WHAT HINDUS THINK OF MISSIONARIES AND THEIR WORK.

BY A BRAHMAN.

"O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us."

[The following paper is written by a native gentleman of competent ability and experience who wishes to act the part of candid friend. It is kindly as well as candid, and in so far as it is an accurate exposition of the attitude of the Hindus towards us and our work, we accept and publish it with all gladness. Some of the writer's remarks will call for comment in a later issue.—Editor.]

It is possible that my account of the feelings of my own countrymen with regard to missionaries and the Christian religion may not be accurate in all individual cases; but if I am not much mistaken it fairly describes the attitude of the majority of the different classes.

1. We will take first those who have received a purely Brahmanical education, who know nothing of English, and are led astray by various prejudices and misconceptions inevitable in their position. They accept the Puranic systems without examination or enquiry, and a few make a life study of one of the systems of philosophy. Amongst this class very few know what Christianity really is. Some of them call it a nástika mata, i. e., an atheistic system. They are quite satisfied with the religion of their ancestors. They see the missionary and they pass him and his congregation when he is preaching in the street; but curiosity
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about a subject which is chiefly speculative and not immediately remunerative is not a vice to which they are addicted. Now and then one will condescend to stay a few moments amongst the idlers and vagabonds who often compose the congregation, and will interrupt the preacher to create a diversion and show his cleverness in dialectics. The educated Brahmans of the old school view any religious teaching that does not come from themselves with contempt. They consider it a great presumption for persons who eat animal food, drink all sorts of liquors and have pariah cooks, to set themselves up as instructors of those who in matters of religion are their superiors.

With regard to the missionaries themselves those who know anything about them have generally a good opinion. Their morals are believed to be unimpeachable and their patience is admired. It is commonly considered, however, that they work merely for their pay. Very few trouble themselves to enquire why private persons should involve themselves in untold expense to have their religion taught to foreigners, and fewer still understand and feel that it is an instance of pure disinterested dharma (charity) on the part of the supporters. As I said before, comparatively few have any accurate knowledge of Christianity. Most would probably say that the Christians teach that all men are equal, that there is only one God, and that theirs is the only true caste. The great object of the missionaries, it is believed, is to make us lose our caste and join theirs. The majority are aware that missions are not supported by the English Government, but think that it secretly favours mission work, hoping thereby to destroy our nationality and attach us more firmly to the English rāj. If you ask them why the Government does not force us to turn Christians you will be informed that Englishmen are too cunning to incur popular odium.

It is not surprising that the common people know so little of what Christianity really is. The possibility of such knowledge is hardly within reach outside the limits of big towns; but even there not very many trouble themselves to acquire it. Nor is this, perhaps, greatly to be wondered at. Suppose a Brahman missionary were to begin preaching his religion to the ordinary citizens of London, some of them might, out of curiosity, and for a few days, listen to what he had to say. But very few would try to comprehend his teaching, and seriously reflect upon it.
Suppose, further, that instead of one Brahman in London, there were five hundred scattered throughout England; that they not only expounded their own religion (of course, with those peculiarities of style and pronunciation unavoidable in the case of a foreigner), but also abused the most cherished names and doctrines of Christianity in no measured terms; and that in addition to all this, they contrived to convert a few of the lowest classes of society, and sent them forth as religious instructors of others;—would the average Englishman listen attentively and patiently in this case, to what they had to say, or take the trouble to study the tenets of their creed? Would there not rather be imminent danger of a serious breach of the public peace?

Moreover it is not easy for men who have to work all day to keep body and soul together to devote as much attention as is requisite for comparing the respective merits of two different religions, in order to espouse that which seems to them the more reasonable. However much the want of a deeper religious tone in the minds of the majority of our fellow-beings may have to be deplored, it will readily be acknowledged that there is much in the circumstances in which they are placed to excuse them for it. The degree of mental culture and natural intelligence necessary to carry on religious enquiry in a rational way is not possessed by the generality of men. The necessary degree of moral earnestness is still rarer.

Thus, we see that the utmost to be expected from the bulk of a nation, in the department of religious activity, is that they shall faithfully follow the dictates of their inherited religion. I do not mean, in all this, to assert that national religions can never be changed, for the whole history of Christianity is against the assertion. But it should be remembered that the religions of Europe which yielded to Christianity were mostly puerile, and, at the time of serious contact, were in a miserable state of decay; and neither of these things can be affirmed of Hinduism.

2. I fear I am wandering from the point. To resume: we have shewn what the orthodox and purely vernacular Hindu thinks of missionaries and their work, and we have seen that it would be unreasonable to expect anything better from him. I will now turn to those who are acquainted with the language and learning of the English. They possess, generally speaking, a very fair knowledge of Christian doctrine, and amongst them are to be found both
the bitterest opponents and the staunchest friends of the missionary.

Most educated natives have received their training either in Mission or Government educational institutions; and it is natural to expect that those trained in the former institutions will regard missions with much more favourable feelings than the rest. Such is certainly the fact; but I believe that Europeans, especially missionaries, generally exaggerate the effects of their Christian instruction. They seem to suppose that many of the students of their institutions go out almost Christians. They think that religious instruction given so long and so zealously must needs bear fruit; and that many of their students would heartily embrace Christianity were it not for the opposition of their friends and relatives. Now this opinion is, to say the least of it, an optimistic exaggeration. It is true there are some who are deeply impressed and perhaps convinced; and some others who go even further and, braving all, openly avow themselves Christians. But in reference to the great majority this description is far from being correct.

One hears occasional complaints from ill-informed Europeans that the missionaries pay too much attention in their schools to secular and too little to religious instruction. I think this charge should be flatly denied on behalf of the educational missionaries. I conceive that as much of special religious instruction is imparted (and imparted generally with unquestionable earnestness), as is necessary for any one, Christian or non-Christian, who does not wish to make Divinity his profession. Moreover, I have yet to learn that there is any necessary antagonism between secular and religious education. Those who hold a contrary opinion ought to bear in mind that the question of religious or non-religious education after all depends not so much on what books are taught, as on how they are taught.

A contrary objection is common among certain sections of my fellow-countrymen. It is said that mission schools are a delusion, offering the bait of a secular education to entrap the pupils into Christianity. But would any Hindu attend a mission institution to learn there only the merits of a religion that is not his, and the defects of one that is his own? In trying to further the spread of a knowledge of his religion by offering it along with knowledge that the native prizes for the sake of its worldly benefits, I conceive
that no one has a right to charge the missionary with resorting to 'false pretences.' He is perfectly open, all along professing that his primary object is the spread of the Gospel.

But while the Bible and other Christian books are zealously taught in all mission institutions, I am bound to assert they are not studied as zealously. Many of the students (at any rate in the higher classes, where they do not care for marks) seldom open their Bibles except in class, and even there only when they cannot help doing so. Whenever they are inclined to excuse themselves from class attendance it is invariably the Bible hour that is first sacrificed. Many of the students in the Bible class employ the time that they would otherwise consider as thrown away, in studying up other lessons. On the other hand it must be owned that there are numbers of teachers whose instructions are so interesting that even such pupils do attend and learn with pleasure what is taught. In other cases discipline ensures the attention that interest was not enough to secure.

From all this it will be rightly inferred that only a minority (and these always mission school students) seriously apply themselves to a study of the teaching of the Bible. This is apparently opposed to what I said before, that the "English-educated" men among us have a fair knowledge of Christianity. But it is not really so. The best of English literature is so thoroughly imbued with the principles of the New Testament that any one who has a fair acquaintance with it cannot help knowing a good deal about Christianity.

