

Service, the priest always calls upon all unbaptized and excommunicated persons to leave the church. Sometimes a group of cultivators come forward to ask the prayers of the congregation before they sow their fields. They kneel at the chancel step, at the time of offertory, and special prayer is made for them.

At the harvest festival nearly all offerings are in kind. The choir and clergy enter singing a processional hymn, followed by the congregation—the women and children bearing baskets of rice-grain, men sometimes with a bangy-load of rice, poorer folks bringing theirs in a fold of their garments; some bring sheaves. Readers are posted in the chancel to direct people where to lay their different offerings, and the long procession continues to flow and recede for some while, as hymns are being sung.

In Ranchi, and several other places in the district, a beautiful custom prevails on Easter morning. Before dawn the people, preceded by school children with torches, go in procession to the cemetery, and sing hymns of the Resurrection amongst the graves, whilst people are enabled to visit the resting places of their several dead, and to draw comfort from thoughts of the great final Resurrection, of which Christ is the first fruits.

Voluntary lay help is not yet a strong feature of Church life. There is a Church Committee, or panchayat, to assist each pastor and reader; but as yet their functions are not very clearly defined, nor are they active. In each village, from early days of the Mission, the leading layman of the place has been styled a Prachin or Elder. These men have sometimes considerable influence, and in many cases are of great use to the clergy.

No great progress can ever be made by an illiterate people, and it must be remembered that, on the whole, the people of Chhota Nagpur are illiterate. The aboriginal tongues were never written, so that missionaries have had to transliterate them into English or Hindi letters.

In spite of schools, very few of our Christians cultivate a habit of reading. Even Hindi books for their perusal are very few. Of course they have the Bible. Such efforts at literary work as missionaries have been able to make have necessarily been for religious instructions.

The Bishop has translated many of Hymns Ancient and Modern, St Paul's Lower Grade Manual of Christian Doctrine, the Didache, and is bringing out the Epistle of Ignatius. A short manual on the Apostles' Creed has been brought out, and a picture-book for instructing the unlearned. The Rev. A. Logsdail has written some tracts, and a very useful book of Family Prayers. The Rev. D. Singh has

brought out a larger book on the Apostles' Creed than the one above mentioned, for readers and advanced classes. All these are what we may call Diocesan productions in Hindi. We have also Hindi Responsories containing extracts from the Prayer-book and selected Psalms, a form of Children's Service, and a Hindi version of the Bishop of Corea's Manual "Lumen."

A monthly Hindi paper is also published, the editor being one of the missionaries. This at present does not pay its way, but fulfils a useful work.

Parts of the Book of Common Prayer have been printed in Mundari, and the German Mission has laid us under a debt of gratitude for their production of a Mundari New Testament.

All outward manifestations of Church life are confined to public worship. There are no such things as guilds, bands of hope, concerts, teas, and so forth, amidst a simple and scattered agricultural community like this.

However there is a sort of counterpart to the concert, in the singing of "bhajans." This deserves some fuller notice. The "bhajan" is a native song sung to an entirely native tune and method, accompanied often by tom-toms, and sometimes stringed instruments. Some of the tunes used here are from up-country, but most, I believe, are indigenous.

The heathen song-tunes, used at dances, and for marriages and various agricultural seasons, have been adopted by our local poets, and set to sacred words, often paraphrases of Bible-texts, in Mundari, or the village dialect of Hindi. The people are very fond of gathering together of an evening and singing these songs far into the night. They have been of no small use in familiarising people with common truths of religion, and have also been found to influence the heathen. A collection of these "bhajans" is now being made by a committee consisting of the Pastor of Maranghada and two or three readers and masters, one of whom enjoys considerable local fame as a composer of bhajans, both tunes and words. At one time there was such a furore for this singing that the anxiety of missionaries was aroused as to its probable effects. It is unfortunate that all the bhajans, with very few exceptions, are sacred, for they are used on all sorts of occasions, such as marriage feasts, etc.

One of the great defects in the character of native Christians is a reluctance to give generously. One of themselves, the late Rev. Jakriya Kachhap, wrote as follows of his people: "They do not like to bear any burden themselves, but prefer to remain in dependence on others, and not do anything for themselves. This is the character of the people of this country. They do not like to give anything