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PROCEEDINGS OF THE
FOURTH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

Held at Coonoor, Nov. 9—13, 1917.

We have just received a most interesting book of 85 pages, with the above title. The scope of the Council's labours may be judged by the Reports of its standing committees on such subjects as Co-operation and Unity, Survey and Occupation of India as a mission-field, The Indian Church, Evangelical Forward Movement in India, The Christian Church, Christian Literature, Medical Missions, Women's Work, and several others.

Besides these reports of standing committees, there are reports concerning Indian Missions and the War, German Missions, and Government Proposals for Labour Emigration.

These reports are so lengthy that we are unable to give more than one of them in this issue, but are sure our readers will find much interesting food for thought and earnest prayer in the Report on The Indian Church, given by the Bishop of Dornakal, the convener of the standing committee on that subject.

The Committee sent out during the year a questionnaire with a view to discover progress made in the Indian Church in the matter of Self-support, Missionary efforts, and Indian leadership.

Answers from 53 societies and representatives have been received, and much valuable information has been collected. The Committee however feels that the investigation should be continued and completed, and the results made available for the churches and missions throughout the country.

A short summary is here presented.

Self-support.

With the exception of a few missions in which the unit of self-support has not yet been clearly defined, all missions appear to present to the people some ideal of self-support. Great differences, however, exist in defining the goal. Between the individual congregation at one end, and the entire church work in a whole district at the other, all varieties exist in the Missionary
Societies that have given any serious thought to the subject. The vast majority of the missions begin with the sphere of the individual pastor as the immediate goal. It is evident that this is the practice in most missions. The details however again vary a great deal. Too often local church expenses and the salary of the pastor are the only items that are reckoned as falling within the purview of self-support. Elementary schools for the children of the congregations, and evangelistic work in the area covered by the pastorate are left out of this scope and are provided by the mission. The income is often gathered from a large area, and the expense is limited to one or two items in only a part of the area. The whole of the congregational work within the sphere of the pastor, whether it be that of the pastor in charge of the congregation, or of other workers assisting in the pastoral work, or of school masters teaching in the congregation schools, or of evangelistic work within the area—all this work may legitimately be considered as falling within the reckoning of self-support. It is however evident that complete support of the Indian Church including the maintenance of higher educational institutions, etc., can only be attained by the grouping of a large number of such congregational units.

In a few missions the gifts of the people in the whole district are pooled to support the pastoral and evangelistic work carried on in one particular station of the field. It is not clear that such a method evokes enthusiasm in the long run. Moreover this can at best be considered as the Home Mission of the Church, and nothing more. The solution of the problem of self-support of the churches must be sought for in some other direction.

From the facts before the Committee, it appears that the division of the district into several pastoral units, and combining several such units into a body that will have the direction of all the work carried on for the congregations in the area would appear to succeed most in creating enthusiasm for self-support. A method that has been found successful in many cases is for the mission to give a measure of control to such a central body, and make it a diminishing grant to enable it gradually to realize the ideal of self-support. The C.M.S. percentage of reduction is 5 in some of its fields, and 2½ in others. The Committee recommends an earnest consideration of this problem at the present time, so that in view of the rising tide of national feeling the Indian Church may assume larger responsibilities. There is no mission that is too young to place the idea of self-support in some form or other before the Christian community gathered by it.
It appears to be the general practice that special privileges are given to churches according to the
measure of self-support attained. It cannot be denied that this has acted as a stimulus in many cases. On the other hand, the Committee feels that the time has come for a reconsideration of the whole subject. And those correspondents are certainly right who urge that self-management in some form or degree should not be withheld simply because complete self-support has not been obtained. A measure of self-government has been proved to be a great stimulus to self-support.

Several suggestive answers have been given in answer to the question regarding the measures found to be most successful in interesting the people’s gifts.

The spiritual life naturally comes first and foremost. “A genuine revival of religion,” “deepening of the spiritual life,” “an enthusiastic preaching of the Gospel of self-denial,” “helping the people to a real spiritual experience and a corporate church life” are among the answers from every part of India. The Committee would reiterate the finding of the First National Council: “That the Church can truly develop along lines of self-support, self-government, and self-propagation, only as it is purified and empowered by the Holy Spirit of God.”

The increasing of the Indian Pastorate appears to come next in order of importance. As a correspondent from North India puts it, “securing pastors for churches is fundamental.” Very little is given, he says, when there is no pastor. And yet there are evidently hundreds of places where the foreign missionaries are also in pastoral charge of congregations. So common had the practice become that, some time ago at a conference of Indian workers, an Indian Christian leader referred with evident sadness and disappointment to the practice of missionaries being pastors of congregations too long. For the sake of the Indian congregations and for the sake of the Indian Church in general, the increase of Indian pastors must receive the first consideration. It is vital to the well-being of the Indian Christian congregations that they are shepherded by pastors of their own nationality and language from a very early stage.

Consecrated Lay-workers.—It is accepted by all correspondents that it is essential for self-support to have consecrated lay-workers. One correspondent from South India mentions,
“good consecrated workers” as the most successful means of promoting self-support. And with this view all will readily agree. It is absolutely in the hands of the worker whether the people will be trained in the spirit of “receiving,” or in the spirit of “giving.” Instilling into the minds of the Indian lay workers the highest ideals of devotion and self-denial, is therefore a branch of work whose value cannot be over-estimated. Any money spent in bringing workers together for a period of study, meditation and inspiration is a most valuable investment. The benefits derived from such conventions and study schools are incalculable and altogether out of all proportion to the expense and trouble involved.