Let me now try to estimate the views of those educated natives who have passed out of their educational career and settled in the world. Of these there are two classes, who, though opposed to each other as widely as possible in point of religious belief, still agree in their antagonism to missionary enterprise. These are (1) those (a comparatively small but increasing class) who, notwithstanding their English education, passionately array themselves on the side of every thing Indian, including the religion; and (2) those who are carried away by the writings of Bradlaugh and men of his school and scoff at all religion, as an antiquated superstition worthy only of fools and women. Of late, Theosophy (whatever that may mean) has been exerting a strong influence on the same side. What the esoteric mysteries of Theosophy are, I know not; but I can mention one exoteric fact which in my view
partly explains why the strange system has secured adherents among the Hindus; viz., that it extols everything Indian, and in no measured terms decries everything foreign, particularly when connected, even remotely, with missionary work.

The above section of educated men, whether rightly or wrongly in the result, think out the problem of religion to some extent for themselves. But there are others, the great majority, who pay no attention at all to religious matters. For the sake of their female relatives they allow religious ceremonies to be performed in their houses, and also take part in them. But personally they do not care the least for these ceremonies. Such persons view the work of the missionary with indifference; and their sympathies are all against his success. Their disapproval of his work is owing not to its religious character, but its (as they think) denationalising tendency. Themselves heedless of religion, they do not like that others should be drawn away from their midst by such an utterly insignificant matter. In this class are to be included some who pride themselves on a little smattering of the works of Mill and Spencer, and pass themselves off as Agnostics, and Utilitarians. There are many among them who bitterly hate the missionaries. They think it a work of charity to misunderstand and misrepresent even the best of them (intentionally or unintentionally), whenever opportunity occurs. In their view every missionary is thoroughly Jesuitical and therefore not to be trusted.

There are, of course, many who are favourably disposed towards missionaries. The majority of these have probably been educated in mission institutions. Much of their friendly feeling is owing to the love and respect that they bear towards their old masters. They know that the missionary (whether they approve of all his views or not) works honestly to do good to their countrymen. They cannot speak of his efforts derisively nor do they scoff at his religion. For Christ himself, they have the greatest respect. They warmly appreciate the sublime doctrines that He preached and exemplified on earth. Some of them go even further: they see in the character of Christ, as portrayed in the New Testament, perhaps their highest ideal of human perfection. They have a profound reverence for His Divine morality and His unapproached saintliness. In short, their attitude toward Christianity differs from that of the Christians only in this,
that they cannot rank him as Divine, and do not acknowledge the need of the atonement.

There is yet another point of view from which many of us regard Christianity very favourably. All may not agree in attributing the civilization and material prosperity of European nations entirely to Christianity; but all allow that it possesses a decided advantage over the religion of India in interposing no checks to the progress of its adherents. It has no caste rules whereby an enterprising youth is restrained from distinguishing himself by seeking a wider education in a foreign land; no prohibition, with all its resulting evils, of the remarriage of widows. With us, a youth fresh from his college, with all his high aims and aspirations, feels bound as it were by chains, when he finds the iron grasp of custom and religious superstition circumscribing his freedom of action and even opinion on every side. He chafes very strongly to get free, but in vain. Thus he is compelled to own the advantage (at any rate from a material point of view) of a religion which does not interfere detrimentally with the purely social and material concerns of life. When he compares the popular conception of religion among his countrymen with the simple morality of Christianity as taught in the Bible, and when he considers the gross superstition that prevails among the uncultured around him, he can hardly escape the conclusion that the religion taught by the 'missionary is certainly to be preferred to the blind superstition of the masses.

There is still another consideration which impels the educated Hindu to treat the missionary with a sympathetic feeling. Of all the Europeans with whom he comes in contact, the missionary mingles with him on the easiest and most cordial terms. This is true of all, but especially of the educational missionary. Most Hindus, including very many educated in non-missionary institutions, readily acknowledge that the relations existing between teacher and pupil in mission schools are far more cordial than those existing in Government educational institutions. The enthusiasm with which they work, and the disinterested efforts that they make for the good of their pupils, are traits in the character of most missionaries which even their worst enemies are forced to admire. By their pupils themselves they are regarded with such grateful feelings that, long after they have passed out of their respective schools and colleges, they cherish the memories
of their teachers with peculiar feelings of love and reverence.

In another paper I will try to show what in my opinion is the best way to bring Christianity to the knowledge of my countrymen and how to create a better understanding between the missionaries and the different classes amongst whom they work.

HINDUS CROSSING THE SEA.

III.

BY A BRAHMAN LIBERAL.

(Concluded from page 337.)

Another argument now and again advanced by the Pandits is that the text

Dvijasyābdhau tu nau yātuh,
Śodhitasyāpi samgrahah,

is a special provision, and the Smritis contain only general rules. The absurdity of this contention is its sufficient refutation. It is well known that the special rule should be of the same authoritative order to take effect against a general rule. If the latter is from the Smritis, the former should also come from the same source. But it is not correct to claim for a special Smriti the power of over-riding a general Védic provision, and pari passu the Smritis and Purānas should be treated in the same manner.

Barring the inconsistencies and contradictions, as detailed in the foregoing paragraphs, involved in the attitude of the priesthood in Southern India towards sea-faring, and granting for the sake of argument that the Purānic text is for the nonce unbreakable, it now behoves the reader to examine its real import and bearings. There are two readings of the first line, viz.:

(1). Dvijasyābdhau tu Nirvānām.
(2). Dvijasyābdhau nau yātuh.

The former is adopted by such eminent authorities as Raghunandana, Mādhavāchārya, &c., while the latter is given by compilations like the Nirnāya Sindhu, &c. There
is much difference between the two meanings. The former confines the embargo to sea-faring only, and quite disjoins the second line from the first. The latter on the other hand renders applicable to a sea-traveller even though puri-fied the prohibition against association. No less an authority than Pandit Tārānāth Tarka Vāchaspāti of Calcutta maintains that “nīryānam” is the correct termination of the first line, as given by the great Mādhavāchārya, Raghunandana, &c., and there is no risk in following such a respectable lead.

The greater part of modern practical Brāhmanism consists of an unquestioning and blind adhesion to custom and prescription, and as affording a justification for their present conduct, the priests will be loth to admit the decision of the Calcutta Pandit. Even this apparent stronghold is by no means impregnable. The word nau yatuh has been construed by several eminent authorities* to mean a sailor and not an ordinary passenger on board a vessel.

Detailed reasons are given by these learned Pandits for their interpretation under the rules of Grammar, and their works were written and published long before this controversy arose in Mysore. In further corroboration of this construction of the text, another text is quoted therein from the “Dharma Tatva Sāram.” With a few exceptions the Pandits of the South meet this argument by denying to the above interpretation any applicability to the South, and refer to the rule of Bōdhāyana whereby sea-faring is legal in the North. But in their ignorance of the ancient geography of India they forget that Poona and Bombay are not in the North, and so far as the Shāstras on the subject at issue are concerned the Maharashtra country is part of the South.

The foregoing cannot it is hoped fail to satisfy even the most ordinary intelligence that the behaviour of the orthodox in the South in regard to the Brāhman who has crossed the sea to Europe, is not warranted by the Shāstras as expounded by the best of themselves, and is due mainly if not wholly to the novelty and rarity of the occurrence.

