

INDIAN MISSIONARIES AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DEFENDED.

LETTER FROM REV. DR. WILKIE

Editor Dominion Presbyterian:—I see that my old friend and fellow student, the Rev. Dr. Campbell, of Victoria, Br. Columbia, with his usual sense of fair play and desire to give both sides of any story before coming to a conclusion; and perhaps also because of a suspicion that all he heard was not true and that the best way to stop all falsehood was to give it as soon as possible all publicity, has been listening to one of these characters that are doing their best to stir up ill will against the Government in India, and has given what he heard to the Press. Dr. Campbell in giving the statements publicity has done good as it enables those who know the facts to set them right; and in the interests of truth and out of loyalty to the British Government I hope all the papers will do what they can to set forth the truth, when by falsehood so much harm is being done.

Had Dr. Campbell been long in India he would not have given Mr. Kumar such a high character for honesty or intelligence; but that arises only from Dr. Campbell's desire to be fair.

Mr. Kumar says "Government statistics show more come by fifty per cent among native Christians than amongst native Buddhists, which shows that Christianity is not as strong a force as Buddhism to elevate the moral condition of the Indian."

I referred this statement to Sir Harvey Adamson, the head of the Criminal Intelligence department, and the following is his answer: "I have had to confine myself to Burma as there are very few Buddhists elsewhere. Here are the figures:—

Religions.	Year.	Convicts admitted	Ratio p.c. of Convicts to Popu- lation.	Ratio p.c. of Convicts to Popu- lation.
Buddhists	1905	15,319		.16
	1906	15,773	9,184,214	.17
	1907	15,673		.17
Native Christians	1905	78		.059
	1906	67	130,928	.058
	1907	54		.041

It will thus be seen that the ratio of Buddhist convicts to Buddhist population is practically three times as high as the ratio of Native Christian convicts to Native Christian population. The results is due in great measure to the Karens, of whom I told you."

In our conversation Sir Harvey Adamson pointed out that the large number of the Christian convicts in Burma were from the Madrasses servant class that flocked over to Burma; and that the lower rate was owing to the superior morality shown in the Karens since they had become Christians. These Madrasses are nearly all Roman Catholics; whereas the Karens are nearly all Protestants of the American Baptist and other missionary societies.

Mr. Kumar further says: "Christian Missionaries work amongst the lowest, poorest and most ignorant class of Indians. They coax them to their meetings and to become members of the Christian religion, by offering them food, clothing and money, etc."

It is true that the largest number of the Christians in India are from the low castes. The poor have the gospel preached unto them and as in the days of our Master the greater number of the followers are from that class. It is equally true that in the famine the Missionaries did what they could for those in distress and as a result had thrown on their hands many poor starving and

neglected children, whom they fed and clothed and trained and that from these have come many an earnest true Christian.

* * *

But to give facts from our own work. We began work in our new field three years ago and have now a Christian population there of over three hundred baptized souls. Of these we last year baptized eight Brahmins, or nearly one-twelfth of the number we received were of the highest caste. The rest belong to all castes from the highest downwards. Not one of these is to-day being fed or clothed by us and not one of these was induced to become a Christian by any of the inducements given by Mr. Kumar. On the other hand they have all been subjected to persecution and in two cases, we fear, were done to death because they became our brothers. The spirit of tyranny and oppression that he attributes to the British officials is what they have shown in regard to Missionary work and I fear it is because they are no longer able to practise that tyranny as formerly that they cry out and attribute their own spirit to others.

It is true that the Christians do not in a day lose their low moral conceptions, taught them in Hinduism, in a day. I do not wish to drag you down into the low immoral cess pool from which we have to lift them but a few facts seem to be called for, and I beg of you to bear with me in stating some things I would gladly pass by. What is the commonest idol met with in India? The Lizam. But what is it? I dare not describe it. This the children are taught to worship and in ways that I dare not describe. The Tantric worship is all prevailing in India. What is it in a word. Nothing more than obscenity in the name of religion. Buying and selling of women, divorce, all kinds of immoral practices are rampant and laughed at by all classes. A thin veneer of philosophy is adopted by the educated classes to cover up their religious practices, that they dare not openly declare and are at heart ashamed of; but that is of no value to those who are in the midst of it and have in any measure gone down into it in their attempt to save. Our Christians do not get rid of this filth in a day, as many a missionary knows to his sorrow; but a look at any Christian community tells at once what Christ has done for them and everywhere they are recognized as being infinitely higher in character than these around them.

