WRITINGS OF AMY CARMICHAEL

by Amy Carmichael

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Amy Carmichael, compiled for study and devotional reading.

177 Chapters

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1.01.00. Book 1: Figures of the True (1956)

Figures of the True by Carmichael, Amy DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP A DOHNAVUR BOOK

LONDON

S. P. C. K.

1956 TO THE GREAT COMPANY OF THE ILL, THE TROUBLED, THE BEWILDERED

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NOTE

"I SEND these photographs in the hope that they may be a pleasure," it was so Dr. Hans aus der Funte wrote, as he sent in his kindness a packet of photographs. And the one to whom he sent them wanted to give them that very hour to everyone who is in any sort of trouble, and who has eyes to see and a heart to understand, and who knows Him who ponders the voice of our humble desires. For surely they are not only lovely pictures of fragments of a lovely creation, they are patterns of things we all know if we have ever really lived: they are Figures of the True.

Perhaps, for one never knows where a book may wander, this little book may discover one who does not know his Comfort. It is written, "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." The Lord turns and looks upon you. There is no hardness in that look, there is no hardness in the words that have led myriads into peace, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There is no other way of rest. All other ways break down. But why seek another way? Fear not, whatever your extremity be; He will not let the water-flood overflow you, neither will He let the deep swallow you up, nor the pit shut her mouth upon you. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper. And if the very word "come" be perplexing, let old, old

words explain it: "Believe and thou comest; love and thou art drawn. Think it not a rough and uneasy violence: it is sweet, alluring; the sweetness draws thee. Is not a hungry sheep drawn, when the grass is shewn it? It is not, I ween, driven on in body, but is bound tight by longing. So do thou too come to Christ. Do not conceive of long journeyings. When thou believest, then thou comest. For to Him who is everywhere, men come by loving, not by travelling." Is not this a good word for one who cannot "travel" far?

A. C.

Dohnavur Fellowship,

Dohnavur, Tinnevelly District,

S. India.

Great Son of Man who walked our dust, Thy love will not forget The power the temporal has to thrust, And overset.

O let Thy touch make things we see Transparent to our eyes, That secrets of Eternity We may surprise. And let the things which are not seen Shine like the stars at night, Till all the space that lies between Be filled with light.

1.01.01 Book 1: Chapter 1

1

You were like a leafy bush, and many little things came to you for shelter. You were not great or important, but you could help those little things. And it was the joy of your life to help them.

Now you cannot do anything at all. Some desolation, illness, poverty, or something that you cannot talk about, has overwhelmed you, and all your green leaves have gone. So you cannot shelter even the least little bird; you are like this bush with its bare twigs, no use to anyone-that is what you think.

.But look again at this bare bush. Look at the delicate tracery of lines on the snow. The sun is shining behind the bush, and so every little twig is helping to make something that is very beautiful. Perhaps other eyes, that you do not see, are looking on it too, wondering at what can be made of sun and snow and poor bare twigs. And the Spring will come again, for after Winter there is always Spring. When will the Spring come? When will your bush be green with leaves again? When will the little birds you love come back to you? I do not know. Only I know that Sun and Snow are working together for good; and the day will come when the very memory of helplessness to help, and bareness, and poverty and loneliness will pass as a dream of the night; and all that seemed lost will be restored.

Now, in the multitude of the sorrows that you have in your heart, let these comforts refresh your soul. They will not fail you for He will not fail you who is the God of the Sun and of the Snow.

Chapter 3

1.01.01. Book 9: 1. About the Book

CHAPTER I

About the Book "We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth."

St. Paul, Asia and Europe.

"There is too little desire to know what is the actual state of mission work in India, and a regard to the showy and attractive rather than to the solid and practical. I will try, however, to avoid being carried away by the tide, and to set myself the task of giving as plain and unvarnished a statement as possible of what is actually being done or not done in the great field of our foreign labour."

Bishop French, India and Arabia.