* (1) Bāla Shāstri of Benares.
(2) Kaja Rām Shāstri of Benares.
(3) Tārānāth Tarka Vāchaspāti of Calcutta.
(4) A Pandit of Bombay in 1873.
(5) Trotakāchārya, head priest of the Jyoti math, a branch of the Sringeri math.
Sinister motives are only exhibited by a limited few of his relations.

His plucky move has so deeply stirred up the stagnation of his community that the maths and priests in Mysore at first stoutly denied that there was any prâyaschittam (penance) for a "sea-travelled" Brâhman. The Parakâla Svâmi of Mysore stated that Bódhâyana’s penance of three years’ duration was the only one he was aware of. It has already been stated that that penance is so impossible that no mortal can survive it, and that penances ending fatally are required by the same Aditya Purânam to be avoided. That high authority moreover laid down that even though so purified the traveller would be ineligible for association. The latter had thus no alternative but to seek the help of a very learned and eminent Pandit and priest at Kanchi (Conjeveram), who had at one time been a candidate for the Parakâlasvâmi’s see. He not only decided that there was a practicable prâyaschittam, under the Smriti of Parâsara, but had it performed under his own auspices. Driven from each position which they had successively taken up in this affair, the traveller’s caste-people and co-religionists for a time had the hardihood even to deny the fact that the purification rites were performed. But since the Kanchi Pandit has vouched for them, they have now taken up their stand against his re-admission into their society. Even the Kanchi priest has given his opinion that a "sea-travelled" Brâhman, even after prâyaschittam, is unfit for social re-union; and the Parakâla, Sringerî, Aobala and Utrâdi maths have raised a chorus to the same effect. The first of these religious head-centres has gone a little further by declaring that because the traveller sailed back again to Europe, his prâyaschittam, performed under the auspices of the Kanchi priest, at an enormous cost and much personal inconvenience and trouble, is invalid, inasmuch as his previously arranged return showed an absence of repentance.

There is no doubt that under the strict law* sorrow for having committed a sin is an essential ingredient of the purification for it. But practically it is not at all observed. Every part of a Brâhman’s ritual in every portion of the day consists of prâyaschittam for non-doing or wrong doing. Daily, weekly, monthly, yearly and periodically he makes expiatory penances, for omissions and commissions, and at the time of their performance nothing is farther from his

* Chap. IV. Parâsara Mâdhavîyam
mind than not to repeat the same commissions and omissions. Every Hindu knows the truth of this assertion, and there is no necessity to furnish proofs. Tested therefore by the established daily observances of the priests, the validity of the prāyaschittam, executed by our traveller under the support of the Kanchi priest, cannot reasonably be assailed*

The next question for consideration is the nature and extent of the sin of association, or as it is technically styled samsargam. The darkness on the subject which prevails in the minds of most Brāhmans is very dense, and the bigotry and prejudice which it engenders are therefore appalling. Even the educated will not or dare not appeal to the texts which give authority to the priesthood. Some of them, otherwise most worthy persons, have gone to the length of stultifying their own heavenly gift of reason by openly asserting that the word of their preceptor is more binding on them than the very Shastras which give vitality to his teachings. The less busy but really more earnest amongst them do not however subscribe to this fatal dogma. For the present, no word is more potent for mischief in the Mysore Brāhman world than samsargam, and the worst passions are roused by the unhealthy prominence which it has attained.

In Chap. IV. Parāsara Mādhavīyam treats of the various classes of sin under four heads,† and no one pretends that sea-travelling comes under any of these major sins.

Ordinarily, the Mahāpātakas are considered the gravest sins, comprising,

1. Robbing or defrauding a Brāhman of his property.
2. Service under a Sudra.
3. Trafficking in forbidden things.
4. Falsehood regarding land.

Associating with any of the above sinners used in former Yugas to be classed as a sin of equal enormity, but it has been cancelled in the present Yuga; so that there is no sin

* It is also very suggestive that now-a-days, no one ever thinks of making or exacting any, the smallest, penance for the four other sins bracketted with sea faring, although none are more common!

† (1) Api pātakam, (2) Mahāpātakam, (3) Upa pātakam, (4) Anu pātakam, &c., &c.
in associating with a person committing any of the above greatest of sins.* Is it not therefore absurd to contend that association with a sea-travelled person after purification is sinful, while to do the same with, for instance, the murderer of a Brâhman is not? And yet the position taken up by the priesthood virtually amounts to that.

Association may be defined as of nine kinds:

1. Using the same seat with a sinner.
2. Do. bed do.
3. Do. vehicle do.
4. Speaking with a sinner.
5. Eating in company with a sinner.
6. Teaching the Védas to sinners.
7. Getting a sinner to perform sacrifices.
8. Inter-marrying with a sinner.
9. Eating from the same vessel with a sinner.

In his commentary on Yajñavâlkya's Achârakânda, verse 261, Vijnânesvarâ describes these kinds of samsargam only in the case of un purified sinners, and quotes as his authority verses 47 & 189, Chap. XI. of Manu's Smriti. The Parakâla math does not therefore appear to be correct in saying that the above text applies to our traveller, who had performed prayâschâttam. Besides, it is opposed to the doctrine enunciated by the great Mâdhavâchârya, who under verses 7 and 8, Chap. IV. of Parásara's Smriti, page 211, distinctly rules that the nine kinds of samsargam (association) obtained only in the former Yugas, but that in this Yuga only four kinds require social exclusion if the sinner is un purified, viz:

1. Teaching the Védas to a sinner.
2. Performing sacrifices for a sinner.
3. Inter-marrying with a sinner.
4. Eating from the same vessel with a sinner.

And under verse 78½ Chap. XII, he says distinctly that in this Yuga there is no dissociation with a sinner in regard to the five other kinds of samsargam already described, although he adds, there may be sin as affecting the other world.

Thus this bug-bear of samsargam, at which even reasonable men, religiously disposed according to their lights, are now quaking, is by a careful examination of the texts reduced to very contemptible proportions. The dictum of the Parakâla math is contrary to that of Parásara's erudite and great commentator. Following the commentary of *Vide the text of the Aditya Purâna already quoted.
Vijnānēśvara already examined, the Parakāla math has ruled that the pollution proceeding from association with the sea-traveller ceases after the fourth person. But Vijnānēśvara's rule applies only to a sinner who has not performed prāyaschittam, and cannot govern the case now under consideration. Even if it is conceded, in deference to the eminence of that sacerdotal dignitary, that our traveller's costly penance was ineffectual, it is only the four kinds of direct association with him which should be avoided, and not the other five, including eating in his company. And there is no such thing in this Yuga as indirect samsargam.

An anxious desire to give a brief but complete view of the Hindu scriptures on this vexata quæstio has somewhat unavoidably lengthened this paper. But it is hoped that those studying the various phases and fluctuations of Hindu social life will not find it quite uninteresting. It may also enable our well-meaning but perhaps hasty critics, like "C.C." in the Harvest Field for December, and the reviewer of the former articles on this subject in the Bangalore Spectator, to realize the avalanches of difficulty which crash down and block the path of a Brāhman trying to move away from time-honoured but unnecessary custom. Utterly free from a religious caste, and inheriting the traditions and advantages of a freedom bordering almost on the extreme, Europeans are unable readily to put themselves in the place of the Hindus they judge.