Several direct means of increasing the people’s gifts are indicated in the replies. Harvest Festivals perhaps are mentioned most often. No doubt festivals of this kind appeal to the genius and temperament of the people. Offerings in kind come next as the most successful method of encouraging regular gifts from village congregations. “God’s Rice Bag,” “Vessels of Blessing,” “Barakat-Bartan,” “Handful of Rice” are the terms used in this connection. It is the regular feature in some districts at Sunday morning services to present at the Table, basins or bags of rice, or other grains, garden vegetables and chicken brought by the worshippers. Annual subscriptions seem to be worked most successfully in the South. Monthly subscriptions, and subscription-books, seem to be the order in other parts. The subscription-book is purely Western, and, no wonder, it never inspires generous giving. Thankofferings, Birthday gifts, Church dues, all are utilized in different parts of the country with more or less success.

The ancient Syrian churches on the west coast are completely independent of foreign aid. According to the Syrian Christian correspondent, “all current expenses of the churches, the support of the pastors and of the bishops are provided by the people themselves.”

The information before the Committee in regard to the Mar Thoma Syrian Church is so interesting that it is presented here in full.

“The church levies fees on its members on certain specified occasions and for certain specified purposes. This is truly Indian in its method. Temple worship, village sacrifices, and the cost of erecting temples are throughout the country met by the people taxing themselves according to the number of households interest-
in the temple or in the sacrifice. This is followed by the Syrian Church. The upkeep of the churches, of the clergy, and of the bishops are met from compulsory fees, while the evangelistic and missionary efforts are supported by the voluntary contributions. The Evangelistic Association received last year about Rs. 15,000. The fees levied are: (1) Baptismal fees; (2) Marriage fees; (3) Burial fees; (4) "Pidiari" (handful of rice) and monthly fee from every family of the community. Certain customary fees are levied for the support of the bishops exclusively. These fees were introduced into the church centuries ago, and have always been set apart for the support of the bishops. Over and above these dues, the Metropolitan is allowed Rs. 125 per mensem from the general treasury of the church. When the bishop visits a church, all his expenses are met by that church.

The clergy are paid from the fees specified above, except the rice collection. The sale proceeds of the latter go to the general treasury of the church. This amounts to Rs. 7,000 a year. It is from this fund that the salaries of the Metropolitan's office staff, contributions to schools, etc., are met. Some of the clergy get fixed salaries, while others are remunerated by fees. On an average they get Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 per mensem. Nevertheless most of the ministers are in well-to-do circumstances, as they inherit ancestral property. But it must be confessed that possession of landed property sometimes interferes with the official duties of some of the clergy, as they have to devote time to look after their private interests also.

A portion of the income of every parish is reserved as parish fund, and it is from this fund that church expenses, such as Eucharistic expenses, lightings, repairs, etc., are met.

The Mar Thoma Syrian Church runs two higher grade secondary schools, three lower grade secondary schools, and 98 elementary schools. Fees are levied from boys and girls, except from pupils of elementary schools, who get their education free. To schools, whose income by way of fees and Government grants may not be adequate to meet the expenditure, the church pays the balance to make up the deficiency.

One chief source of income is what is called Parisam. Parisam is a tenth of the dowry given by the parents of the bride to the bridegroom. This tithe is of course a handsome sum in a wealthy community like the Syrians. Half of this tithe goes to the priest, and the other half to the local church funds.
While the example of the Syrian churches may not be followed by other churches in its entirety, their successful methods are full of suggestion and inspiration.

One of the questions asked was in reference to the proportion of church income derived by deductions from the salaries of mission workers. Though deductions (that may more or less be considered compulsory) are made in some missions, the general opinion is against such a practice. In a notable case, the correspondent says, "till the end of this year salaries of all workers are subject to tithes. This will cease in December 31st, 1917. The principle of compulsory tithes has been almost unanimously condemned." The principle is well expressed by another correspondent representing a large mission extending to most of the provinces in India: "As a mission we do not make deductions from the workers' salaries. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. We do not believe that forcible taking by deductions is giving." A few missions, however, report that as much as a fourth, and in one or two cases a third, of the entire Indian church income is obtained by such deductions. From very wide experience we gather that system is not loved in the least by the workers under the system. It is clear the missions concerned ought to give very careful consideration to this subject.

The Committee is not in possession of complete and accurate statistics to enable it to estimate the proportion of the people's gifts to the amount spent by the missions. Generally speaking, the proportion is, in the words of correspondents, "very small," "one-tenth per cent," or "microscopic." Sometimes it is one-hundredth, in a few of the missions one-twentieth or one-tenth, or even a third. The highest figures are reported from the C.M.S., Tinnevelly, which provides at least 66% of the total expense on the pastors, primary schools, and evangelistic work of the whole district.

A review of the progress made in the matter of self-support leads the committee to the conclusion that a great deal can be done by the Provincial Committees in studying the subject in relation to the churches in their respective provincial areas, and it is also urged that Indian leaders can render real service to the church by urging on their fellow Christians the importance and principles of giving.