THREE friends sat Native fashion on the floor of an Indian verandah. Two of the three had come out to India for a few months to see the fight as it is. And they saw it. They now proposed that the third should gather some letters written from the hot heart of things, and make them into a book, to the intent that others should see exactly what they had seen. The third was not sure. The world has many books. Does it want another, and especially another of the kind this one would be? Brain and time are needed for all that writing a book means. The third has not much of either. But the two undertook to do all the most burdensome part of the business. "Give us the letters, we will make the book," and they urged reasons which ended in—this.

This, the book, has tried to tell the Truth. That is all it has to say about itself. The quotations which head the chapters, and which are meant to be read, not skipped, are more worthful than anything else in it. They are chosen from the writings of missionaries, who saw the Truth and who told it. The story covers about two years. We had come from the eastern side of this South Indian district, to work for awhile in the south of the South, the farthest southern outpost of the C.M.S. in India. Chapter II. plunges into the middle of the beginning. The Band Sisters are the members of a small Women’s Itinerating Band; the girls mentioned by translated names are the young convert-girls who are with us; the Iyer is Rev. T. Walker; the Ammal is Mrs. Walker; the Missie Ammal explains itself. The Picture-catching Missie Ammal is the friend who proposed the book’s making. This is her Tamil name, given because it describes her as she struck the Tamil mind. The pictures she caught were not easy to catch. Reserved and conservative India considered the camera intrusive, and we were often foiled in getting what we most desired. Even where we were allowed to catch our object peaceably, it was a case of working under difficulties which would have daunted a less ardent picture-catcher. Wherever the camera was set up, there swarms of children sprang into being, burrowed in and out like rabbits, and scuttled about over everything, to the confusion of the poor artist, who had to fix focus and look after the safety of her camera legs at the same time, while the second Missie Ammal held an umbrella over her head, and the third exhorted the picture, which speedily got restive, to sit still. So much for the mere mechanical.

Finally, I should explain the book’s character. "Tell about things as they actually are"; so said the Two with emphasis. I tried, but the Actual eluded me. It was as if one painted smoke, and then, pointing to the feeble blur, said, "Look at the battle! ’the smoking hell of battle!’ There is the smoke!" The Poet’s thought was not this, I know, when she coined that suggestive phrase, "The Dust of the Actual," but it has been the predominating thought in my mind, for it holds that which defines the scope and expresses the purpose of the book, and I use it as the title of one of the chapters. It does not show the Actual. Principalities, Powers, Rulers of the Darkness, Potentialities unknown and unimagined, gathered up into one stupendous Force—we have never seen it. How can we describe it? What we have seen and tried to describe is only an indication of Something undescribed, and is as nothing in comparison with it—as Dust in comparison with the Actual. The book’s scope, then, is bounded by this: it only touches the Dust; but its purpose goes deeper, stretches wider, has to do with the Actual and our relation to it. But in touching the Dust we touch the outworkings of an Energy so awful in operation that descriptive chapters are awful too. And such chapters are best read alone in some quiet place with God. For the book is a battle-book, written from a battle-field where the fighting is not pretty play but stern reality; and almost every page looks straight from the place where Charles Kingsley stood when he wrote—

"God! fight we not within a cursèd world, Whose very air teems thick with leaguèd fiends—

Each word we speak has infinite effects—

Each soul we pass must go to heaven or hell— And this our one chance through eternity To drop and die, like dead leaves in the brake!

. . . . . Be earnest, earnest, earnest; mad if thou wilt: Do what thou dost as if the stake were heaven, And that thy last deed ere the judgment day." This is our bullock-bandy. The water was up to the top of the bank when we crossed last. The palms are cocoanuts.