To sum up: the conduct of the priesthood in this matter is thus wholly indefensible, uncanonical, inconsistent and unreasonable. Indefensible, in that the Śāstras are opposed to it, as shown in the foregoing pages. Inconsistent, because nearly all the sinners with whom the sea-traveller is enumerated are freely associated with at the present day without even the semblance of a penance being imposed. Thousands are now daily crossing the seas from port to port in India, from India to Burmah, from India to Ceylon; and although the voyages extend beyond three days, such travellers are under no social disadvantages whatever. Even a dip in the sea at Rāmeśvaram, to which so much spiritual virtue is ascribed, cannot be secured without crossing the sea. And lastly, at the present day, in the very heart of Southern Śnātaka orthodoxy there is moving freely in full enjoyment of all social privileges a Brāhman who has been to and lived for some time in England in the service of a
well-known Brâhman Barrister at Bangalore. He is sup­posed to be subject to the spiritual lead of the Śringeri Guru, who however does not seem to have seen the afore­said rulings of his great Guru and predecessor in office, Madhavâchârya, when he was induced to give his opinion against the re-admission of our traveller into his own society.

Hindu society is honey-combed with many cankerous sins, and the officious busy-bodies who pretend to feel so much interest in the concerns of their neighbours do not make the faintest effort to cast off such members as cover the name of the Hindus with shame. Infanticide, drinking, adultery, perjury, forgery, the abandonment of soul-benef­iting offices of religion, adoption of all kinds of foreign vices, atheism,—these are increasing every year in our midst. No one, not even the head of the math, considers it his duty to stop this downward course of the people, and it may fearlessly be affirmed that there is no Hindu family in which some member or other has not been guilty of some act or omission which is declared in the Shāstras to be a sin of the same dye as association with a sea-travelled Brâhman. The traveller who has unwittingly caused all this social turmoil has boldly shown the road to the acquisition of material prosperity, which had hitherto been closed to the majority of the heavily handicapped educated Hindus. Their present fields of employment have become overcrowd­ed, and the struggle for existence is becoming harder every day. There can be no rational objection to a caste man travelling abroad without losing his caste, which is only done by breaking the customary rules in the matter of eat­ing, drinking, &c. A Brâhman need not cease to be a Brâhman by simply visiting and sojourning in the civilized countries of the West, if he takes care to observe those rules; and in these enlightened times there can be no diffi­culty in doing whatever one may wish in such unimportant matters. The world is going ahead, and the ball of pro­gress, once set rolling in this land, cannot be stopped by any set of caste Vehm-Gerichts. It behoves the Brâhman elders therefore to take this truth to heart, and make up their minds to bow to the inevitable. They have reconciled themselves to the railway, telegraph, female education, service under the English and Mlec’hnas, and a thousand other radical innovations, each of which is subversive of Brâhman exclusivism. This discussion would further be
incomplete without an appeal to the wise and practical precept of Parāśara in Chapter XI, verse 50:

Yugé yugé cha yé dharmah,
Téshu téshu cha yé dvijah—
Tésham nindā na kartavyā,
Yugarūpā hi té dvijah—

Every orthodox Hindu ought to inscribe on his heart the commentary of Madhavacārya thereon. The Brāhmans must travel beyond their country, if they wish at all to march with the times. The natives of the North and the West are doing so, and unless the people of the South wish to remain backward and stagnant, they must be up and do likewise.

GATHERED SHEAVES.

No. VII.

GURUDĀSA.

By the Rev. J. A. VANES, B.A.

Out of the many whom we might select to complete our set of “Gathered Sheaves” we have chosen Gurudāsa on account of his interesting career and his stability of character. The latter feature should certainly influence us in our selection, for it would be very painful if one, after having been written of as a “gathered sheaf”, should yet go back to his early belief and disappoint the too sanguine reapers. But we are persuaded better things of Gurudāsa. Indeed for him to go back to his early belief would be very difficult, seeing that his early views were marked more by unbelief and doubt than by anything else. His ancestral faith was Vaishnavism, for his parents had worshipped Vishnu,—viewed by the Hindus as that one of the Triad whose special duty it is to protect and preserve mankind, as distinguished from Brahma and Siva whose respective duties are creation and destruction. Gurudāsa was born in Mysore, and there he had full opportunity of seeing idolatry in all its various phases flourishing under the combined influence of royal patronage and the enthusiasm of numberless devotees. Losing his parents when quite an infant he had as a child very little
training, and managed to leave school soon after he had been sent there. However his first delight, which amounted almost to a passion, was to listen to the old legends of the gods and to the astounding tales with which Hindu mythology abounds; and in the city of Mysore he had daily opportunities of gratifying this desire. The tales, however, did not increase his respect for the deities, and there was no one who suggested to him an allegorical interpretation; so that while they charmed him as much as ever, they developed in him a spirit of unbelief and contempt. After a while, however, circumstances led him to feel the influence of party spirit, and whatever might have been his views as to the general character of the Hindu Triad, he soon shewed he had no doubt at all that his father's god was the best of them. He thus became a stout upholder of the superiority of Vishnu, and learnt a large number of stanzas in praise of him.

Now, however, he began to find that it was necessary for him to follow the work as well as the faith of his fathers, and his grandmother insisted on his taking some pains to learn weaving. After he had attained a certain skill in the art she found a wife for him and he was married. His weaving then seemed to have a real attraction for him, and in order that he might make a finer class of cloths he came to Bangalore, where he served for sometime in the house of a weaver who was able to supply him with the kind of work he wanted. Devotion to business, however, was short-lived and the old passion soon returned with even greater force. He says that for some years he neglected his sleep by night and his weaving by day in order to listen to the tales of his national mythology. It appears as though the poverty naturally resulting from such a course made it difficult for him to spend over his worship as much money as an ardent admirer of Vishnu might wish to do, and certain doubts arose in his mind which led to his taking a decisive step, the account of which we had better translate from his own words:—“One day as I was thinking about the idol I worshipped really containing the one god Vishnu, and thinking too about my fastings, my expenditure and my loss of business, all incurred for this deity, a doubt arose in my mind and gradually increased in strength. My mode of worship was as follows:—after first washing the idol and wiping it with a clean cloth I plastered it over with sandalwood paste and worshipped it
with flowers, lights, incense, wave-offerings and betel-leaf. One Saturday, about 5 o'clock in the evening, after having fasted and gone through most of the usual ceremony, I felt very hungry and anxious to get the business finished as soon as possible; so having mixed some ashes and tamarind in my left hand, and having placed the image face downward on my right hand, I began to rub it between my hands most vigorously so as to remove all rust. The constant repetition of this process had, of course, a very marked effect on all the prominent parts of the image such as the ears, nose and belly, and they were gradually being rubbed away. I thought to myself, 'Now if this image really does contain a god, why does he not resent being thus rubbed away, and why does he not remonstrate with me? The fact is, it is a mere image and has no life or divinity about it.' This became my settled conviction and I never went back to my former belief.