Missionary Efforts. The progress made by the Indian Church in evangelistic and missionary efforts is very encouraging.
Almost all the correspondents say that their missions recognize the principle that the Church rather than the Mission ought to be the centre of the evangelistic work. But many have to confess that the recognition is “theoretical, rather than practical.” The “proposition,” says the representative of a Missionary Society in North India “has not become practical, because the Christian community is so small and weak.” The secretary of another mission remarks that “the difficulties are not with the mission, but with the Church which is so slow to recognize this principle and act upon it.” One large missionary body does not recognize any distinction between church and mission. The organization is evidently based in India exactly on the same lines as in the Homeland. But as another correspondent confesses: “The principle is that the Mission has no separate existence from the Church: in practice it exercises a fairly strong control.” The danger, however, must be recognized and guarded against of the Mission constituting itself the Church in the mission field.

**Missionary Societies.**

Most churches have Home Missionary Societies connected with their organization, though in a large number of cases the receipts of such Societies and the work done by them are extremely limited. The Committee recognizes with thankfulness the advance thus made in the missionary effort of the Indian church and intends to make the information in its possession available for the Church in India. The aggregate of what the Church is doing is marvellously great and truly inspiring. The receipts range between Rs. 300 and Rs. 16,000 per annum; resulting in the aggregate in the ingathering of some thousands of converts. The largest of these is the Indian Missionary Society of Tinnevelly which raised Rs. 16,000 last year. This Society supports in its Telugu field four ordained Indian missionaries, a boarding school, and an Industrial School, and has gathered in the Telugu country over 2,000 converts. In addition to these, most churches support the National Missionary Society of India whose income last year was Rs. 22,000. It carries on work in six fields, with fourteen Indian Missionaries, and has a Christian community altogether of about 2,000 converts.

The reflex effect of such efforts on the Church itself is always unmistakable. Wherever such a Society exists, there the report is that it has “strengthened character,” “enthused the Indian Church,” “increased the sense of responsibility for the evangelization of India,” “helped the Church to realize its duty,”
"created great interest in the missionary work," and in one noteworthy case that "it is helping to make caste feeling disappear."

**INDIAN LEADERSHIP.**

The first question proposed by the Committee under this head was whether any change had been effected recently in the mission organization to give larger place to the Indian Christians in the counsels of the mission. The Committee reports with thankfulness that in different parts of the country, in different Missionary Societies, steps have been taken in this direction which are sure to be far-reaching in their influence and effects. In several large missions the system laid down in the constitution is that no difference is made between Indian and European, and that every position open to the European is also open to the Indian in the church organization; but evidence has reached the Committee that even in such missions there is room for improvement in carrying the principle into practice.

Several missions report steady progress already made in this direction. From a large number of reports we have received we take the following instances:—In the Church of England field in Assam "District Councils or conferences have been established and a Diocesan Council on which all the clergy, English and Indian, have seats, as well as lay representatives from each district." In the National Council of the Y. M. C. A. "it is now the settled policy of the Council to gradually transfer the General Secretaryships of all Associations to Indians, using foreign Secretaries for training purposes and for specialized work." In the Nadia District, the C.M.S. has just introduced a new District Church Council system and has placed all evangelistic and elementary schools in the hands of the Councils which consist mainly of Indian clergy and representatives of the congregation. Previously this was directly under the C. M. S.

Another notable instance of a forward step taken in this direction is to be found in the Baptist Missionary Society. The last Triennial Conference may be said to have adopted the Manga Charta of the Indian Christian community of that Mission. The first resolution adopted is as follows:—

"Whereas the Conference notes with satisfaction indications of real progress throughout the field towards a true appreciation of the place and importance of the Indian Church in relation to the Missionary cause, and

"Whereas in some of our areas there is established a large
body of believers and a form of Church organization in which these ideals are being slowly realized, and

"Whereas there are other areas in which Christians consist of a rapidly growing body of new converts, who may and should, profiting by the experience of the past, be taught these ideals from the beginning; therefore it is resolved:

"That we do now and henceforth proceed on the principle of making the Church centric in all our plans."

Another resolution, appointing a Committee to discuss and make definite suggestions, states that "a period of transition must elapse before the reorganization contemplated can reach its full development, and that during this period, one of the main difficulties will be the maintenance of an adequately equipped Pastorate, and that it may well be the case that this temporary difficulty can only be overcome by financial aid from the Church in the West, and that the solution of the problem should be sought along lines consistent with the principle of making the Church centric in all our plans."

In the Telugu S. P. G. Mission "the local governing body of the mission has been reconstituted, and now includes a majority of Indian Christians," whereas until three years ago the body was composed of European missionaries only. In the Tinnevelly S. P. G. Mission "all the Councils have been reorganized and more real power given them. The result has been a far keener interest and better attendance." The Tinnevelly C. M. S. Mission "has perhaps taken the most notable advance step in recent years. Two Indian clergy have been made Vice-chairmen of the Council, a position hitherto reserved for European missionaries. One Vice-chairman has been given superintendence over a large district comprising 4 circles, succeeding to a European missionary. Three Indian members have been appointed on the local missionary conference which manages all departments of work not directly under the Council. The Theological Institution which has hitherto been entirely under the Mission has been now placed under a board, representative of the local Indian and European bodies or other. The Second Grade College has been transferred entirely to the Indian Church Council."

