

etc., and the "maple tree" I hope to tell you soon has taken firm root in Indian soil. Would that I could say we have no present cause for anxiety, but our comfort is that "the Lord reigneth." Sukhanandan and Narayan returned from Allahabad last week and they are in Mhow at present, but there is fear that they may be obliged to leave again, as there is some reason to believe that their friends are endeavouring to get them into their power, and if they should succeed, it will undoubtedly cause trouble to us as to the young men. Sukhanandan and Narayan are in good spirits, however, and though hunted like deer, they are firm in the conviction that they have done right, and that "God is over all." They paid us one visit in Indore, and were obliged to depart through the night, as even in the short distance between here and Mhow they were seen by some of their father's household, and it was a risk to remain even for an hour or two. It is a great step in advance to have secured mission premises, in fact without such we are not certain of remaining here twenty-four hours.

There is a young Maratha man coming here to learn English, and his *reader* is the Bible. We make that our standard text book whatever other may be used. He is very intelligent looking, and exceedingly diligent. He says, "I will come here and read and think in my heart, and then I will learn from you." I trust he may be taught of the Spirit. He asked me one day whether we had any "service," that is, employment to give him. In this country the English language is the road to preferment, and the natives are anxious to secure a knowledge of it.

We visited the city this morning and went to a house which we have only secured of late, but there are fourteen women come together from the various houses in the neighbourhood, and listen most respectfully to the reading of the Word. It is only a short time since we began to go to the house, but one woman out of the number has long been our friend. For two years she has been listening, to Miss Rodger at first, and now to Ueno for eight months past, but she used to come from her own to the house of a neighbour, until I found her out when she was sick, and since then we go directly to her. Two or three months ago she expressed her desire to become a Christian, but I took no notice at the time, as there is often little meaning in such a remark. But time passed on, and the other week she again spoke of it. I prefer to let it work in her mind, as I know the Good Shepherd watches over the stray sheep, and the truth will work to its full fruition. If she is thoroughly in earnest, and I believe it to be so, I am content to wait the Lord's time, always committing her to His leading guidance.

On our way to this particular house we had to pass a very cross cow tied in a narrow passage, and if she had not been most securely fastened, it had fared badly with Ueno and myself. A man seeing that I was afraid to go near, attempted to hold her head, but she rushed furiously towards him, and he quickly retreated. Then a woman came, and to her she submitted quietly, and after we had reached a place of safety I was amused to see the woman put down her head and lovingly kiss the cow, calling her "brother," which in Hindostan means one of a family, as well as more literally a brother. The house is owned by the married sister of our friend, and they were cooking when we went, so they were not very willing we should enter, but rather than have us go away, we were allowed to sit in the entrance, or general living room. It was a very small room, but they spread a cloth on the mud floor, and down we sat. I must tell you that I am becoming quite a Hindoo in this respect, and generally the floor is the cleanest place, most free from vermin at all events. The roof was supported by bamboo poles, and of course the walls and floor were of mud. Two holes, not any better, opened into the cooking room, and when the women and children filed in after us, the little place was filled. A baby was sleeping under a few rags, but sleeping as sweetly as if in a royal nursery; and a man, naked to the waist, occasionally put in an appearance. Boys, who were not allowed to enter, came about the door clamouring for books, and perhaps getting a box on the ear for making a noise, or pushing each other till a quarrel would ensue, and then they would all be driven away. They are just as noisy and mischievous as our own lads, and are ready enough to hoot and yell if I do not give them books. I invited the old lady to visit us at the mission house, and some of the

others replied that "they all would do so," therefore some day I shall have a roomful here. The first day we went to the house I was given the baby to hold for a few moments, and this as I knew, was a great honour done me by the mother. They generally form a circle round us on the floor. To-day I brought some simple medicine to a sick man, and he expressed a great deal of thankfulness; but when I proposed that he should first of all have a warm bath, he said that "the Hindoo people were afraid of using water," which is quite evident to me. They suffer sadly from the cold in this severe weather, for such it is. To-night a good fire would be quite acceptable, and all the evening I have been wearing a heavy shawl. It is much colder than at this time last season. M. MCGREGOR.

Indore, Dec. 12th, 1878.

### CHRISTIAN GIVING.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE ANNUAL MISSIONARY MEETING OF BEVERLY CONGREGATION.

