

One of the World's Greatest Empires

IN his valuable little book, "The Christian Conquest of India," Bishop Thoburn gives the following interesting information about India:

India is one of the world's greatest empires. Its area embraces 1,766,597 square miles. It extends from east to west about 2,500 miles, and from north to south nearly 2,000 miles. Its revenues are on a large scale, and in times of stress have proved as elastic as the average revenues of European nations under similar conditions. Its army is large and always prepared for possible emergencies. If threatened by invasion, the Indian Government could meet the invaders on the frontier with an army of 370,000 men. Its vast provinces are threaded with railway lines, and modern improvements of every kind keep pace with the general progress of the country.

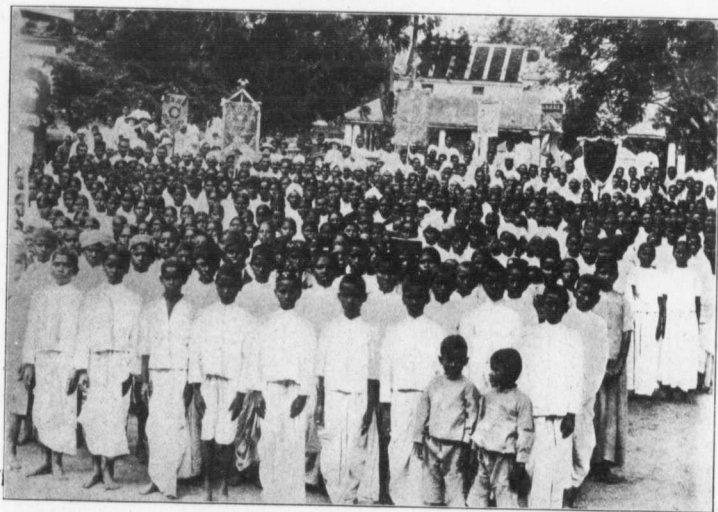
The geographical position of India can be seen by a glance

loquats, lemons and limes of many kinds—all claim a place in the list of Indian fruits.

The forest products of India include almost everything which grows in the tropical world. Immense elms capable of seating six hundred persons in their shade, and valuable trees of different kinds are found throughout the Empire. A forest reserve of sixty-seven million acres is carefully protected by the Indian Government.

The Indian Banyan tree has become noted throughout the world. Some of these trees have been well cared for, and in course of a century or more they have spread in all directions until a single tree is made to resemble a small forest.

India has some extensive deserts in the north-east, some arid wastes and malarious swamps in other regions, but taken as a whole it is a land of great fertility. India fed and cared for her own vast population and sent to foreign countries in



A Christian Endeavor Rally in India

at the map of Asia. On the north it seems to nestle "under the roof of the world," the name sometimes given to the vast region in Central Asia, which is buttressed by the Himalyas, and by other ranges on the north, east and west. On the west its shores are washed by the waters of the Arabian Sea, and on the east it is bounded by the Chinese Empire, Annam and Siam.

In Europe and America the impression prevails very generally that the people of India subsist almost wholly on rice, but this is a great mistake. Rice is a staple food for only one-third of the population. Rice is produced in very large quantities, and is a common article of diet along the sea shore and river bottoms, especially in Burma, but the greater part of India consists of uplands, which are not adapted to the production of rice. Taking the Empire of India as a whole, the most common article of diet will be found to consist of the different kinds of millet, and of the grains belonging to the pea family.

India is justly famed for her variety of tropical fruits. The mango is to the people of India what the apple is to the American people. It grows everywhere, and often large mango trees line both sides of a public road, and being free to the poor become a great boon during the fruitage season. The banana, of many varieties, is also found in all parts of the land, and its fruit is usually cheap. Oranges of fine quality, guavas of many varieties, pineapples, custard apples,

1903 04, 28 million dollars worth of tea, 38 millions of wheat and flour, 63 million of rice, 115 of raw and manufactured cotton, besides quantities of other products.

The first railroad in India was completed in 1853, connecting Bombay and Thana, a distance of three miles. During the mutiny of 1857-8 the Government was badly crippled by a lack of facilities for transporting troops. After this disastrous experience Lord Dalhousie influenced the Government to connect by rail the large cities and military stations. Now there are about 30,000 miles of railway.

In a region so large as India it could not be expected that the climate would be uniform, and yet it presents certain features which may be spoken of as peculiarly Indian. Throughout nearly the whole empire the year may be divided into three sections: cold, hot and wet.

The cold season begins in India about the first of October, and from this on to March the weather is delightful, with sky almost cloudless. People can make their arrangements months in advance without fear of having them disturbed by bad weather. In most parts frost is unknown. Houses are never built with chimneys, and fire is rarely introduced into any dwelling. In southern India the thermometer rarely falls below sixty-five degrees.

About the middle of March it gets decidedly warm, and by the month of April the hot wind has come, and with the exception of fruit and forest trees vegetation has wholly disap-