1.01.02 Book 1: Chapter 2

2

"I WAS a tall young tree. And many a forest creature as well as many a bird found succour in my strength and comfort under my leaves, for they made a wide, cool shadow, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. But now it is not so. It seems as if it could never be so any more. Frost-bound I stand. I can endure, for I have asked for fortitude, and I trust that I have not asked in vain. But I cannot do what once I did. The trees of the Lord are full of sap, in those gallant trees the birds build their nests. My sap is frozen within me and no bird builds her nest in my cold boughs-those happy birds that sang among my branches, where are they now? 0 that I had done more for them when power to do was mine! And I am not alone in this cold solitude, I am only one of many. Those others, frozen as I am, stand as I stand to-day. Our green days are past; our purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of our hearts.

O give me the comfort of Thy help again, my God, and bring my soul out of prison that I may praise Thy name. There is forgiveness with Thee; unto Thee, 0 Lord, do I lift up my soul. Hear my voice according to Thy loving-kindness: quicken me, 0 Lord, according to Thy loving-kindness. Look Thou unto me, and be merciful unto me, as Thou usest to do unto those that love Thy name. The words of men cannot help me now: miserable comforters are they all. Speak Thou to me, 0 God, for with Thee is the fountain of life. Let Thy tender mercies come unto me that I may live. O God, be not far from me. 0 my Strength, haste Thee to help me."

* * * * *

"My son, thou hast made thy prayer unto Me in an acceptable time. In the multitude of My mercy I have heard thee; in the truth of My salvation I have delivered thee. 0 cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. It is He that hath made Summer and Winter."

* * * * *

"Summer and Winter? Then Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy. I had thought that I and those others were so shut up in this prison of frost that we could not come forth."

"But My frost-bound ones are the bondmen of their Lord. (One of My bondmen said, ‘I am an ambassador in bonds.’) My mercy compasseth them about. Every part of thy being is embraced in the Shining of My mercy. Thou hast said in thine heart, All these things are against me, but one day thou shalt say, ‘Blessed be morsels of ice; hail, snow, and vapours.’ Thou shalt know that all these things were fulfilling My word."

"I know it now. From Thee came the ice and the hoary frost of heaven. My life was as the face of the deep when it is frozen, but Thou hast given me grace to help in time of need. I will trust, and not be afraid. Blessed be God which hath not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me. The day is Thine, the night also is Thine; Thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; Thou hast made Summer and Winter. My times are in Thy hand. Thy

word hath quickened me." For a little while he was silent to his God, and then he said, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." And his God answered him in words whose depths no man has sounded, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And then, "to long-loved music set," a song began to sing within him. He could hear every word distinctly: "My soul He doth restore again" was one line of that song. And it ended peacefully, Goodness and mercy all my life Shall surely follow me: And in God’s house for evermore My dwelling-place shall be.

1.01.03. Book 1: Chapter 3

3

THERE was one who was not afraid of any evil tidings, for her heart stood fast believing in the Lord. And her trust was in the tender mercy of God for ever and ever.

Often He had arisen as light in the darkness.

Often she had called upon Him in troubles and He had delivered her, and heard her what time the storm fell upon her.

He had been merciful, loving and righteous, and she had said, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high; and yet humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth?" And now she found herself standing alone, looking into a great mist.

Fold after fold the hills lay there before her, but always in mist. She could see no path, except a little track in the valley below. She thought that she was quite alone, and for a while she stood looking, listening, and feeling this loneliness and uncertainty harder to bear than any acute distress had ever been.

Then, softly, voices began to speak within her, now discouraged, now encouraging.

"My flesh and my heart faileth."

"But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

"My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my soul: and my kinsmen stand afar off."

"Nevertheless, I am continually with Thee: Thou hast holden me by my right hand."

"My tears have been my meat day and night; while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" "Thou shalt answer for me, 0 Lord my God."

"Why art thou cast down, 0 my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?"

"Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

"My way is hidden from my God."

"He knoweth the way that I take. All my ways are before Him. As for God, His way is perfect and He maketh my way perfect. They thirsted not when He led them through the deserts. Will they faint when He leads them through the hills?"