By this time his family consisted of three little girls who were big enough to learn their alphabet, and, as he found himself well nigh as ignorant as they were of school books, he set to work along with them to learn to read, and so had not much time left to meditate on the fate of his household gods. Next he thought a school would be the best place for the children, and as our Mission girls' school in the Nagartara Pete, Bangalore, was close at hand, they attended it regularly for the next three or four years. Gurudasa little thought that this step was one of the most important of his life, and had he foreseen what was to follow it no doubt he would have kept them safe (?!) at home. In about three years' time he began to notice that his eldest child showed a wonderful acquaintance with the truths of Christianity and he began to be fearful as to the result. It would certainly never do for the daughters to follow the father's example and break with Hinduism, much less would it do for them to become Christians. On this latter point Gurudasa had quite made up his mind. Far better that he should go back to a hypocritical worship of the forsaken deities than that his daughters should adopt this foreign faith. For Christ and His worship he manifested undisguised hatred. We do not forget, however, that Christ had mercy on Saul of Tarsus as a pattern for after ages, and experience has shown missionaries very decidedly that bitter antipathy to Christ may be the precursor of loving devotion. We find Gurudasa now giving up his
days and nights to meeting this new trouble, and in attempting to do this he studied a lot of books on the Hindu religion in hopes of finding a way out of his difficulty. But it was all in vain. He saw that Christianity had a powerful hold on the heart of his eldest girl and he had no arguments that could shake her conviction.

What, however, seemed worse to him, was that his wife had been influenced by his daughter and after some time told him plainly that they both were going to join the Christian religion. It may have been that Gurudāsa's conscience reminded him that he was not the person to abuse them for discrediting their national faith; or possibly his experience of married life had made him feel unequal to opposing his wife; but whatever the cause may have been he yielded to the majority and allowed his wife and children to go over to the protection of Mrs. Dalzell who then had charge of the girls' school. He himself returned to his bachelor state and wisely gave himself up to meditation. His meditations were tinged with fear, and as the result of them he became pretty certain of three things:—the myths that had delighted him in his boyhood were filled with contradictions and it was out of the question for him to believe them; he knew not how to obtain knowledge of the true God; and finally, whatever help that God was able to give, it had not come to him. In spite of his assurance to the contrary, however, God had given him help and was leading him by a way that he knew not. He gave himself up to prayer, and the burden of his petition "to the unknown God" for many days was, "O thou who protectest sinful man, why hast thou left me? Show me Thy way!"

About that time there came to reside near him some Vedantists (pantheists), and through their influence he purchased copies of the Gnānasindhu, Anubhavāmrita, and other similar pantheistic works, and for the next three years gave himself up to their study. In the end he came to consider the Gnānasindhu as the most satisfactory of the books, and from it he learnt one great lesson,—that it was of chief importance to get a good Guru (spiritual teacher). The qualifications of such a Guru were clearly stated, also the impossibility of getting to heaven without such a guide; but where was he to be found? This was not told, and Gurudāsa set to work to seek him for himself. In Bangalore there were many who professed to be Gurus, but he found none of them answering to his ideal; so he adopted the dress, guise
and manner of life of a Sanyâsi (ascetic), and set out as a wandering beggar in a northerly direction. He went from village to village as far as Hampi and found no difficulty whatever in getting food, for the Hindus look on indiscriminate charity as highly meritorious, and few housewives end the day without having given a handful of rice to some beggar; but to find one whom he could accept as a true Guru was a far more difficult task. One after another he met with in his wanderings, but after careful enquiry from their disciples and others he generally concluded that there was no real renunciation of the world on their part, and after some time, with a disappointed heart, he made his way back to Bangalore.

As he was returning he fell ill at a rest-house with a bad attack of fever and ague, and his meditations, as one may imagine, were by no means cheerful. His copy of the Gnânasindhu had been his companion in his wanderings. Asking himself how it was that he had been brought to so sad a plight he somewhat ungratefully, though perhaps truthfully, ascribed it to this book; so without more ado he took it from under his pillow and put it in the fire. The next day he resumed his homeward journey and his thoughts reverted to his former experiences in Bangalore. He remembered how, when he lived with his family near the Chandesvara temple, he had sometimes listened to the preaching on the week nights in our boys' schoolroom, and, though ashamed to be seen there, used now and then to creep in behind the crowd and stand near the door. He could not but feel that the picture of truth presented by Christianity was a very fine one and that he had opposed it from party-spirit, not because he thought it wrong. He had taken pleasure in asking the Christians questions that they could not easily answer, but he acknowledged now that he had been somewhat unfair to them. As he pursued this train of thought it suddenly occurred to him that the description which the Christians gave of their Guru answered exactly to what he had been so long and painfully seeking. Continuing thus to meditate, the old opposition seemed to die away, and before the day ended Gurudâsa had determined that Christianity after all was the religion for him and that he would enter the Christian Church by baptism.

His resolution was not carried into effect at once. He was somewhat shy of being baptised in a place like Ban-
galore where so many knew him. So without returning there he made his way via Tumkur to Mysore, and there for six months carried on his work as a weaver and regularly visited John Mark, the catechist. Even then he did not make known his feelings to any one, and though he was urged to confess Christ publicly he shrank from doing so. The fact was he felt that Bangalore was the proper place for him to receive baptism, in the presence of his wife and children; and that in avoiding Bangalore as he had done, he had been wrong. Shortly after his wife came to Mysore on a visit, and finding him there, was not long in learning all that had happened during their separation. As may be supposed she soon persuaded him to accompany her to Bangalore where, after being on trial for a few months, he received baptism in 1878.

Here we will bring our account to a close, for it is not necessary to enlarge on the topics which the narrative readily suggests to our readers. Those who are working in our girls' schools will see that the Christian instruction given in the class may have mighty effects elsewhere; and those who preach the gospel in the streets will be glad to acknowledge that missionary success does not depend simply on what they are doing: for God is working in the hearts of many who have not much to do with Missions, and His servants may be privileged to reap that whereon they have spent little or no labour.

SHADOW AND SHINE IN MISSION WORK.

IV.

By the Rev. G. W. Sawday.

In the January number of the Indian Evangelical Review there was a thoughtful article on the causes of ill-health amongst missionaries, written by one who has had considerable missionary experience. The writer stated his belief that comparatively few missionaries die or are invalided by actual disease, but that most men returning home have succumbed to the worry and anxiety of their work. Probably every missionary feels the truth of this statement and is constantly found praying for grace more fully to obey the Apostolic injunction, "Be care-
ful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.”

It is scarcely a matter for wonder that the missionary is worried, seeing that he has not unfrequently to be pastor, class leader, schoolmaster, chapel steward, circuit steward, builder, architect, and one knows not what else, all at one and the same time. While, however, making all due allowance for the vexations of these things, we feel that the great source of anxiety in these days is, as it was in older times, that the care of all the churches rests upon us; in other words, we feel that we are answerable to God for the souls of our people; answerable, in a sense, for winning them and answerable, too, for keeping them. And truly there is no burden in the world to be compared with this in the eyes of every true-hearted missionary. He is as a father to his people, and every case of backsliding, yea, every evidence of lukewarmness fills his heart with unspeakable pain. “How shall I present my people faultless before the throne of God”? is the burden of his cry night and day, and in his anxiety to answer this aright, he spends many a weary day and tosses about during many a sleepless night. But although this is, without doubt, the experience of nearly every missionary, it is very questionable whether it ought to be. If we realized more fully the power of God’s Spirit, and remembered that we are but God’s agents, without whom He could work just as well as with; if, above all, we seriously considered that our Saviour Christ loves our people far more than we do, is more concerned than we are to keep them from the evil of the world, and that every plan He devises is backed up not only by boundless love but by infinite power,—we should surely, then, be saved from much of the anxiety that now so often unfits us for our work.

