

Concerning our Telugu Mission.

For some time I have wanted to write something to your readers in regard to the question of success (or failure) in our own mission among the Telugus. I am aware that there are many who consider the mission thus far as a comparative failure. As far as statistics go that impression might naturally be received. Statistics, however, in this country are no criterion of the success or failure of missionary work. The tabulated statements of results ought to mean something (and do mean something) in Christian lands. Here in India they give no adequate conception of the real progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. Since coming to India I have been trying to discover the reasons for the marvelous success in some missions and the comparative failure in others. The investigation has thus far led me to believe that our mission, and others similarly situated, may be very seriously misjudged. There are a number among our Baptist people who have in a measure lost faith in the success of this enterprise. I do not wonder at this, for there really seems to be very little return in proportion to the expenditure. Quite possibly there are others who are loyal to our foreign mission to speak deprecatingly of the work, but who have, nevertheless, grave doubts and fears in their hearts. They are perhaps wondering if there is not something radically wrong with the management of the mission, either on the part of the missionaries on the field, or on the part of the Board at home. If there are such let me give them a few facts which I have gained—facts which will, I am sure, cause some fainting hearts to like courage.

Let in a country like India (so conservative and caste-bound) it takes Christianity a long time to get a foothold. The history of most Indian missions will, I think, bear me out in this assertion. Even the American Baptist mission, which has met with such wonderful success during the last ten or twelve years, was for many years an apparent failure. The work on our fields, especially at Bobbili and Bimilipatam, is a comparatively recent thing. The work in the Madras field has been preached for many years. Before we came the London Mission carried on work here for a long time. This will probably account for the larger gathering on this field than upon the other two fields.

2nd. We must remember that missionary work in different parts of India is widely different in character. This, I believe, is the chief reason why so much more success (statistically considered) has been met with in some missions than in others. Even the same society will have much greater success in some parts of India than in others; take as an illustration the London Mission. That society has had work for half a century (more or less) in various parts of the country. At Chittoor, Vizianagram and Vengalpetam they labored many years with very little success; while their work further south—in the Cuddapah district for example—has been a great success. On those fields they are now gathering hundreds of converts.

What is the reason for this apparent failure in one section of the country, and great success in another? you will ask. Perhaps I can throw some light upon the question. It seems to me that the old reason is entirely due to the different construction of society. The people of India may be divided for convenience into two classes: (a) Caste people; (b) Non-caste people. There are those who are either outcasts, or belong to such low caste that they are virtually non-caste people. In the case of those who belong to the higher castes, caste is everything. They are tightly bound by its chains. To most of them caste is dearer than life. In fact, they think that everything worth having here or hereafter is to be found by conformity to caste rules. These caste people are entrenched in a citadel the strength of whose walls make a very Gibraltar. This is the impregnable fortress within which India's millions are held, and which Christians find it difficult to enter. It is a long siege, and the first generation or two of missionaries must do the "storming the fort." It will be for others who come after to scale the walls and enter the captured citadel.

It is hard to imagine, fully to realize the chains that bind a caste man. He who accepts Christianity and breaks away from his caste must have more faith, and backbone, than is generally found among our Christian people of Canada. As soon as he shows any inclination to listen to the gospel he is sharply watched and rebuked. When finally he accepts Christianity it is literally a "forsaking all and following Christ." He must hate father, mother, brother, sister, wife and children in order to follow Jesus. The hatred, intrigue, great moblike wrath of his incensed relatives and caste people is turned upon him like a flood. Even after he has lost faith in his old religion and become convinced of the truth of Christianity he trembles as he shrinks from the awful ordeal that awaits him. Henceforth he is disgraced, disowned, disinherited—an object of disgust to those to whom he was formerly bound by the closest ties of friendship. His own wife and children, his own father and mother, spurn him as they would a leper. To face such a sacrifice is more than the weak faith of most of them can stand; and who can wonder? Like the "rich young man" they turn sorrowfully away from Him in whom they once believed, and in whom (they surely know) is found their only hope. Since coming to India I have seen a number who seemed just on the threshold of the kingdom, but appeared utterly powerless to enter—it costs too much they think. In the case of two mouth-teachers whom I have seen, I have seen the tears in their eyes and have felt that they were but a step from Jesus. But they are tightly held within the relentless grasp of caste, and whether they will ever come or not God only knows. Such cases make one's heart ache. Now, a word in regard to the thousands of non-caste people. Their case is very different. Most of them are held very loosely indeed by caste. To accept of Christianity is even from a worldly standpoint a gain and not a loss. They have nothing to give up and everything to gain by becoming Christians. More than that, they are more simple minded—not so full of prejudice, pride

and conceit as the higher classes. Like the "common people" of our Saviour's time they are far more ready to receive the truth.

