for collecting funds and bringing definite proposals for the establishment of scholarships and studentships. It will be seen from this that the Indian Christian leaders are fully awake to the present situation. There is no reason why a combined effort should not be made by the different missionary societies as well as by the Indian Christian Associations *to establish a Central Industrial and Technical Institute* like Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Institute in the U.S.A. where hundreds of Christian boys and girls could be trained in the different arts, industries and agriculture year by year. The missionaries have always been the pioneers of education in this country. The opportunity was never greater than it is to-day to establish an Indian Church on the basis of self-support. If the British and American missionaries along with Indian Christian leaders make up their minds, this would soon be an accomplished fact. I commend the idea to this Conference for their most careful consideration.

Another possible opening that I would suggest is *Military Training for Indian Christians*. The Ahmednagar, Aurangabad and Jalna Districts could furnish hundreds of men for enlistment

in the army. Soon after the outbreak of war the Government of India sanctioned the recruitment of four Indian Christians double companies in the Punjab. Regarding the Indian Christians recruited under this order, His Excellency the Viceroy observed on August 1, 1916: 'It is a still greater pleasure to me to know that the military authorities have been fully satisfied with the experiment, and that the work and conduct of the newly recruited officers and men have been excellent.' A double company was raised composed of Tamil Christians at Cannanore. (I understand a labour corps was raised in Jalna and Aurangabad Districts). What has been possible with the Punjabi and Tamil Christians is surely possible with the Mahratta Christians.

We may now consider for a moment *the external relations of the Indian Christian community.*

- (1) Its relation to Government and the disabilities under which it has to work.
- (2) Its relation to the non-Christians.
- (3) Relation to missionaries.

(1) Until very recently the community did not receive even a recognition from Government. Representations have been made by the Indian Christian Associations from time to time in which the grievances of our community were set forth. The agitation has been kept up for many years. At the time of the recent visit of the Secretary of State, deputations of Indian Christians waited upon His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Private interviews were granted by the Right Honourable Mr. Montagu to some of the leading Indian Christians. As a result of all this it is gratifying to note that among the recommendations of the 'Franchise Committee' are a communal electorate for the Indian Christians of the Madras Presidency with three seats and the nomination of one Indian Christian on each of the other Provincial Legislative Councils. When this becomes an accomplished fact it would to some extent remove one of the standing grievances of the community. As a matter of general principle representatives of a community should be *elected* and not nominated. The Indian Christians do not ask Government for any special favour on the ground of religion, at the same time they claim equal rights and privileges with other Indian communities. India is as much our Motherland as it is of the Hindoos or of the Muhammadans, and we are entitled to a fair and just share in the public services of our country in holding administrative posts under Government

Time will not permit me to place before you all the disabilities of the community.

(2) With regard to *our relation to the non-Christian communities* there seems to be a diversity of opinions. A few years ago the different communities might have been satisfied with a mere racial or communal progress, but to-day the people of India see a new vision of United India, a union not so much of individuals as of communities. India has at last awakened to its national consciousness. The spirit of nationality is in our midst. What should be the attitude of the Indian Christians to the National Movements of the country? A prominent Indian Christian leader in Calcutta gave as his opinion that we should actively participate in all the National Movements of the country and that we should join hands with the non-Christians in all political matters. On the other hand, a well-known Indian Christian in Bombay is reported to have said that he would like to shoot the 'Home Rulers'! It appears, however, that the real path lies somewhere between the two extremes. Loyalty to Government is always compatible with loyalty to our country. Some non-Christians go to the extreme of accusing the Indian Christians of being entirely denationalized and unpatriotic. Here is a typical quotation: 'The Christian religion in India as we see it lived to-day before our eyes, bears on every hand the marks of the foreigner. The Indian Christian tends to become a foreigner in his own native land cut off from his own people. Every Indian who becomes a Christian is lost for ever to the national cause. He not only deserts the religion of his fathers and forefathers of countless generations, but he also abandons the customs, traditions, modes of life, eating and drinking and even of dress, which distinguishes Indians and make them a distinct type of human civilization.' These charges are much too unfair and the writer betrays a startling amount of ignorance of the actual conditions as they exist in the Indian Christian community. Kali Charan Banerjee of Bengal and Lala Goluk Nath of the Punjab have contributed a great deal towards the building of an Indian nationality.

(3) *Its relation to foreign missionaries.* Difficult and delicate candid discussion is a necessary task. Speaking of the relations of the Indian Christian community to foreign missions and missionaries before the A. I. C. of Indian Christians in 1915 Rajah Sir Harnam Singh made the following observations: 'There can be no question that missionaries have done and are

doing excellent work in India, and we are under a great debt of obligation to them. It seems to me, however, that they are sometimes apt to forget that the times have changed and that the old India has passed away. There is a new spirit in India—the spirit of nationality—to the healthy development of which it should obviously be the aim of missionary policy to contribute in an ever-increasing measure. It is unfortunate therefore, that the feelings and relations between missionaries and educated Indian Christians are not what they should be. In mission polity there is, at present, no place for the educated Indian Christian. No status is assigned to him, and, generally speaking he is not in receipt of a living wage. At the same time the missionary is apt to resent independent opinion and to be chary of advice. What are the reasons for this?