Then she looked again at the mist, and it was lightening, and she knew that she was not alone, for her God was her refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He was about her path; He would make good His loving-kindness toward her, and His loving-kindness was comfortable. Nor could she fear any more, for those dim folds in the hills were open ways to Him. He would not let

her be disappointed of her hope. So it was enough for her to see only the next few steps, because He would go before her and make His footsteps a way to walk in. And of this she was also sure: He whom she followed saw through the mist to the end of the way. She would never be put to confusion. And in that hour a song was given to her. She sang it as she walked: "0 what great troubles and adversities hast Thou showed me! and yet didst Thou turn and refresh me: and broughtest me up from the deep of the earth again. The Lord is my Strength and my Shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my song will I praise Him. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not. 0 Lord, Thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; Thou hast redeemed my life. 0 let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, that I may sing of Thy glory and honour all the day long, for Thou, Lord, hast never failed them that seek Thee." And as she walked thus and sang, others whom she did not see because of the mist that still lay on her way, heard her singing and were comforted and helped to follow on, even unto the end.

1.01.04. Book 1: Chapter 4

4 A VOICE said, "Climb." And he said, "How shall I climb? The mountains are so steep that I cannot climb." The voice said, "Climb or die."

He said, "But how? I see no way up those steep ascents. This that is asked of me is too hard for me." The voice said, " Climb or perish, soul and body of thee, mind and spirit of thee. There is no second choice for any son of man. Climb or die."

Then he remembered that he had read in the books of the bravest climbers on the hills of earth, that sometimes they were aware of the Presence of a Companion on the mountains who was not one of the earthly party of climbers. How much more certain was the Presence of his Guide as he climbed the high places of the spirit. And he remembered a word in the Book of Mountaineers that heartened him, My soul is continually in my hand-it heartened him, for it told him that he was created to walk in precarious places, not on the easy levels of life. This decision that had to be made, this stern task that would test the fibre of character, this duty that must be performed, this blame that must be accepted without self-defence or resentment-these things were part of the day’s work for the true mountaineer. And he said to his foe, Love-of-fleshly-ease, "Rejoice not against me, 0 mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will go in the strength of the Lord God." And other words came and put new life into him: "When I said, my foot slippeth; Thy mercy, 0 Lord, held me up. He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet; and setteth me upon my high places. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip. Thou hast girded me with strength. Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe." And he said, "I will climb."

1.01.05. Book 1: Chapter 5

5

"I WOULD rejoice in mountains to climb, but I see no mountains. I see only a dreary waste of water, a drearier strip of shore; nothing invigorating, nothing inspiring, nothing hard enough to inspire.

"My life is just like that-not so much hard as dull, and I would have chosen the hard to the last; not mere negation, but achievement at whatever cost. It is the inability to do that is so devastating."

"Hast thou looked up?"

"Up? I see a mass of clouds. That is all."

"And nothing beyond the clouds? 0 look again. Is there no hint of light beyond? Are not the very clouds a marvel of controlled power, pillars of cloud and of fire?"

"My sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my God."

"So long? ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." "It is written, As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness: Thy help, 0 God, shall lift me up. I wait to be lifted up."

"But it is also written, As for me, I will patiently abide alway: and will praise Thee more and more. Hast thou tried the lifting power of praise?"

"My sight faileth for very trouble. How can I praise when I cannot see?"

"We can sing when we cannot see, even a little bird will sing in the grey dusk before the dawn breaks."

"My soul melteth away for very heaviness, who can sing when his soul melteth?"

"Tell me, is not thy heart’s desire to bring many sons unto glory?"

"That is all my desire, although He make it not to grow."

"Then there is only one way for thee; I know of no other way. If thou wouldest be inwardly victorious and help others to be victors, thou must refuse to be dominated by the seen, and the felt. Thou must look steadfastly through the visible till the invisible opens to thee. This is harder than to climb a mountain. It is indeed to climb out of the lowest abyss where the craven soul can crawl, and to walk on the sunlit uplands. It is to live in the spirit of the words of one who was to look out upon a duller stretch of water and a darker strip of shore than thou dost now. Ponder then his words: ’For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us afar more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are

eternal.’

