

numerous, extending over the whole area of the palace grounds, but their entrance had been blocked up because on one occasion two men had been lost there, even their bodies not being found.

On the roof of the Jahaz Mahal we took our lunch, while we were engaged with which, a band of pilgrims, or sight seers, or perhaps both, climbed up beside us. They had come from a village some 150 miles, and had never before heard the story of Jesus, and it seemed a strange coincidence that here in the midst of this distant ruined city on the roof of a palace whose halls had for years re-echoed to the revelry and licentious songs of the followers of the false Prophet, they should for the first time hear from our lips the message of the Gospel.

#### THE DOOM OF HINDUISM.

Many other incidents of a like nature marked the day; on our return journey we stopped at the hut of a fakir (holy man), a rude shed built over a perennial spring near the edge of a precipice about one hundred and fifty feet deep; the old man seemed in some place or other to have once heard the truth, and to realize in his own wild way that Hinduism was nearing its end, that in India also the Nazarene must conquer.

#### DESCENDING THE HILLS.

Next morning we started our descent of the Ghats or range of mountains which separates the plains of the Nerbudas from the plateau of Central India. It was a beautiful though a tedious drive, in and out among the hills, now on the edge of a precipice, now on some steep slope, and again toiling up some rocky hill side. Late in the afternoon we arrived at Damdhod, a large village on the main road to Bombay.

Nothing particular marked the day we spent here except a few of the minor accidents of camp life in India; we learned here for instance the disadvantages of sickness in the district when your tents and furniture are two or three hours behind you on the road.

Our next village was Maheshwar, some eight or ten miles further on, and the journey though short was very rough, leading in one place over a stream, the approach to and the bed of which were a succession of large stones and boulders.

We noticed a considerable difference in both soil and growth between the country above and below the Ghats; here the land seemed dryer and there was less opium and more cereals than up above, but the grain seemed to have ripened much quicker in the greater heat below.

#### A FIELD WAITING FOR THE REAPERS.

Maheshwar has always been a point of interest to me since my coming to Mhow; it is the centre of a large district cut off from the rest of the field by the Ghats and I have looked upon it as a probable out-station. It was to open up work here that we also received an invitation from a native gentleman who promised certain pecuniary aid. It is a large village, almost a city, of near ten thousand inhabitants, and was once the home of Ahili Bai, a queen of the Holkar dynasty who once ruled the Indore State. Her fort is still standing and is in as perfect preservation as any fort I have seen in India. The palace is a poor structure and hardly worthy the reputation of the great Queen, but the temple on the river side is I think the prettiest building in this part of India, though the Ameen of the village put it rather strongly to me when he said "it is just like Venice."

This same temple was almost a source of trouble to us, for being very much venerated by the Hindoos, they have very particular ideas as to which parts of it should or should not be defiled by shoe leather. and as the soldiers who

were on guard in the temple do not see a white man very often, they were fain to make known their official importance by as frequent a setting forth of the rules as possible. In spite of these and other difficulties however the temple is well worthy of a visit, if only to see the many stairways leading from the river up to the broad platform and thence in a grand flight of steps up to a noble doorway and the hidden beauties beyond.

#### "THE HEATHEN IN HIS BLINDNESS."

It was sad however to see the great crowds of people that came to worship at the shrine, and to watch their blind faith in the mere act of bowing before the white marble image of Mahadev. It did not require very close observation to see how everything was manipulated by, and in the interests of the few Brahmin priests who make their living off the temple; every act of temple service from the placing of the colored mark on the forehead to the receiving of the offerings inside the temple seemed to be regulated by the amount of money paid in each case; surely the father of lies is an ungrateful master.

We spent three days in Maheshwar, preaching in the bazaars and Mohallas with varied success. The Ameen appeared very friendly, calling on us with his officials at our camp; he spoke of being anxious for us to open schools and medical work, but I fear a good deal of his interest was on the surface. When my brother and I returned his call on the following day, word was sent down to us at the door to take our boots off, to which we returned the prompt answer that we would not take our boots off for the Maharaja, let alone the Ameen of one of his villages, which reply considerably checked the lofty manner his lordship at first assumed, and we had a pleasant interview.

I have no doubt Maheshwar would make a grand centre for work, though it is rather far away to be worked as an out-station from Mhow, it would in itself form one of many excellent fields which are waiting for missionaries from home. The Ameen promised a house and as I said before, another man has promised help if we will but begin work there. Moreover there is a harvest waiting for any one who will go in and labor there. There is a class of poor people just outside the town who have shown very much interest in the Word: the men were unfortunately away at work during our stay in Maheshwar, but just as we were on the point of leaving and had all our things packed, one of them, a young man, came to see me. He had heard of us while at work in a distant village and made all haste to come and meet us; he seemed already to have learned considerable about the Truth and expressed a desire to become one of us.

I was sorry to depart without at least leaving some one to lead him and the others into further light, but what could I do? This is just one of many such fields which will remain with their ripened grain ready to fall until more men from home come out to help us.

Leaving Maheshwar we proceeded by easy stages back to Mhow, stopping on our way to hold another meeting at Manpur. All the way along our route the same great fact was impressed upon us; village after village we passed containing some hundreds, and some thousands of souls as yet totally ignorant of the way of life. In the whole of my travels I have not seen a field that is more needy or more poorly supplied with workers than this part of India. I only trust that these brief sketches of our tour in the district may be instrumental in creating an interest in the hearts of some of our young men at home in the needy fields of Central India.