#### (I.) ITS NATURE, OR WHAT IT IS.

It is of the nature of, and forms a part of worship. Worship may be defined as including, reverence for God, trust in Him, love toward Him, and consecration of ourselves and all that we have to Him. This worship may either be private and informal between the individual and God alone, or it may be public and formal before the world, and in this aspect, in all ages of the Church's history it ever included the act of giving, it was so under the old dispensation from its first institution. For ever and above all the gifts and offerings that were prescribed and fixed by the letter of the Levitical law. It was commanded that, "Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty." "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee," Deut. xvi. 16, 17. Thus the giving was essential to right and acceptable worship. Its withholding vitiated and destroyed the whole act, while its faithful discharge was intimately connected with flourishing piety in the individual soul, and the constant and general keeping of the commandment was ever accompanied with the Divine blessing, and was a sure guarantee of national prosperity. As it was instituted, so it existed and continued to be recognized and practised during the chequered history of the Hebrew monarchy. It survived the captivity, and in the days of our Saviour, the casting into the treasury formed part of the temple worship. The dissolution of the old dispensation and the introduction and establishment of the new did not alter the nature and spirit of true worship in the least. Under the old, the tithes and offerings were distinctly prescribed and enumerated, while the free-will offerings were at the option of the individual as his love or gratitude might prompt him. Under the new, there is no bond but that of love or gratitude laid on any one. It is only "give as the Lord hath prospered you," and lay by you on the first day of the week; and, on that day "forget not the assembling of yourselves together." Hence we see that all true worship is inseparably connected with giving; and conversely, that all right giving is of the nature and essence of true worship.

#### (II.) ITS GROUND, OR WHY IT SHOULD BE PRACTISED.

Giving should be practised, first, because of God's Lordship over the world. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." Psalm xxiv. 1. He is the creator, preserver and bountiful benefactor not only of the world, but of all that live and move and have a being therein. He is the great owner; we are the recipients of His bounties. It is His of right to demand the worship and service of every rational intelligence and moral agent, and when that has been rendered to the full such have only done what it is their duty to do, and have not, as a matter of right, the slightest claim to any fruition or enjoyment of God. Such is the natural law.

But in the kingdom of grace, we stand in a different relationship to God. Through the mediation and atonement of Jesus Christ we are admitted to the favour, fellowship and enjoyment of God, in the kingdom of His dear Son. For he has a kingdom in this world though it is not of it; He has given it a constitution, an executive, a code of laws, a purpose to accomplish and a work to do, and to every loyal

subject *his own* or *her own* particular work; and he honours every such subject in making him or her a co-worker together with Himself in the advancement of the interests of His kingdom. He claims ourselves, our service, our substance and our *all*, on the ground that He has delivered us from the hands of the oppressor; that He has ransomed us from destruction, and redeemed us by his own blood; and that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and bound therefore to glorify Him in our bodies, souls and spirits, which are His. On what stronger "possible grounds" could His claim be based?

#### (III.) ITS MOTIVE, OR WHAT SHOULD PROMPT US TO GIVE.

*It should not be* because others give. There is in this world a very great deal of doing things just because others do them, and in contributing to the cause of Christ we believe that there is not only a good deal of giving because others give, but also a measuring the amount of that giving by what certain others have contributed. This should not be so. *It should not be* because we do not like to be odd. There is a sort of multitudinarian instinct about us, that inclines to follow our neighbours and act with the majority, and causes us to shrink from pursuing a course that would isolate us from the general current. *It should not be* because we are asked to give. Some people are ready, without thinking, to respond to every call that is made on them; but to ask a man for money in these times is to put his good nature to the strongest possible test. *It should not be* because we would be commented on and considered niggardly if we did not give. *It should not be* in order to get quit of the collector. *It should not be* because we would like to stand well with the world or the Church. *It should not be* because that we will never miss what we give. We cannot serve God with that which costs us nothing.

*But it should be* from a deep sense, and as a devout acknowledgement that we owe all that we have, are, and hope for, to God through Jesus Christ, to God as the great fountain, through Jesus Christ as the great channel, esteeming it to be a high honour that He has counted us worthy to be the custodians of His treasures, the stewards of His goods and the beneficiaries of His bounties, rejoicing that He has laid no bonds on us, but that He has made our own consciences the judge, and His bounty toward us the measure, of our giving to Him, His love the constraining power, and His gracious declaration that He looks on it all as done to Himself, is its glory and its joy. Giving thus, we lend to Him, and shall He not repay it again.

#### (IV.) THE MODE OR MANNER OF OUR GIVING.

It should be systematic; not fitful and uncertain. Just as in everything else, if we wish to go on smoothly and prosperously, we must go according to some settled and definite plan. It ought to be looked upon as a part of our life work, and as such be constantly before our minds. We should settle with our own consciences as in the sight of God both the schemes to which we give and the amount of our giving, and then adhere to it as in any other matter of business, and if we set about it in this conscientious and business-like manner, there will be no fear of our withholding altogether, because we have so little to give. For in so giving God will not only bless the gift but bless us in the giving and make it to us a blessed thing to give.

This methodical arrangement of the duty will help to make us cheerful in our giving—and God loves a cheerful giver. If we have no well defined plan of giving, we will seldom find ourselves prepared to give, when we are asked, and when asked in these circumstances the conflict between the sense of duty and inability rightly to discharge it, makes the calls of the collector sources of irritation and dislike to us, so that the spirit in which we give if we give at all, is such as to rob us of all the pleasure connected with our giving, deprives us of all the good that accrues to us from right giving, and leaves us no right to expect God's blessing.

Again, we should be *discriminating* in our giving, and to this end it will have to be *intelligent*. All objects are not alike deserving, and there may be honest differences of opinion as to which is the most needful or the most deserving scheme; but in order to a decision or a judgment there must be information on many points, acquaintance with the condition of the world at large, with the state of our own land and the schemes of our own Church in particular. This can