

sions of the Free Church of Scotland in India. My duties kept me twelve months in the country, and frequently led me to spend days in villages away from roads or railways. I had previously read what ancient religious books of India could be found in translations, and such expositors of Indian religions as Professor H. H. Wilson, Dr. Max Müller, Professor Monier Williams (perhaps the safest guide), Sir W. W. Hunter, and others. I went to India with the results of this reading in my memory, ready to apply the instruction received, expecting to see what I had heard or read. What was apparent, on the contrary, was a wonderful religious confusion of worships in what was called *Hinduism*, a heterogeneous, almost fortuitous conglomeration of religions, and the universal prevalence of worships, continually fed by new shoots from a living, germinating polytheism, quite distinct from that of the deities of the Hindu pantheon. Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Casarea, to say nothing of the Prophet Isaiah, seemed to me to give the descriptions of eye-witnesses as compared with most of the above-mentioned authorities. The result was bewilderment, and the mental conclusion was that one Brahman doctrine appeared to be true—the doctrine of *Maya* or Illusion, and that I had fallen a victim to it. Soon, however, I got hold of men who were seriously striving to see the natives of India as they are, and not as the Brahmins describe them, members of the Archaeological Survey of India, contributors to the *Indian Antiquary* and publications of a like kind in Calcutta and Madras; above all, minute descriptions of the habits of the people of the various provinces, such as may be found in the volumes of the *Bombay Gazetteer*, or generalizations from long personal observations, such as those of Sir A. Lyall in his "Oriental Studies," and the invaluable ms. folios of Mr. Buchanan-Hamilton in the India Office. They all told a different tale from my previous authorities. Let me, therefore, in this paper give the results of personal observations rather than of reading.

If we take the census of 1881 as a basis, the non-Christian population of India may be roughly divided into Hindus, aboriginal tribes, Mohammedans, and certain miscellaneous sects, including Jains, Buddhists, Parsees, Sikhs, etc. The miscellaneous group includes about six millions of people, the Mohammedans about fifty millions, while the Hindus and aboriginal tribes amount to about two hundred and six millions. Of these two hundred and six millions probably over twenty millions have no relation to Hinduism at all, and belong to the Santals, Gonds, Khasis, and to the Hill tribes of portions of Bengal. Among the remaining one hundred and eighty-six millions, who may be called Hindus, there are multitudes variously classed under the name of out-caste or depressed castes. These may be estimated at from forty to sixty millions, leaving about one hundred and thirty millions of caste Hindus. Caste Hinduism rests on a basis of depressed castes entirely outside of the Brahmanic division, and these are again surrounded by a fringe of aboriginal tribes. This has an important bearing upon Christian mission work. Those missions which have hitherto