The Wesleyan Missionary Society in South India has since 1914 inaugurated a scheme of devolution of work from the Mission to the Church. The American Madura Mission has given
a new constitution according to which the Council now takes all the responsibility formerly vested in the District Conferences. The American Arcot Mission has transferred its whole village work and church work and its whole evangelistic work to the control of an Indian Church Board with a grant of Rs. 50,000 per annum.

The formation of Diocesan Councils in the Anglican body has done a great deal to throw the emphasis on the church rather than the Mission. A correspondent from Bengal says that important steps have been taken in the Diocese of Calcutta whereby the churches under the C. M. S. and of the S. P. G. will now take their places as regular parts of the Diocesan organization. All clergy together with lay representatives are members of the District Church Councils. All pastoral, educational and missionary work in its own area (except higher education) are directed by the Council. The higher education work falls under the purview of the Diocesan Board of Missions. When the District Church Councils assume the entire responsibility for the work under them, the path is cleared for the euthanasia of the Mission.

All who have the welfare of the Indian Church at heart will thank God for this progress.

To the enquiry whether the war in any way has contributed to the change recently effected, the answer was largely in the negative. And yet in a few cases the war has compelled the societies to take a forward step which otherwise they might not have taken immediately. Opening the position of superintendents to Indians in one church, placing an entire mission in the hands of an Indian clergyman in another, and the creation of a larger number of Indian assistant missionaries in several missions, all these appear to be directly or indirectly traceable to the conditions created by the war.

The Committee is in possession of most interesting replies to the query regarding men with university education. The missions that indicate that they cannot entertain men of this type are very few indeed. All missions require such men in the educational institutions. But several would welcome such men in pastoral and evangelistic departments also. One mission in the North "is sadly in need of such men." The Y.M.C.A, needs them for secretarships; another needs them as pastors of congregations. "Such men will be welcomed enthusiastically if they possess the necessary qualifications as to their character and ability. Several self-supporting congregations would welcome such men as pastors. Within a few years they would, if they
seemed to warrant it, be appointed district superintendents.” A large mission in South India says, “We are making definite efforts to see graduates as pastors of the leading churches.”

To sum up the situation: Most missions are ready to-day to place qualified and experienced men in full charge of districts or sections of districts. The mission organizations are undergoing such rapid changes in most places that the men will be directly responsible to the church authorities only, and not to individual European missionaries. Large opportunities and large responsibilities are ready for suitable men in every part of India. They have, in the words of a correspondent, “large scope not only in routine work, but for initiative also.”

The door is thus wide open; the call is insistent and urgent. May it be given to the young men of the Indian Christian community to respond to these calls, and enter in through these open doors! Your Committee prays that it may be commissioned to ventilate these needs and opportunities to the Indian Christian student community, and seek the co-operation of the Christian Student Movement to place these calls before the student body. The Committee feels most solemnly that these calls constitute an unequivocal challenge to the Christian student body of India. We have every hope that the response in the coming years will, with the blessing of God, be equally hearty and generous. It will be one of the primary functions of this Committee to watch, and stimulate, progress in this respect both on the side of the missions and on the Indian Christian community.

**The Church in India,**

In view of the fact that wide discussion is going on in the Christian community as to the possibility and scope of a National Church in India, the Committee feels it desirable to conclude this report with some reference to the subject.

We believe that the Body of Christ will not be complete till India, with other nations, is free to give full expression to its own character and life in Christ. It is no use hiding from ourselves the fact that this goal is not yet reached.

It is clear that in respect to forms and organization, the Indian Church should have entire freedom to develop on such lines as will conduce to the most natural expression of the spiritual instincts of Indian Christians.

Any hasty attempts to precipitate the realization of a “National” Church, which will have no connection with the church of the historic past is bound to end in disastrous failure.
We cannot wipe out the history of the past. What India has
to do is to study the Revelation of God and the teaching of
history, and to think out her own position in the light which
God has given to her. We therefore plead with missionary
leaders to encourage their Indian fellow-workers to think fearlessly
along these lines. We also plead with Indian Christian leaders
to make a deeper study of what the essentials of the church are,
and what its characteristics and functions. In the words of
Dr. Gore: "No system, no religion, no body can hope to stand,
unless it undergoes the painful intellectual effort of defining
what its principles are." If we all do this faithfully, we shall
be ready in God's own time for the consummation when the
Church of Christ in India will be at once independent and free,
as well as historic and catholic.

A study of the progress and problems of the Church of
Christ in India teaches us the necessity for a deeper consciousness
of the Presence and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.
His is the Temple we are endeavouring to build in this land, and
He is the Guide into all truth. A practical recognition of this
fact by the missions and the churches in dealing with all these
problems is what is most urgently demanded at the present
time.

**HOW IT FEELS.**

There was always an unsatisfied corner in my heart after
every farewell missionary meeting I ever attended at
Nyack. It was not because the messages did not reach me,
nor because it was not my turn to go. The real trouble was
that no one ever told how it felt inside to be a missionary.
I wanted to know what particular sensations were aroused by
the past events and the coming adventures. Now as a matter
of fact, an outgoing missionary has no time to analyze his
emotions. He is too busy getting his shopping done, his
trunks packed, his passport properly stamped and his farewells
said. So I never could have told another what I so much
wanted to hear, but now that the opening events of missionary
life are over, I will tell as best I can, how it does feel to begin
such a career.

