

This resulted in the baptism of 2,881 more. The ingathering was thus finished. In six weeks they had baptized 8,691. During the remaining five months of the year they baptized nearly 1,000 more, making a total for 1878 of 9,606.

A thrill of joy and gratitude went through the Baptist churches in America when the tidings came of this Pentecostal baptism. It was a denominational event. The officers and the Executive Committee of the Foreign Mission Society, in a document signed by them all, called upon the Baptist churches of the land to praise God in their sanctuaries on the first Sunday in December, 1878. It was a thanksgiving service widely observed.

And this ingathering continued. The Madiga community was shaken to the foundations; the old gods were forsaken and evil customs put aside. In every case the individual had to give an account of his faith in Christ, but after that the gregarious character of a tribal movement had its effect. Families came; villages came. In 1883 Dr. Clough had a membership of 21,000 in his mission, and the nominal adherents counted from four to five times that number. It was said during those years that it was the largest Baptist Church in the world. By actual count, Dr. Clough, during his long missionary service, superintended the baptism of more than 50,000 persons.

Decisive steps were taken after the ingathering toward organization. From the beginning the movement had gone on oriental lines. Always ready to heed the opinions of his staff of workers, Dr. Clough had learned to see with their eyes. On the basis of the primitive self-government existing in the Indian village, he had built up a rudimentary church government. Now however, he was prepared to make a definite effort to bring this movement into conformity with Baptist conceptions of self-sustaining churches.

There were on the Ongole field twenty-six outstanding centers of Christian activity, each with a pastor and a teacher. In 1880 these centers requested from the

parent church at Ongole recognition as independent Baptist churches.

At the same time twenty-four of the tried and trusted men on the staff of Ongole preachers received ordination to the ministry from a council called for the purpose. This attempt at organization on occidental lines was only partially successful. As Dr. Clough in later years said, "The western forms of Christianity are not necessarily adapted to an Eastern community." He tried to lead the people toward Western organization; at the same time, he left them in their own grooves, respecting their old customs wherever principle was not at stake. His aim was to inspire the social organization, as he found it, with the Christian spirit. Therein lay the cause for the stability of the movement: The foundations were oriental and therefore permanent.

The story of the Ongole Mission during those years became one of the great stories of modern missions. It sounded very strangely like the early centuries of the Christian era. Men marveled at it, and felt their faith refreshed. In more ways than he realized, Dr. Clough worked on the lines of primitive Christianity, going about with his preachers, telling and retelling the story of Jesus, the Christ, with tireless zeal. There were controversies over the Ongole methods all through the years, yet he and the Mission stood unmoved. He had been a pathfinder, hewing a fresh track off the beaten highroad. Other men, consciously or unconsciously, followed his lead. Students of missions believe that he inaugurated a new era in modern foreign missions.

Year after year he stood almost alone at his post, begging for reinforcements from America. After the ingathering, backed by the other missionaries, he asked for four new men to take over from him the four outlying taluks, or countries, of his field. The response was slow. Everywhere on the foreign field, the demands had far outstripped the capacity of the recruiting agencies, as well as the financial resources of the home base. Help