"Live by the grace of thy Lord in the spirit of these words, for in them is the quality of eternity. Say of the will of thy God, ‘I am content to do it.’ Go through that depressing dimness without yielding to depression and without depressing others. All the resources of heaven are at thy command to enable thee to do this. Take a single promise of thy God; lean thy full weight upon it, and soon, very soon, thou wilt sing of the Lord because He hath dealt so lovingly with thee."

1.01.06. Book 1: Chapter 6

6

SNOWY slopes; a few brave pines trying to go as high as they can; a great curtain of sky so closely drawn, except quite low down where it is raised a little, that it seems to be covering something; a peak that shines out white and clear and triumphant-of what is this the figure, 0 Lord, my God? Is it that which surely shall be, the coming of the conquering light? Is that peak the last step up from what we call time, to what we call Eternity, with its vision, liberty, revelation, powers and great delights? All that the words mean: "We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. And His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads"-is that foreshadowed there?

Beyond that curtain does the first of those many mansions stand, which the wise tell us are not simply fixed abodes in some spiritual city, but rather stations along the highways of some vast realm, the Country of our Father? Is this, the unimaginable (for it passes the furthest frontiers of our thought), part of the True that is shown in a Figure by this pure peak?

Then, 0 my heart, welcome all that is sent to prepare and to brace thee for so generous a To-morrow. Wel- come bareness, snow and frost, limitations, frustrations, the strain of uncertainty, steep ways, dull days (but look up on such days, to that which is higher than earth). Welcome these things as the purposed preparation for something made ready for thee before the foundations of the world. And if the mysteries of the Unexplained close round thee in the evening, or, far more truly, as the dawn draws near when thou shalt "waken in His splendour beyond the hurt of night"; if thy mind pushes ahead of thy body, and thy longing to do for thy beloved crushes thee, and the love that is in thee shatters thee, for it seems too mighty, too expanding, to be contained in the vessel of the human soul, so that love itself is turned to sheer passion of pain-even so, set thy will to welcome all. Let thyself be broken. Let thyself be rent. Lay those keen yearnings in the Hands that were wounded for thee. Let another gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. The hour hasteneth when it will be said, And the angels carried him far above the peak, beyond the curtain, to that which is eternal in the heavens. For it is soon cut off -that silken thread that holds us down, and we fly away. The Lord looses the fettered ones, * and sets them free to serve.

* Psalms 140:7, LXX. And if, as I know well is true, thou wouldst die a hundred deaths if only the nations might be delivered out of their heavy oppressions, and all cruel handling of our fellow-creatures who cannot complain, but must endure, could by one stroke be ended, then stay thyself upon the word that once spoken can never be annulled: Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast-My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips: I have sworn once by My holiness that I will not fail David. The Lord sitteth above the water-flood; and the Lord remaineth a King for ever. The Lord shall give strength unto His people: the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace. Is not this strong consolation? Be consoled, therefore. In the end the Creator of the earth will justify His creation of a world, which He foreknew would sin and suffer

from generation to generation-else were a demon, not a God, upon the throne. Fear not to dare to think such thoughts. There was one who drank of the cup that is filled to the brim with anguish, and he said, and was not rebuked for saying, "Will the Lord cast off for ever: and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" But he did not tarry in that place of terrific questions: "And I said, This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High." For the Lord is King, be the people never so impatient: He sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.

Let the winds blow, let the waves thunder, they cannot uproot the rock. The wickedness of the wicked must come to an end, or God would not be God. If they did not consume away like a snail, so that a man shall say, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth," there would be no God for man to worship. But God IS. The coming of the Lord is as certain as the morning. The night will never return, with its brooding shadows of cruelty and wrong. Light, not darkness, is the ultimate Conqueror. Not always shall our hearts cry out, Lord, how long wilt Thou look upon this? for sorrow and sighing shall flee away and the travail of the ages shall cease.

Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; He must reign. Great voices shall yet declare, Out of Sion hath God appeared in perfect beauty. And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, and the glorious majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever. This assurance is among the things that cannot be shaken; so also is the peace that passeth all understanding, the peace of which He who is the Light and thy Salvation spoke long ago: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

1.02.00. Book 2: From the Forest (1920)

Chapters

Title

Dedication The Dohnavur Fellowship

Notes Chapter 1 - That Thy Work Might Appear Chapter 2 - The Brownie Chapter 3 - Forsaken Chapter 4 - Not Forsaken Chapter 5 - The Loris Chapter 6 - Succoured Chapter 7 - Counter Fire Chapter 8 - Glow-worms' Eggs Chapter 9 - The Minor Operation Chapter 10 - Cleaning Up Chapter 11 - Not . . . But Chapter 12 - Lover of the Unlovables Chapter 13 - Tiger Pugs Chapter 14 - A Woman or Some Such Thing Chapter 15 - As it was, and is, but shall not ever be Chapter 16 - Running Water Chapter 17 - Of the Self-same Stock Chapter 18 - From Pool to Sea From the Forest By

Amy Carmichael Dohnavur Fellowship

NEW EDITION

Oliphants Ltd.

London / Edinburgh

1.02.000. Book 2: Dedication

TO MY SISTER, ETHEL O all ye Works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him for ever.

O ye Mountains and Hills, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him for ever.

O all ye Green Things upon the Earth, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Children of men, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him for ever. The Song of the Three Holy Children, verses, 35, 53, 54, 60.

(Sentences written in large blue letters on natural wood, running round the Forest House.)

Chapter 11

1.02.0000. Book 2: The Dohnavur Fellowship

THE DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP THE work known by this name began in 1901. There exists in connection with the temples of India a system like that which obtained in such places as the great temple of Corinth with its Thousand Servants. Young children trained for temple service have no chance to grow up good. They are the most defenceless of God’s innocent little creatures. We gave ourselves to save them, and as we lived in a village called Dohnavur the work became known by that name. In 1918 we began to take boys too, for they also are used in the temples, and still more often in the evil dramatic societies of Southern India. The story of the Fellowship is told in Gold Cord. The work is difficult and asks for all that we have to give. There are griefs, but there are far more joys. The greater number of the first generation of children are spending their lives in the service of their Saviour, and for the blessing of their country. From the first we thought of the children as our own. We did not make a Home for them; when they came to us they were at home. And so from the beginning we were a family, never an institution; and we all, Indian and European men and women, live and work together on the lines of an Indian family, each contributing what each has to offer for the help of all. We have no salaried workers, Indian or foreign; make no appeal for funds; and authorize none to be made for us. We have never lacked; as the needs grew supplies came; and as we advance we find that our Unseen Leader is moving on before us. There are between six and seven hundred in the family, outposts in the villages and medical work.

We have no workers who are only preachers. "We have heard the preaching, Can you show us the life of your Lord Jesus?" said a Hindu to one of us. St. Paul, who not only taught publicly and from house to house, but laboured; working with his own hands, gave us the pattern that we as a Fellowship were intended to follow. So the evangelist shares in the practical work of life--doctoring, nursing, teaching, building, engineering, farming, and so on.

We come from various parts of the household of God; but we never find this to be any hindrance to harmony, for we meet at the Centre, above and below difference. And to be one in love to our Lord and in faith in the Book, the sum of whose words is truth, makes for vital unity.

1.02.00000. Book 2: Notes

Note I THE ravine in the forest where this book was written has deep in it an old disused coffee garden. A friend, knowing our need of a safe place to which we could take our children and workers for change, gave it to us, and the children helped to build a house there. The story of the Brownie belongs to a date before the little band of English women, whose hearts the Lord has touched, had been called out to serve with us. That is why they do not move about her. Something of the story has been told elsewhere, but it seemed to ask for a book to itself, short though it be.