* * *

A word about Government officials. All are not alike and some lose their heads and do foolish things; but after more than a quarter of a century amongst them I think I can speak with some confidence and I have to say that a more clever, honest, conscientious, kind, justice loving and justice giving class of men it will be hard to find anywhere. That they are not understood or loved by those unscrupulous schemers, who say and do what they think will gain their end, without regard to the result, is not surprising. I have never seen or heard, and I am sure it is not true, that every native on horseback on meeting an official must dismount or be beaten. Every day you may here see the absurdity of this statement. Again it is only in the Native States that I have ever seen the umbrella lowered in the presence of officials—and these officials were not British but Native. In British India any one anywhere carries an umbrella without any interference.

Mr. Kumar further says: "No one in the West can understand how much the people of India have to endure at the hands of the representatives, high and low, of the powers that be; and how they are crushed under the burden of taxation to replenish the Government Treasury which pays the salaries of their haughty, arrogant and cruel oppressors."

In the book of Sir John Strachey, G. C.S.I., on "India, its Administration and Progress," I find some facts as follows:—

On page 82: "In 1902 in the whole of British India there were only 864 Civil charges, ordinarily but by no means always held by members of the Covenant-ed Service. . . . Including military officers in Civil employ and others about 1,200 Englishmen are employed in the Civil Government of 232 millions of people and in the partial control of 63 millions more."

"By far the greater and a most important part of the actual administration is in native hands . . . 3,700 persons are holding offices in the superior branches of the Executive and Judicial service, and amongst them there are only about 100 Europeans. . . . Native officers manage by far the greater part of the business connected with the multifarious interests in land. . . . Natives dispose of the greater part of the magisterial work. . . . The duties of the civil courts throughout India, excepting the courts of appeal, are almost entirely entrusted to the native judge. . . .

"The salaries given to natives in posts of importance are very liberal. . . . With possibly the exception of England there is no country in Europe in which judicial and executive officers receive salaries equal to those given in the native Civil Service of India. . . . In Bengal a High Court judge, whether English or native, receives £3,200 a year. The salaries of the native subordinate judges range from £480 to £800. . . . The salaries attached to posts formerly reserved to officers of the Covenanted Civil Service, and now held by natives in the provincial service, vary from £640 to £1,600."

"In France itself the salaries of the higher judicial and executive officers are smaller than those given to the natives in India. For instance, the first President of the Cour de Cassation receives £1,200 a year. . . . The greater majority of the Prefect in France, who hold offices second in importance to hardly any in the country, receive less than native deputy magistrates in the higher grades in Bengal."

On page 89: "There is a large subordinate service. . . . this is essentially a native service, in which practically no Europeans are employed."

* * *

What follows from all of this?

(1) There are only about 1,200 Europeans all told in the Civil Service appointed from home. The greater part of the officers in even the higher grades are natives, and in the subordinate service nearly all are natives.

(2) Kumar says the people "are crushed under the burden of taxation. . . . to pay the salaries of their haughty, arrogant and cruel oppressors." As the salaries are largely those of his own people, then they must be the oppressors, that must be got rid of. Has any conquered people been given a larger share in its administration? India at least never has. Why do not these agitators state these facts?

But a second fact needs to be noticed. Is it a fact that India is being crushed under the burden of taxation?

In the last ten years 151.12 million pounds sterling of gold and silver have been absorbed. The greater part of this has probably gone into jewelry of different kinds. It is one of the most striking facts in connection with the imports of India that such a large sum should have been absorbed, and it at least shows that the country is not becoming poorer when it is able to lay aside such