The first emotion that grips the outgoing missionary is one
of sorrow. There are the many friends who will be missed, the
kindly neighbours, the familiar surroundings—most of all the
home folks. What tender associations cling around every
familiar face and place so soon lost to view. What recollections
of childhood joys and sorrows and home influences come flocking to mind. And seven years stretch a long way into the future. Such changes can come in that time. The loved ones will be older, or perhaps gone,—some will surely be missing at the next reunion. And this separation brings so much pain. To say good-bye, through your tears, to the dearest ones on earth, that feels like death.

The next feeling that possesses the new apostle baffles description. It is much in the head and more in the stomach and mostly all over. It affects spirit, soul and body, but the constituent elements of this strange phenomenon cannot be analyzed nor its seat diagnosed. Strong men bow before it in terror while weak babes are often immune. It accompanies a certain pitch and toss of the vessel, when the horizon line careens wildly about, and violent agitations take place in internal regions. To dread both eating and fasting, to vainly try to turn your stomach wrong side out, and to be most absolutely, utterly miserable, that feels like sea-sickness.

One morning, after you have spent many days on the briny deep, a little flat speck of land pokes its head out of the water and a few palm trees wave their fronds in the far distance. It is the new homeland! The missionary's heart has rung to such heavy chords in the past days that the harp may not respond with loud music to this new impress. But if there is no great exuberance of emotion, there is a feeling of peace and thanksgiving—thanksgiving for the faithfulness of God in the past, peace because of the quiet assurance of being in His will. The new scenes do not come with a shock. The Guide has led so easily from step to step that the vista has unfolded naturally. It seems like an ordinary occurrence to find yourself in your new home.

There is another emotion or mixture of emotions that baffles description. It comes as you approach your first heathen temple. Outside is a little shrine of a god of healing. Afflicted ones offer sacrifices here and then rub the idol to get from him healing virtue. Evidently many have been here for relief, for the lacquer is well worn off in spots. A bell hangs before the temple to waken the god and there is a large receptacle for the money that wakens the priest. Within, a man makes his offering before the shrine and then lifts his voice in a chant. To see one lost in darkness really worship the devil; to hear a brother, capable of knowing God, but without hope in the world, to hear him praying to wood and stone; and then to realize that by God's grace you know the way and dwell in the Father's house.
—what feelings of awe, praise, sorrow, yearning, this first contact with heathenism gives.

The strings of emotion resound once more to a fortissimo melody before returning to normal vibrations. It is early on Christmas morning. The Southern Cross hangs low over the plains, as if to kiss the earth with its symbol. All through the night the stars have glowed over the sleeping world with a brilliancy unknown in the Occident, just as they twinkled over Bethlehem so many years ago. Under the Christmas sky is a band of men,—swarthy of face, as were those Judean shepherds. They are singing carols. Now Indian music is by no means the harmonic progression of sweet sounds that ours is. Nor do these particular vocalists have very pleasing voices. Add to this an accompaniment of one tone only; held down all through the song while a pair of brown feet pump assiduously on a rickety organ, a native drum that utters a melancholy "punk," and a pair of cymbals played with much vigor, and you have the musical ensemble. They too, the only words you can understand are "Yesu" and "Krest." But you know in your heart of hearts that in all your life you have never heard sweeter music, nor any that so set your heart strings to vibrating. A few months ago most of these singers were ignorant, degraded, sinful heathen in some jungle village. The songs oftenest on their tongues were vile beyond mention. Now with cleansed lips they are able to sing praises of the holy Babe, and they are studying to be able to pass on the good tidings of great joy to others who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. To know these things, and to know that God has given you the privilege of ministering in this needy, needy land; that He has said, "I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens..."—that gives you a feeling of "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

RAYMOND H. SMITH.

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE.

M. B. Fuller.

In these times of danger and delay for mails when we get the home mails for three or four weeks by one steamer it is a matter for profound gratitude to God that He has so cared for our mails that nearly all of it has reached us. I am not sure that any business letters from our Home Board have been lost.
They have taken the wise precaution of sending the monthly advice, giving the detailed statement of all money sent for regular charges and scores of separate amounts sent by donors for special purposes, in duplicate. The duplicates being sent ten days or a fortnight after the originals and all official correspondence also in duplicate. Most of the money has been sent by cable each month, so that there was no danger of loss or delay. And what has been sent by draft or check has been sent in duplicate and none has been lost.

With all the pressure of the war God has remembered us and the work and has provided for it.

There has been great delays in the mails and we have received letters which have been nine weeks on the way. And some money orders have gone down, but the Post Office has issued fresh ones and so far as we know only one amount sent by foreign money order specially failed to reach us. But some of our home friends have been a good deal concerned about money sent and perhaps money sent by checks or drafts may have been lost, and unless duplicates were sent by separate mail if a draft or check was lost the letter containing it was lost and so we never knew that it had been sent. And it may be that money orders have been lost and letters containing the receipts or information that the money order had been sent were lost with the orders, so we could not trace them.

We mention this as an explanation for any persons who have sent money and have not heard from the field that it had been received.