Perhaps no part of our work interests us so profoundly, and at the same time causes us so much disquiet as our intercourse with enquirers. Sometimes they happen to be people of the town, whom we have known for years, and whose growing interest in Christianity we have watched with intense hopefulness. Sometimes the enquirers drop as it were from the skies. They are people about whom we know nothing and have come from a far-distant village where the good news of salvation has almost unaccountably reached them, awakening more than a passing interest in their
minds. Sometimes they are people who have been suddenly pierced with a deep sense of sin. The word uttered by a bazaar preacher or read in some tract, has gone home, and they come with the earnest request that they may be at once baptized. Such cases are by no means uncommon in India. At other times the enquirers are wandering stars. They have been to various missionaries for instruction, and may possibly have received baptism before. Such are, generally speaking, a source only of anxiety and unpleasantness, and in nine cases out of ten there is something radically wrong with them.

When enquirers first put in an appearance, our feeling is naturally one of gladness; but many disappointments make the old missionary a little incredulous: at any rate he is disposed most thoroughly to test their characters before admitting them into the church. It is often a very difficult matter to tell the motives from which men come. Are they genuinely anxious to save their souls? Do they really perceive the futility of Hinduism? Or has some other object driven them to us? It may be wondered what other object can have enough power to drive men to a deed which will separate them from their home and people, and bring many curses upon them. Some may think that nothing but sincerity could lead men to such a step, but experience teaches otherwise. Perhaps they have had a quarrel with their friends, and come to us simply for the purpose of spiting them. Or perchance they are unhappy in their domestic relationships and hope by becoming Christians to rid themselves of the old encumbrances and commence a new life amid more congenial surroundings. Or possibly they think that as Christians not only will they not be allowed to starve, but some post will be provided for them, of which the work will be lighter, the position more respectable, and the pay somewhat higher than that to which they have hitherto been accustomed.

It is very difficult in all cases to find out the true motives of enquirers, for some can simulate very cleverly. Consequently the missionary needs much wisdom and keen insight into character to enable him to judge aright, especially as an error of judgment in this matter generally leads to much sorrow and not infrequently to shame. It is hard to send away any man, for there is always hope that under Christian influence even the most un-
worthy may amend his ways; but still we think that, for the honour of Christ's Church in India, in almost every case strict examination and a probation more or less prolonged should precede admission into the Church. We cannot, of course, limit the power of God's Spirit, and there may be instances (would that they were a thousand-fold multiplied!) in which conviction of sin, faith in Christ, and baptism may legitimately accompany each other, as in certain notorious cases in Gonda. Occasionally, too, a sincere desire to become a Christian may be joined with a proclaimed anxiety for employment, since many—the higher castes especially—in embracing Christianity, have to give up their means of livelihood and everything else. For such something must be done, or they will starve. Still the progress of a mission which has to provide for most whom it receives will be necessarily slow since mission funds and mission posts are always limited. We long to see a spirit of enquiry springing up in the ryots, merchants and others whose positions are secure, and who will not be dependent on the mission, but will themselves render substantial help to its funds.

Dealing with enquirers is, as we have thus seen, a fruitful source of anxiety to the missionary; but all the worry does not fall on him, for the enquirer himself, if sincere, has much to contend with. His visits to the mission house, his conversations with the native agents, his absence from the temple services, his neglect of the daily ceremonies render him an object of suspicion to all in his house. His outgoing and incoming are carefully noted, his steps are dogged by spies, his every word is weighed in the balance; for is he not going to bring irremediable disgrace on the family name? It is all perfectly natural, but none the less galling to the man who is the object of such suspicion! When at last he has manifestly taken his resolve his difficulties are enormously increased. Persuasion is first tried. That failing, threats of punishment and vows of vengeance are resorted to, and should these not succeed physical force is not unfruitfully put forth. One young Brahman friend of ours was two or three times prevented from coming for baptism, and in the end had to run the gauntlet and come on a week day, as he was always specially watched on the Sunday. Some enquirers avoid much of this by taking refuge with the missionary, but the friends always try to see him, and if foiled in this generally bring a charge against
the missionary for wrongful confinement. This necessarily results in the public appearance in Court of the Padre and the enquirer, when there is sure to be a great display of feeling. The father entreats, the brothers shed copious tears at a moment's notice, the mother beats her breast, calling on the name of her god, and threatening at once to cast herself into the nearest well unless the son returns home. Who can wonder that, having stood firm as a rock so far, many find their courage waver when brought face to face with such a scene as this?

Even after baptism the trials of the enquirer are by no means ended. Every means is used to induce him to return to his home. The disgrace he has brought on his family is vividly depicted to him, and he is taught to regard himself as the scapegrace of the family, the day of whose death would be more blessed than that of his birth. If he wavers and offers to return, funds are raised from all the members of the caste, Brahmans are fed, Gurus are fee-ed, and no stone is left unturned to procure his re-admission into caste. Of late years even the rules of Brahmanism have been considerably relaxed, and enquirers, after having eaten and lived with us for days and been in some instances baptized, have yet been received back into caste. But should the convert refuse to listen to the seductive voices of his former friends, the last resort is tried. Men have been dragged or inveigled by their infuriated friends from the houses in which they were staying, and shut up for days and weeks, until, weakened in body and enfeebled in mind, they have been ready to obtain freedom at any cost, even at the sacrifice of their convictions. There are few mission stations in India whose annals do not speak of scenes such as this. Should, however, every means prove vain and the convert stand firm, he has the pleasure of knowing that he is dead to his friends. His effigy is made and taken to the burial ground where it is burnt; his name is no more mentioned in the home, and the curses even of father and mother are hurled at him whenever they happen to see him in the street.

In most cases the missionary has the most real anxiety after the enquirer has been baptized. Although perfectly sincere, the new convert is not perfect. His moral standard is low; and his uninstructed conscience is by no means sensitive. With many prayers the work alike of destruction and of construction has by God's help to be carried...
on in him; until he understands what Christ would have him be, and he really longs to become that. A relapse sometimes seems imminent; but we are amply compensated when at last we see him growing in grace and in loving attachment to our Saviour. Our cup of joy is full when eventually, proved and approved, he passes on to some noble work in connection with the mission, work in which he can help others, he being rendered efficient for it by an experience which has been so instructive.

GLEANINGS.

The Maharajah Holkar seems disposed to maintain his hostile attitude towards the missionaries at Indore, and it is said that, unless the Viceroy distinctly emphasises the hint given by him some months ago, it is nearly certain the discussion of the question will be removed from India to England, and that its final settlement will involve some complicated and possibly serious issues.

A native correspondent writing from a village a few miles from a station on the Rajputana Railway, sends to the papers particulars of a revolting piece of barbarity committed under sanction of the social customs of a section of the Hindu community. It seems that a beautiful young Hindu widow of the Bania caste, and professing the Dhundia tenets, resolved to perform the necessary ceremonies to denote her widowhood. As most readers are aware, it is customary for Hindu women to have their heads divested of hair after the loss of their husbands. The young Bania women agreed to the performance of this rite; but the fanatics, instead of shaving the head with a razor, or resorting to some other simple method of removing the hair, plucked it out by the roots, "just as weeds are rooted up in a cultivator's field or husks taken off a cocoanut." The wounds caused by the brutal violence of the operators bled profusely. The incident occurred in the broad light of day under a tree in the village, and the participators in the ceremony, far from fearing interference, probably considered they were doing a righteous act.

