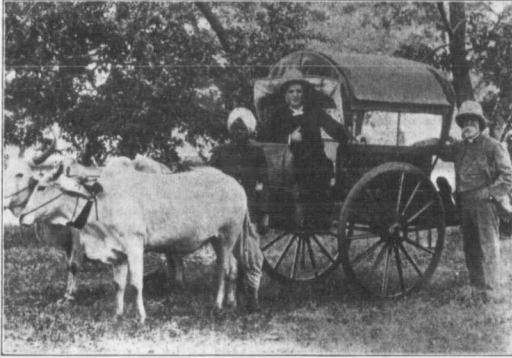


Missions Among the Millions of India

Interesting Interview with Bishop Warne

A SHORT time ago the ERA was favored by a call from Bishop F. W. Warne, Missionary Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India, who has just returned from his field of labor to attend the General Conference at Los Angeles. The Bishop is a Canadian by birth, and spent the early years of his ministry in this country. During the past four years his wife and daughter have been

hers, 78 American missionaries, 300 native preachers, and an entire force of 3,000 native helpers. In the Province of Gujerat we have 20,000 Christians after working eight years. Twelve years ago we sent one missionary into the Meerut district, and he has never been re-inforced by a single man from outside, but as a result of his labors there are to day 23,000 Christians, and 600 class leaders.



BISHOP WARNE, IN HIS CARRIAGE.

residing in Toronto in order to avail themselves of facilities for the daughter's education. It is one of the most serious deprivations of a missionary's life that it is absolutely necessary for his children to go abroad to attend school at perhaps the most interesting period of their lives.

Bishop Warne is a man about fifty years of age, who is intensely optimistic concerning missionary work in India. Since the death of Bishop Parker, and the semi-retirement of Bishop Thornburn the entire responsibility of superintending the missions in India has rested upon his shoulders, so that his work during recent years has been exceedingly heavy. He is, however, looking well, and in good spirits. Regarding the opportunity to obtain some information concerning missionary work in the far East as too good to be lost, Bishop Warne was subjected to a series of questions, to which he replied very heartily. The interview may be of some interest to EPWORTH ERA readers:

What place do you make your headquarters in India?

I live in Calcutta, which has a population of a million and a half, and is the second largest city in the British Empire. Of course, much of my time is spent on the road. During the past four years I have travelled by railroad, steamboat, ox-cart and elephant, 140,000 miles.

What kind of weather do you have in India?

During ten months of the year the heat is very oppressive, the thermometer standing at over 100 in the shade day after day, and seldom getting much cooler at night. On one of my journeys the temperature in the centre of the railway car never got below 110 degrees. At our services I generally have a "punka," or large fan, worked over my head, so as to produce a little breeze. This is also used frequently in the homes of Europeans and Americans who find it difficult to endure the heat, without some such alleviation. The natives do not mind it so much, as they are accustomed to it, and are not encumbered with much clothing.

Has your Church made much progress in India during recent years?

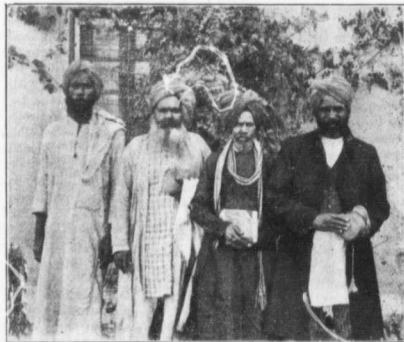
Yes, it has grown at a very satisfactory rate. When I went to India, seventeen years ago, there was a Christian community of 11,000 persons. Now we have 150,000 mem-

Can you give any statistics showing the general advance of all the Christian denominations in India?

During the past decade the increase of all the Christian churches was 28½ per cent., while the evangelical churches, which include the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist denominations, have grown 50 per cent. During the same time Mohammedanism has increased 2 per cent. and Hindooism has decreased over a million. This development of Christianity has taken place in the face of the most determined opposition. Hindooism is as active as ever, and fights against every inch of advance made by the missionaries. The leaders of Hindoo thought, however, acknowledge that their religion is doomed, and that Christianity is destined to be the religion of India. The caste system has been a great barrier to the acceptance of Christianity, but this is weakening, slowly, yet surely, and the prejudice against the missionaries is giving way.

Are the people in India easily accessible to the Gospel?

Oh, yes; there is no trouble at all to reach them, as they come in great numbers to hear the Gospel preached. In almost every village there is a little square where the people gather in the evening to hear a native "story teller," who exhorts them to be faithful to the gods so that they may not be provoked to anger. Our missionaries, without difficulty, secure audiences in these places, and the people listen very respectfully. Occasionally there are those who want to argue



CONVERTED HINDOO PRIESTS, NOW METHODIST PREACHERS.

with the preacher, and questions are frequently asked, but on the whole the natives are glad to hear the truth.

In some places the readiness of the people to accept Christianity is wonderful. At the present time there are thousands who are asking to be baptized. Of course, the rite is not administered until after very careful examination, instruction and probation. At one place I assisted the missionaries in baptizing 1,340 persons in three days, and