But we mention it also to urge all our friends to send all money through the Home Board, whether for special uses, such as the support of workers or orphans, or building churches, or for personal gifts to missionaries for their own use. We want in this public statement to make it known that under the present Business Manager at New York there is nothing left to be desired in the promptness and carefulness, with which the name and address of every donor of every special sent to New York, is given in each monthly advice, and the object for which the money is given, and every such special is acknowledged from the
field to the donor. But it requires at least four months to receive such an acknowledgment, because of delay in the mails. The money, most of it comes by cable, but the advice comes by mail, so we cannot acknowledge specials till the advice comes, and a score or two cannot all be acknowledged in a week, hence a little delay. But we want our friends to feel perfect confidence that all the money sent through the Board reaches us, as every precaution is taken. We shall need money for the work in every line and especially for the support of Indian workers, and we hope that friends of the work will lay this to heart and to all that God will help them to do. When I receive the year's support for a worker by a check in an unregistered letter I praise God that He brought it safe, but the Post Office, that wonderful friend and servant of missions, has provided a way by which risk is reduced to a minimum by registration of all letters containing money or drafts, and for eight cents a letter can be registered and will be delivered at the mission House door and a receipt for the safe delivery signed by the missionary, so that we urge everyone who sends money, bills or drafts or checks to send them by registered letters. All the advices from New York office are sent in registered letters to us, so we advice our friends to send all money to David Crear, Treasurer, 690 Eighth Avenue N. Y., and it will be sent by first remittance to us.

CHRISTIAN SABBHA AT NARDORA.

Four or five miles over a rough road, from the railway station, on a new railway, at the village of Nardora, on the banks of one of the sacred rivers of India, for the second time in its history, was the Sabbha for Indian Christians held, for three days, beginning on Easter Sunday, March 31st, 1918.

One looking at the wild appearance of the surrounding country said that surely it was the work of God Himself to have sought out a people in such a place. Again, as last year the tents were pitched for meetings, for Indian workers and for Missionaries. Of the latter nine were present, three of them appointed speakers—and that bare elevation at the edge of the village overlooking the river had taken on the appearance of a busy camp. Just outside the village is a neat house in its own compound where the Indian worker and his family live. They are stationed
there to look after the flock of about 20 Christians and also to oversee the work in the surrounding area. On Sunday a.m. a goodly number had arrived from other places, some to stay all through, others to return to their villages sooner, while a number kept coming and going to the end. The key-note was struck when after a service of song, the Missionary asked them all to repeat with him 2 Cor. v. 17, and then taking one after another, having them try to repeat it without a single mistake, thus emphasizing the importance of getting a Scripture verse and its meaning correctly and so embedding it in the memory.

When afterwards St. John 11th Chap. was read and explained, the "grave-clothes" of Lazarus were made to appear anything but attractive as they were compared to the old customs and sins of the heathen life the Christians were leaving or had left, or through ignorance or unwillingness were still clinging to, and also ulterior motives for taking the step was labelled as was fitting. No place was given to the popular idea of any of the Hindu, Buddhist, or Mohammedan creeds or customs, which instead of leading men Godward are but devices of Satan to drag and force men to perdition.

A hymn was sung, the chorus of which is:—

"At the end of this age our Lord Jesus will come,"

"Our Lord Jesus will come"

And sitting on a cloud ho, will own His followers."

Whatever might be said as to the musical talent displayed, the inspiration the words gave was very real.

The next messenger brought Ezekiel xxxvii. 12, 13. "I will open your graves"—"Ye shall know that I am the Lord," etc.

While the text was being read two little girls were in conflict on the floor, one a low caste Hindu drawing in her little garment and screwing herself up tightly, telling the other, a new Christian child, to keep her distance lest she (the Christian) defile the Hindu with her touch, and the speaker was enlarging on the simile of the "dry-bones" and India. Dry-bone—Brahmin, dry-bone—Coonbie,dry-bone—Mahar or any other caste,even dry-bone—guru, each one a dry bone without life. Roman Catholics tell them that it is defiling to break caste and give up its outward signs, and so accommodate them by receiving them caste and all, sins and all! A dry bone at best is a defiling thing and it is not enough that it moves. It needs to hear the word of the Lord and live. Bone touches bone, is clothed with flesh and skin, defilement of caste gone, Christian homes established. Idolatry, lying, adultery and all that "dead in trespasses and
sins” means must go. “Come out of your graves” at the voice of the Spirit of God.

CHORUS:—“We were before defiled
    Christ atonement made
    We repented, Christ died for us
    We died with Him, We live with Him
    Now why should we fear.”

Another speaker read Acts iv. 24 to end of chap. and drew a portrait of the first Christian Church. Their repentance was not merely apparent but real, and each one had the witness of the Spirit. They loved one another. (It is necessary here to say that these brethren did not come with Bible-readings out of books or with mere theories to flash before the new converts. A knowledge of their need was necessary and the utterance of the Spirit as well to press home the truth.) A certain section from which many have been baptized consider themselves rather a superior branch of their caste. These needed to know that they are just sinners and that the meaning of the caste they belonged to is “Quarrelsome”! The early church was a suffering church. Some of them went to jail, but not for quarreling but for Christ. Nor did they appeal to Peter or to James or any other apostle to plead for them. Their prayers were to God and not to man, were for real needs, not phonograph prayers, and they got what they asked because they did not regard iniquity in their hearts. When it was time to begin the evening service a wind-storm came up threatening tents and lamps, and it was interesting to see a missionary here or there standing still waiting for God to work, and He did, so that there was a calm and the meeting proceeded.