These non-caste people like sheep fall in a flock. Wherever they are, many of them living in the same community it only requires a few leading men to start and all the others follow. If the father comes, his family follow. If the head man of a village makes the start others follow. When any man begins to come the revival sweeps like a flood among the villages. It becomes a social rather than an individual movement. The question of personal conversion is, of course, kept prominent, but it is not at all what it is in Christian lands. Repentance and intelligent knowledge of the truth, and an intelligent faith in Christ, is not found in the case of thousands who present themselves for baptism. I dare not say that they have not saving faith, or that they are not fit subjects for baptism, but certainly they seldom have what we call a "religious experience." They hear the story of Jesus, believe it, and express their desire to become followers of Jesus. In most cases, I fancy, they come not because they have repented of their sins (for they have little conviction of sin), but because others are coming, and because they believe it to be the best thing to do. These non-caste people are very much more numerous in some parts of India than in others. Wherever they are very numerous the mission work spreads chiefly among them. This is often no more the case that Christianity is called by high caste people "the Mala religion" (Mala is a class of outcasts among the Mala and Madiga of the work of the mission so extensively that Christianity is considered to be a religion chiefly for these classes. Such has been the history of the great gatherings in various parts of India. This is true of the Malabar, London Mission, and Baptist societies. The work has been confined chiefly to the Mala and Madiga. In such parts of the country the citadel of Hinduism—caste—has scarcely been touched. Of course the gospel is preached to all classes, but the converts have come almost entirely from the Mala and Madiga or other non-caste people. In our part of the country these people are not nearly so numerous and are very widely scattered. They are not "massed together" as they are elsewhere. Hence there is not the same opportunity for the spread of Christianity among them. We neither despise these lower classes nor the work among them, but our work lies chiefly among the higher classes, as we have not the other class in such numbers to work with. The work in missions like ours is mainly local, but it is work that is telling directly upon the "stronghold of Hinduism," viz., caste. Not from choice but of necessity, we are thrown chiefly among the caste people. Those whose work lies so exclusively among the outcasts are gathering a glorious harvest of souls in which we rejoice. But they have not yet touched the citadel of Hinduism. That work is yet before them, and it is, and has been, before us. Let us look for a moment at our three Baptist missions among the Telugus. The American mission, in so far as it has had great gatherings, has drawn its converts almost exclusively from among the low caste people. Likewise the work in the Canadian mission has been chiefly among the same class of people, viz., Mala and Madiga. In that mission the bulk of the converts have been gathered on the southern part of the field bordering upon the American mission. As we come farther north in the Canadian field the work becomes more like our own. Bro. Craig writes us from Akudu that he has only 20 caste men on his field. He has 1,637 Christians, and in that number (two only are from the caste people. I presume the same would be largely true of the Canadian field. Dr. Rogers of the American mission, tells me that he thinks probably 99 out of every 100 of the converts on their field are from the non-caste people. Bro. Archibald has given me the statistics for this field, which are as follows: There are about 90 Christians on this field, and they have come from the following castes: Rajah, Komati, Kernaam, Teliga, Yella, Weaver, Kamsali, Calinga, Fisherman, Barber, Karsari, Capu, Ordra. There are also converts from the lower castes as follows: Mala and Hellia. There are also Savaras and some from mixed castes. There are no Brahmin converts on this field, but there are two at Bimilipatam. This you will see we have gathered converts from almost all castes, from the highest to the lowest. As far as the work has advanced, it has advanced into the very heart of the enemy's territory. Don't let us be discouraged. The victory is sure, because the Lord of Hosts is with us. Let us all arise to our supreme duty in regard to the Telugus, and determine that we will, by God's help, take the nation for Christ. There is nothing wrong with the mission except that we want more men, more money and more power from above. Let no faint-hearted soul murmur "failure" and beat a retreat, but with one voice let us shout "victory!" and press into the enemy's stronghold to release those whom Satan's bond has bound, for these many years.

W. V. HOODS.

Counseling the Cost.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUTLER.

Two men propose to build residences for themselves. One selects an inferior workman and inferior material; and when the shabby and flimsy structure is finished he boasts of his good bargain. In a few years the rickety affair is tumbling about his head. The other man selects a skillful builder (whose time and brains are valuable) and excellent material, and demands thorough work. He pays a good price for a good home.

"Wisdom is justified of her child," and his children after him justify his wisdom in rearing for them a solid and durable home. It was in reference to such cases that the Divine Teacher propounded the question, "Which of you intending to build a tower steepleth not down first, and counteth the cost?" Human life is character-building; for remember that character means exactly what we are, while reputation is only what other people think we are. Every man builds his own character; and perhaps the reader of this article may be honestly anxious to build after the Bible plan. Fix one fact in your mind, however, and that is—the better and stronger your character, the more will you pay for it. All the best things are costly. Jesus Christ laid down His own life to redeem you from hell. "Free grace" for you meant Calvary for hell. A strong, godly character is not to be cultivated among the Mala and Madiga at the price of eminent spiritual power to a complete consecration to his Master, he said: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Henry Martyn, at his price, flung away all hope of literary distinction, and exiled himself to a pioneer mission of hardships in Persia. Glorious Livingstone did the same thing in Africa. All self-knowledge also must be bought dearly. King David paid for his by disgrace and the death of a darling son almost as dear as his own life. Peter paid for his by his bitter agony of shame in Pilate's courtyard. It was a great price for a great prize. Every free discovery that you make of your own weaknesses will be worth all that it costs you.

As God reckons jewels, there is no gem that shines with more brilliancy than the tear of true penitence; yet God only knoweth what heart-pressure and what crushing of wilful pride may have been necessary to force that tear to the cheek of a sinner's prayer. I have sometimes met with a person who possessed peculiarly lovable traits of gentleness, self-abnegation, and meek bravery under sharp trials. I envied such a beautiful character. Ah, I envied not going to praise all these; I am not going to blame the man who has sometimes met with a person who possessed peculiarly lovable traits of gentleness, self-abnegation, and meek bravery under sharp trials. I envied such a beautiful character. Ah, I envied not going to praise all these; I am not going to blame the man who has sometimes met with a person who possessed peculiarly lovable traits of gentleness, self-abnegation, and meek bravery under sharp trials. I envied such a beautiful character. 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