The Rev. S. Knowles of Gonda, Oudh, sends to the Indian Witness an interesting account of evangelistic work done during a heathen festival at Devi Patan. Several baptisms took place on the way to the festival. After preach-
ing at Maharaj-Gunge, a liquor vendor publicly appealed for baptism and as publicly renounced his evil traffic. During the same service a blind man cried out:—‘These men speak the truth, and from this day I am a disciple of Jesus Christ;' and, with his sightless eyes turned to the setting sun, he was initiated into the Christian Church. Next day at Balrampore there was a joyful meeting with the disciples baptised twelve months ago; after which during a street service ten more, of whom two were Brahmans, publicly accepted Christianity. During the festival at Devi Patan services were regularly conducted, at which there were never less than 500 present. At all times perfect order reigned and the greatest attention was paid throughout. On one occasion the people were so moved that they shouted as one man, with all the enthusiasm of devotees, ‘Isa panth kijai’ (May the religion of Christ prosper!) and prolonged the shout for some time. Seven persons were baptised during these days, one being a faqir, and two others Brahmans; while the names of fifty enquirers were also taken down. Said a faqir at Balrampore, “Sir, I went to the festival a Hindu; I have returned a Christian.”

The Salvation Army holds that adaptation is, under God, a primary element of success, and Major Tucker has so far acted on that principle as to discard shoes and walk the roads barefooted. The natives think that he has now begun to approach the ideal of an Indian faqir and honour him for it.

Once now and again news reaches us of the spasmodic outburst of aggressive zeal on the part of Muslims. Quite recently a room has been opened by a few Muslims in the Grant Road, Bombay, and preaching services are held there daily.

Religious enthusiasm takes on some strange shapes. A Ceylon paper says that the King of Cambodia has sent a number of gifts to the Buddhist Pali College in Colombo, the most remarkable being a brush made of his own hair, to be used for sweeping the room in which the image of Buddha is kept.

A letter of a painful character has been addressed by the Rev. Robert Gillespie to the Bombay Guardian in re-
ference to a recent appeal for money by the leaders of the Salvation Army in this country. The appeal in question, signed by Major Tucker, is based on the statement that "a glorious and powerful revival" is either in progress or about to begin among the Native Christians of Borsad and Shahawadi. The claims of the work are said to be so pressing that Rs. 1,500 are needed at once "to enable him to meet the demands of the next few weeks." Mr. Gillespie affirms that Major Tucker, having failed to reach the heathen, has entered upon the work of proselytism, and he thus explains it:—"Encouraged by a man whose special grievance for years has been that the Borsad missionaries would not work under his guidance and direction, and beguiled by three or four parties who had been expelled from our Church for fraud, lying and adultery," Major Tucker "having first caught the unclean is now trying to seduce the unwary." He is charged with having tampered with the Borsad native agents, with a view of inducing them to join the Salvation Army, and the Rs. 1,500 are required, it is asserted, for the making not of converts but of perverts. This account is confirmed and emphasised, in a later issue of the Guardian, by the Rev. W. Beatty of the Irish Presbyterian Mission. He tells us that he gave Major Tucker all the assistance he could until he found that the latter persistently discredited all previous conversion, and insisted on professing and genuine Christians being converted after the Salvation Army fashion. We quote one passage from Mr. Beatty's letter:—

"The Pastor of the congregation was in full sympathy with the work till he found Christians of long standing and experience dubbed as recent converts. Called to tell their experience they said, as he did himself, that they knew Christ, and were rejoicing in Him for years; but this was not pleasing to Mr. Tucker. It was not "proper salvation." Old conversion was said to be achev'a nahi; abi kali. And why so? An account of many conversions pungent and fresh must be sent to the War Cry, on which to appeal to the Christian public for funds to replenish an empty war chest. On the 5th April and three following days a Christian Mela was held at Borsad, and the Salvation Army appeared on the scene. At meetings held, well on to midnight, under a tree in the Christian village, the people were called to surrender to Christ, which they were only too happy to do, and as each one rose from his knees to testify to the power of the grace of God, the big drum was beaten, the end of the Major's scarf waved round the head, and a loud Hallelujah uttered; and next day a telegram sent off to the War Cry of so many souls saved. It mattered not that the man was excommunicated for heinous sin, he had but to fall down at the penitent form, pray for the forgiveness of sin and rise and proclaim his faith in Christ, when the
pasan of rejoicing was raised and another soul added to the ranks of the Salvation Army. On one of these occasions Mr. Gillespie observed among the saved who had been brought up to the platform to pray for the unsaved, men whom he knew to be living in sin, and who slunk down from the "Otto" before his scrutiny. Next day in the presence of Mr. Tucker and the church he called attention to this deception which was being practised, but, as after circumstances proved, without in any way affecting the Major so as to make him more careful."

All this is sad, if true; and we should like to believe that Major Tucker's enthusiasm has led him to act, not with guile, but without discrimination. Evil spirits, such as those described by Mr. Gillespie, are always ready to make the most out of religious birds of passage, whose want of local information renders them easy prey. All the same Major Tucker is seriously blameworthy; yet instead of rebutting the charges or acknowledging his mistake, he prefers to pose as the martyr, persecuted by the unworthy jealousy of brethren less holy than himself!

**WESLEYAN METHODIST NOTES.**

Many workers in India will have been saddened by the news of the sudden death of Mrs. Sanderson, wife of the Rev. D. Sanderson, of Richmond. The greater part of her life was intimately bound up with mission work. For several years she laboured diligently with her husband in the Mysore District—chiefly at Tumkur, where she is still lovingly remembered. After their retirement from India, Mr. Sanderson was appointed House Governor of the Richmond College; and the numerous missionary students who have passed through their course there, cannot but have most pleasant remembrance of Mrs. Sanderson's genial, motherly kindness. She was an active and valuable member of the Ladies' Auxiliary Committee; and the last act which she performed was the writing of a letter soliciting support for the Hassan Orphanage. Many in this land who knew Mrs Sanderson will join us in offering our respectful sympathy to the bereaved husband and family.

We are glad to learn that the Rev. James Cooling, B. A., has been elected to a Fellowship of the Madras University. Ever since Mr. Cooling came to India he has thrown himself with industrious enthusiasm into educational interests, not merely denominational or local, but national, and has amply earned the honour which has now been bestowed.

The forces of the North Ceylon Mission have just been strengthened by the arrival of Miss Bestall, who is about to take
Miss Beauchamp’s place at the Point Pedro Girls’ Boarding School. Miss Bestall has for some time been an earnest church-worker in England, and we trust that in her new sphere she will be encouraged by finding her usefulness largely multiplied.

It always does us good to hear good reports of our people, when they have left us and joined other Missions. In a recent report of the Muhammadan Mission in Madras, H. D. G. says:

“During the year a new influence for good has been brought to bear upon the boys, the effect of which we cannot but look for hopefully. My brother has laid the foundation of a gymnasium in the compound, and A——, about whom mention has formerly been made, a convert from Islam, is now living in the new house, built last year in the compound. He has qualified as a gymnastic master, and is employed in that capacity in a neighbouring school, and also teaches some of our boys. Some of these are very much attached to him. On Sunday he helps more directly by preaching in the school verandah to the old men, women and boys assembled. Of course, he has to bear a good share of hatred and opposition, and at times his spirits are depressed at the state of things; but, happily, his muscular frame is not a little protection to him, giving him the appearance of one whom it would not do to trifle with.”

A—— was baptized in Tumkur about four years ago, and we solicit prayer for him and for his friends who are still Muhammadans. He is the only one of his family who has become a Christian.

NOTES OF OTHER CHURCHES.