A thank-offering had been handed in—for the healing of the son of one of the new Christians, raised from death’s door, they said. The custom in heathendom is to vow to an idol that, if a certain favour is granted, a sum of money will be spent or some other offering made in honour of said idol, and it sometimes takes the shape of treating their caste-fellows to a dinner or drink or something else. In this case it was a basket of sweet-meat to be passed around among the Christians. The true meaning of a thank-offering to the living God was explained and the basket was to be sent through a visiting missionary as a gift to a leper asylum. Surely a new departure, “Line upon line” it has to be and no less.

In the testimony meeting one told of healing, another of joy, another of food enough to eat. One stood up to testify for his brother, when the leader asked if his brother were present and
soon an awkward individual struggled to his feet and tried to raise a foot to show where a wound had been, but suddenly collapsing he said "I can't speak I'm ashamed." Before the meetings ended he had so overcome his shame as to say somewhat coherently what was on his heart. A woman who had been partially healed of a dread disease asked for prayer for perfect healing, etc., etc. The Bible reading which followed showed that salvation means—from the guilt, from the power, from the punishment and from the love of sin, and again not in mere theory but with argument, illustration seeking to illumine and convict of the great need of such a Saviour, for it is hardly strange that a people living in such sin and ignorance for generations should not take all in at once. However as one speaker said we must never give them the impression that they can grow into it, but having accepted pardon through the Atonement made by the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God and being willing to forsake all sin they will then grow in grace.

Does the reader ask why such detail of an Indian Christian convention? and we reply, Dear homeland Christian, it is that you might the better know how to take hold of God with the missionary in a heathen land, and stand with him in faith and prayer for those among whom he lives and labours. That these men and women were being enlightened was very evident from the way they listened, with increasing interest, solemnity and quietness, to the next very practical talk which was on "Hindrances to prayer being answered." At another meeting an object lesson was given when, before wondering eyes, ten little earthen vessels were taken one by one and placed on the table in order, after reading the story of the Rich Young Ruler, the speaker showed that he had not kept the commandments, for his attitude towards the Lord's command showed covetousness, and to illustrate, the tenth little vessel was smashed to pieces, and as one vessel after another got the fatal blow it was evident that no one present could claim the right to heaven by his own works, even when the broken fragments were carefully put in a black bag. Man's way "Do and live" was contrasted with God's way, "Receive life and then do." Ten new whole vessels were put in a white bag and shown to represent the righteousness of the Atoning Christ Who had not broken the law in any respect. He offers his righteousness instead of the sinner's guilt, imputing that righteousness to him and then imparting also, so that the sinner becomes righteous through Him and is enabled to lead a righteous life. It was evident that eyes and ears were intent and one could but believe that some were making eternal decisions.
Once and again was the key-note struck "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; all things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

One of the visitors was an Indian worker, a converted Brahmin. In a meeting where there was much heart-searching he stood up to testify and acknowledged that he used tobacco, had not been able to give up the habit, but expected to when God would give him special strength. There was a mighty struggle in the man's heart for, as he explained privately, he needed his smoke for several feasible reasons. The day was not an easy one for him, nor was the night, as he confessed next day, for he said the balance swayed first to one side and then to the other. "Can I give up the filthy thing? or not?" At last, looking in his Bible he read "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone etc" and as a result he came to his Missionary with his bundle of cigarettes and with a heart relieved, and a happy smile on his face just because he had yielded his will to his Saviour and Lord.

A woman came bringing her neighbour who used a drug of the opium kind, saying "I brought her and her drug, Shall I go to heaven and leave her to go to hell!" A man whose face reminds us of a Christian leader in the home-land (May he have the same spirit of service!) brought a woman to the meetings. He said "She has gone into sin again, I've brought her here for God to set her right."

Many more such incidents might be recorded, but these will serve to inspire to love and prayer, we trust. A child of one of the workers was dedicated, named Robert Raguel.

One of the new Christians, who is being trained as a catechist, was married as a child according to Hindu rites. His little wife came from the Khamgaon school where she is being taught, and they were married as Christians in the presence of all, while the company listened with awed interest as their missionary in pointed and inspired words showed the sacred relationship between husband and wife in God's sight and contrasted that with the same from the heathen standpoint. It was a new way of looking at the subject and many will never forget the forcible words.

The communion was an impressive and hallowed service when about one hundred men and a goodly number of women sat reverently and well-behaved, as all partook of the broken bread and of the cup, emblem of the Body broken and the Blood shed to make atonement for sin. Caste was surely swallowed up as the one cup was passed around and the presence of Him who
said “Do this in remembrance of me” “Till He Come” was very real. The last evening was a prayer and praise meeting in which a deeper tone than the first day was evident and the oft repeated key-note was again struck “If any man be in Christ he is a new creation, etc.”