- (1) Racial prejudice; and
- (2) the desire to keep all power and authority in the missionary's own hands.

‘If my opinion is in any way correct—and it is for you all to search your hearts and to ask yourselves if such a state of affairs is in itself a reality—this is not as it should be, and it seems to me to be all the more distressing because the time has certainly not come for us to separate ourselves from missionary societies. We need their continued help and advice, and above all, their true and kind co-operation. Indeed I myself look forward to the eventual establishment of an Indian Church, in which all races will have a part and be able to work harmoniously together, untrammelled by prejudice of race or sentiment of colour, for the material and spiritual development of the people of this land and the common good of humanity.’

What is really required is genuine co-operation between the missionaries and the Indian Christians. The attitude of the ruler to the ruled must be substituted by the altruistic spirit of our Master. Barriers of race and colour must be broken down the development of original thought should be greatly encouraged and ample scope should be given for the growth of *Indian Christianity*. Denominational differences should not be perpetuated but an earnest effort be made to bring about a real union of all the Christian people. The great need of the Indian Church to-day is a band of prophets and *Sadhus*, who would present the claims of Christ in an eastern garb.

The Indian Christian community occupies a unique position in the country. The fusion of the several communities into one

Indian nation is desired by all interested in the social and political progress of India. The community is the nucleus of a future Indian nation. It counts among its numbers those who were at one time the 'Untouchables' as well as those who were once high caste Brahmins. In the process of social evolution the Indian Christian community represents the formation of a homogeneous unity out of a heterogeneous complexity. I believe that the community is destined to play a very important role in the social and political regeneration of India. Being in frequent contact with Europeans on the one hand and knowing intimately their own countrymen they could very well interpret the East to the West and the West to the East.

The future of the Indian Christian community depends not only on its material prosperity nor merely on its political or social status, but also on its religion. Social life in India has been always deeply affected by the religious life. Christianity has come to us in a foreign garb. It is essentially an eastern religion. Asia has ever been the birth place of the world's greatest religions. The figures, imagery and language of the Bible are all eastern. We Indians can understand the Scriptures with greater ease than could the natives of Europe or of America. The simplicity of the religion taught and lived by Jesus appeals to us naturally. But when Christianity is presented in a complex form with its multifarious sects and denominations its conflicting creeds and formularies, the result is bewildering! 'The Institutional,' form of Christianity with its cut-and-dry systems of theology has on the whole, failed to elicit a hearty response from the imaginative and mystical East! Christianity at the present time is being judged throughout the world, not by its beliefs but by its works. It is not difficult to understand why conversions from the higher classes in India are so scanty. A distinctly *Indian* Christianity has to be evolved as yet, and India must contribute her share to the interpretation of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

The greatest conflict the world has ever witnessed is by no means over only one phase of it is finished the conflict between right and wrong, the war between spiritual power and brute force is still going on. The destiny of individuals as well as of nations depends on the predominance of one of those forces over the other. The issue before us is no more the determination of eastern or western civilization; but the civilization of the world! A type of civilization in which the brute power is not subservient to the spirit, a civilization in which the body is given

facilities to outgrow the soul, a civilization in which greater attention is paid to food, dress and other 'creature comforts' cannot be *Christian civilization*.

A tremendous sifting process is now going on all over the world, and men and women are everywhere engaged in separating the essential from the non-essential, the valuable and the vital from the useless and the inconsequential. They are finding that the religion of Christ is something that relates itself intimately and fundamentally to the minutest affairs of the daily life. Referring to the post-war conditions Canon Bannister of Hereford says: 'The furnace fire of war will burn up much of the wood, hay and stubble which we have built on the foundation of Christ. Many of us, in the confusion of this bewildering upheaval, are already thinking more of the Sermon on the Mount and less of the Athanasian Creed. We shall find after the war, that the Church will become in fact what in idea it already is, a society of men banded together by a common faith in God, and witnessing to a moral and spiritual ideal of Christ based upon the principles of love and self-sacrifice revealed in Christ and inspired by His Spirit. It will, speaking broadly, substitute religion for Theology and it will take for its text-book the Sermon on the Mount instead of the Epistles of St. Paul; it will aim at the coming of the Kingdom of God rather than the progress of the Church. The ministry of the Church is not a kind of ceremonial magic, not the repeating of a certain form of words, nor the swinging of the censor.

The ministry of the Church means piloting the teeming, many-sided life among us over an unknown sea to a land which God will show! What we need to-day is social Christianity, political Christianity, (which is a very different thing from ecclesiastical politics) civic Christianity, international Christianity, the Christianity of the Christ.

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