Last month we gave our readers some account of the work of the Church Missionary Society in the districts of Tinnevelly which are under Bishop Sargent. The Report of the Mission in North Tinnevelly is now before us, and we have much pleasure in calling attention to it. In the very beginning of the Report, there is mention made of the trouble caused by the “lawless intrusion” of the agents of another Society. Why some people thus lay themselves out to give trouble to others when there are so many parts of India still unoccupied by the missionaries of Christ, is a mystery to us. Such should bear in mind the Apostle Paul’s desire, “to preach the gospel in the regions beyond, and not to boast in another man’s line of things made ready to hand.” The difficulty was, however, safely surmounted, and most of the seceders returned.

The Mission contains 5,403 adherents, as compared with 5,050 in the previous year. There were 90 adult baptisms, two of which deserve special mention. One case was that of an old man of 69 years, by caste a weaver. Twenty-seven years before, when preaching was being carried on in his village, he had proved most disputatious and had striven hard to prevent the people from listening to the truth. The preachers left discor-
aged, but did not forget to pray that God would change the hearts of the villagers. That prayer has been answered. There is now a flourishing congregation in that very village and at last the great opponent has become the disciple of Christ. The second case was that of a respectable young man who learnt to practise enchantments and witchcraft. His father became so angry at this that he ran away to the hills, where he joined a coffee planter. His master seeing that he was very superstitious, showed him his folly and pointed him to the Lord Jesus. Being taken ill, he went to his father's house, where, on a sick bed, he had ample time to think over all he had heard. Deciding to become a Christian he was at last baptized. After his baptism he returned to his own village, only, however, to be met with taunts and rebukes. His young wife was taken from him, and to add to his troubles it pleased God again to afflict him. He took medicine from the native quacks but became worse; and when deprived of the use of his limbs, his friends did all they could to induce him to renounce Christianity. It was a fiery trial for him, but he stood firm, and through God's mercy is recovering from his sickness.

The London Missionary Society in South India has recently suffered some serious losses by the retirement of men from active service in the field. It is scarcely two years since Mr. Hooker, a very promising young missionary, died at Coimbatore after less than two years service. His then colleague, the Revd. H. A. Hutchison, B. Sc. a missionary of some eight years' standing, with a good knowledge of the vernacular, has since been compelled to resign work in India, on account of ill health. Mr. Hutchison is at home on furlough and will not return. The Revd. W. Lee, of Nagercoil, has spent about nineteen years in Travancore, and is in every way an efficient missionary; but he is forced to give up the work because Mrs. Lee's health will not allow her to live in India. Mr. Lee left for England last month, and is succeeded by the Revd. A. L. Allan. The Revd. F. Wilkinson formerly of Travancore and more recently of Madras has also retired this year, after nearly a quarter of a century spent in India. The Revd. W. E. Richards, who arrived only eighteen months ago, was forced to take a sea voyage to Australia as the only hope of saving life after a dangerous illness, and the disappointing news has been received that he has suffered a relapse and is not allowed to return to Madras. Thus four retirements within the present year are announced. Besides this, three brethren, the Revd. Messrs Phillips of Salem, Lewis of Bellary, and E. P. Rice, B. A., of Bangalore, have this year gone for the usual furlough. It is pleasant to announce that some reinforcements are expected—the Revd. Mr. Haines, formerly of Bellary, and the Revd. Mr. Long from Cheshunt College.
The setting out on a long journey is to a Hindu an event of great importance; as important in fact as was a journey from Cornwall or Durham to London in the old staging days before trains were dreamed of, and when such a step was not to be undertaken until the will was made and all things set in order, in case there should be no return from the unknown country towards which the daring traveller was turning his face. Indeed we may question whether a journey undertaken in England some fifty years ago involved so much anxious thought and careful preparation as that devolving in these days on an orthodox Hindu who thinks of leaving his native village for the purpose of visiting some distant town. The first thing is to find an auspicious day, and this depends a good deal on the direction that the would-be traveller wishes to take. Some astrologers say that on Tuesday you may go to the east, on Monday and Saturday to the south, on Wednesday and Thursday to the west, and on Friday to the north; and many and perilous are the dangers that await those who venture to set these directions at defiance. Others, again, say that it is not well to commence a journey on a Sunday, for there is a proverb which says that he who sets out on a Sunday will meet with a worse fate than should befall even a dog; a word in season from our neighbours, by the way, to many who, thinking "the better the day, the better the deed," do not hesitate to spend on the road the hours of the Sabbath that might be far more profitably spent in God's house. Some believe that the planets which rule Tuesday and Thursday are peculiarly unfavourable to travellers, and if they wish to set out on those days will leave their homes on Monday and Wednesday and spend the night in some other house in the same village, in order that their journey may not be considered to have commenced on those ill-omened days. Many and curious are the traditions about certain days. Thus, for instance, the first Tuesday of the new moon is unfortunate, because Nalachakravarti experienced great suffering on that day; and the first Friday of the new moon is also unfortunate because Balachakravarti was then defeated. The first Sunday of the new moon is ill-omened because Rāghu Rama got into great trouble, and the first Thursday because Arjuna was overwhelmed with disaster. Some would not dream of leaving home on the first Saturday of the new moon because Rāvanna was then killed, or on the first Monday because Parasurama was defeated. It will thus be seen that the man who credits (as so many do) all these traditions, finds no little difficulty in fixing on the right day for leaving his home; and we can easily believe that the anxious thought and prolonged con-
versations with the village astrologer about this all-important matter, often take up far more time than the actual preparations for the journey.

Even after the day has been fixed some inauspicious omen may upset all the arrangements. When a man has, after much thought, fixed the day, got all his things together, and is just setting out, if some neighbour comes and says, Where are you going?; or, Why are you going?; or, I also will come; or, Don't go now, your work will not succeed; or, There are thieves in the road and tigers in the jungle; or, There is much sickness in the place to which you are going; if any one makes such remarks, the unhappy traveller, bemoaning his ill-luck, had better return to his home, for he knows that if he goes nothing but disaster awaits him. Even if no croaking friend should thus accost him his journey may be ill-omened, for should he see any one sneezing or weeping, or beating his breast, or should his bandy fall or his horse kick, or should he see in the road an oil man, a Brahman widow, a new chatty, a new basket or a new rope, or should he meet a lame man, a blind man or a bald man, or should be fall in with a Sanyasi, a beggar or a barber, or should his eyes light upon a man with sore eyes, a naked man, or a woman scratching her head, or should be hear cats quarrelling or monkeys chattering, and should be himself slip or fall on leaving the house, or should his turban or handkerchief fall to the ground, he will know that no success can attend his mission, and if he be a wise man he will turn back to his home and await a more favourable day.

He may, however, be cheered by more favourable omens than these. If he is accompanied by an intimate friend, if he hears donkeys braying, if he meets some virgins or married women, if he sees flowers, fruits, saffron and turmeric, if he meets an elephant, a horse or a carriage, if he passes a water pot filled with water, two Brahman in company, or a drove of cattle, he may well rejoice, for his journey is sure to be crowned with success; and if all these things are seen on the right side so much the better, for then there can be doubt that he will not only reach his destination but return to his home in safety. It will thus be seen that when a Hindu intends to undertake a journey, his eyes must be always open, for nearly every thing he meets is an omen for good or for evil. Happy is the man who is able to fix upon an auspicious day for his journey, but happier still is he who meets with no ill omen to upset all his arrangements and prevent him from reaching his destination in peace!

G. W. S.