Then the very last talk—another object lesson. The natural heart filled with sin, shown by pictures. The peacock denoting pride; Hedge-hog, theft; Pig, impurity. Snake, poisonous tongue, etc., in contrast with the cleansed and filled heart, where the lamb, the dove, the eagle and the ox emblems of characteristics of the Holy Spirit dwell. Again the drawing on to make decisions and the doxology, and the Sabbha was finished. God had worked and oh, may His work go on and continue till Jesus comes.

There were several baptisms in the river the last day. Among them a little wife who had refused to be baptized with her husband, but had since been converted in the Khamgaon school, and next day as an aftermath among others a man who before had thought he had done all that was required of him when he gave his three grown sons to be Christians, but now with glad heart also yielded himself.

ONE WHO WAS THERE.

A LITTLE FRUIT AT LAST.

There should be in the heart of every true and faithful God ordained missionary a desire that he should bring forth fruit as the result of his labour, not that it might call forth commendation from his Home Board and from his co-missionaries, but from the Lord Jesus Christ, and that his fruit should be represented in that great throng yonder, which will stand before God having their robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

None, but those labouring in a foreign field know what it costs to work amongst the native people of India. There are those who are called particularly to preach the Gospel; it is a tremendous charge given to the preacher by the Master Himself. When He said “I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain” He said also “Without Me ye can do nothing.” He meant just what He said, and when He sent His messenger forth to preach He expected a fruitful ministry, and His disappointment is great if His servant’s work is barren and fruitless.

There is a strong tendency to allow one’s spiritual life to wane, our interest in our work to slacken, and spirits easily
provoked by the aggravating circumstances which will always be met in a foreign land. Shall we let those circumstances hinder a fruitful service for the Lord Jesus? Is there not Grace fathomless as the sea, to lift us above them and to keep our spirits victorious? There are hundreds and thousands of immortal souls perishing without hope, and light before our eyes for whom Christ died, and for whom we are responsible. How can we sit at ease with multitudes going downward.

When a man turns from his idol and accepts Christ as his Saviour, the heart of the true missionary is filled with joy, and encouragement, and it is a happy day when the “new born” soul openly confesses his faith in Christ by baptism.

It was a joy to us recently when two people were baptised in the river Tapti. One of them was a young intelligent Rajput. He had heard one of our native preachers preaching in a village. He became interested and went daily to the preacher’s house for instruction. A Brahmin offered him a house, rent free, half of his food expenses, and a promise to get him six young Brahmin students to teach English, if he would recant, but he had made his choice, and the Brahmin’s efforts to change it failed. So before the small Christian assembly on the banks of the river he openly confessed his faith. He has entered the Bible Training School for further instruction. We trust this will be fruit which will remain.

The other one baptised was a sister of one of our native Christians. She had been under instruction for a long time. Her heathen nephew accompanied her to the river, and he was keenly interested in the service. It is his parents who hold him back from confessing what he secretly believes. There are others under instruction which may one day give us the joy of welcoming them also into the Kingdom of God.

Mrs. Cutler writes the following from Daryapur —

The new converts’ Mela of 1918 is over. We looked forward to it with mingled feelings though with a firm and big expectancy from our God. We now look back to it, and always will, with hearts filled with deep gratitude for all God’s great goodness and tender loving kindness to us and to the flock entrusted to our care, so abundantly did He answer prayer.

Since, on another page will be found the report of the meetings, etc., we wish only to express our thanks to all who stood with us in faith, sympathy and prayer and to ask also that the work of these days may be followed up by prayer. We
perceive anew, a stirring among the "dry bones" of the Kunbi people and again this year a good number were present at the Mela. The Lord Jesus Christ has yet to receive His own from among them. Pray for them, that hearing His voice they may arise, step out and openly follow Him. Our hearts are burdened anew for them and there are special opportunities being afforded for work among them.

Will not some readers take this request very definitely to heart and stand with us in faith and prayer for Glorious Victory? For Thus Saith The Lord.

"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered, for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Isa. xlix. 25.

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**PRAISE AND PRAYER.**

**CHANDUR.**—Prayer is requested for a faithful and tried Bible-woman who is at present in hospital, afflicted with a serious disease, that God may speedily heal and work great good out of the trial.

**GENERAL.**—Pray for the protection from evil influences of all kinds for the Indian workers and Christians during the hot weather when so many of the missionaries are away from their stations, and that this hot season may be a time of upbuilding in spirit, soul and body, for the tired missionaries.

Pray for those who are studying the language.

**BHUSAWAL.**—Praise to be able to report that those who have entered their "Canaan experience" are delighted with it and are abounding in the work of the Lord, anxious to lead others into the same experience.
PRAISE AND PRAYER

Pray that the Indian people under instruction may soon decide to accept Jesus as their Saviour.

Pray for some who attend our English services that they may be delivered from habits that keep them away from the Lord.

After sending in the material for this month's number of the *India Alliance*, not knowing that it would be the last, our precious Bro. Ramsey passed away at Panchgani, on Monday, April 22nd, (his birthday.) For the last year he had a fight for life, but kept up bravely at his work, and those who saw him little realized the patient courage with which he worked in physical suffering. We shall miss him much in the work and counsels of the mission.—M. B. F.

**The India Alliance.**

This is intended as a monthly message from the Alliance Missionaries to the friends of their work. It will also deal with the general questions of mission work by original or selected articles, and will seek to deepen the interest and stimulate the prayers of all who may read it, by showing the encouragements as well as difficulties of the work.

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