Note 2

SINCE this book was written another house has been set in the Forest. It is called the Jewel House because the stones of which it is built were like jewels when they were first hewn from the rocks. Many were veined with blue and some had patches of amethyst. And they all sparkled. Some of the photographs show this house. It was built specially for our men and boys. For since the Brownie's days the prayer at the end of Chapter 17 has been answered, and now we have many boys, and English and Indian brothers are training them to play the game.

Note 3

GREETINGS to new readers of this old story. The story of the children goes on and we welcome new friends for them. Most of these of whom this tale tells are now fellow-workers, fellow-soldiers. The fight is as keen as ever and again I say, Welcome to you, our new friends.

Note 4

AGAIN, welcome to new friends. The forest of this story is more and more loved; and year by year happy companies go up to rest by the river, swim the pools, climb the heights, and meet the God of the Heights.

A.C.

November 5th, 1946.

1.02.01. Book 2: Ch 1. That Thy Work Might Appear

That Thy Work Might Appear The pride of the height, the clear firmament, the beauty of heaven, with his glorious show .... Then commandedst Thou a fair light to come forth of Thy treasures, that Thy work might appear.- Sir 43:1; 2Es 1:1.

CHAPTER I

GREEN, green forest stretching as far as the eye can see on three sides, rising in mighty billows up the mountains, leaving bare only the rocky tops; high climbing, low dipping forest. A valley, like the trough of the wave of forest green. In the middle of the smother of green the red roof of a house, our forest house. The house looks as if it could not breathe for forest, but it can; in front the trees drop sharply down, like a cliff dropping to the sea, the green, green sea of the forest. And still further down, framed between mountains, the plains.

They might be the plains of the world, so vast are they in this evening light, losing themselves in the mists that hang over the Indian Ocean, mixing themselves with the sky in the pale, far East. Up in our eyrie we, a little group of humans, crouch to the leeward of a huge sugar-loaf crag, each holding on with one hand to its rough side as we stoop forward and look down on the forest and the plains.

What infinitesimal dots we feel here, merest leaves blown up by the wind; but by no means were we blown up, under the jungle we crawled step by step, through a dried water-course at first, and then up what felt in parts like a roof for steepness, every foot of it tedious toil because of the thick undergrowth, till suddenly we came upon this great crag like a mountain-top in a child’s first drawing, as sharply cut, as definite as the mountain tops of one’s imagination always are, and in geographical fact so often are not. Thus it shot through the forest, and looked over the world; a wind-swept solitary palm clutching on with brave roots to a crevice half-way up, rough mountain grass embracing it a few feet higher, then nothing but three or four enormous rocks, tossed one on the top of the other, forming an arch for kings. The topmost of these is the hill-top. On a shelf six feet below the point of the highest sugar-loaf we have found room to sit. And Bala and Sella, all quick with the spirit of adventure, stand alone on the very tip, to appear from the house below as waving, gesticulating dolls. But the glory of the billows of green forest, the almost unearthly wonder of the mountains, seen thus in the light that only comes between rains, the blue-bordered embroidery of the spreading plains, not these things hold us, as we cling on to our various crannies on the sugar-loaf and gaze down enchanted: Dohnavur, it is our own Dohnavur that holds us; we can see into it; see part of its nearly mile-long wall, the little pointed red roofs of its nurseries, the trees of its gardens, the bungalow roof, a mere slip of red paint, my room’s roof a round-shaped daub, and most clearly of all the new, largest nursery, built all by itself in the field facing the hills. And now there is a sudden delighted shout, "See, its two porches! Oh, we can see its porches!" For the sun, now due west, has picked them out, and as clearly as if they had been three hundred feet below instead of something over three thousand, we see for a few bright moments the white mortar lines running down the long roof, the two porches, wherein are hanging

the many little white hammocks ("we can see them too with our inward eyes" interpolate the fascinated children), the new boys' nursery to the north, each like a small cameo carved by those level rays. For so was a fair light commanded to come out of His treasures that His work might appear. For surely more precious than even the glorious forest and the mountains which sweep in new and beautiful curves unperceived from below, more precious than all the coloured glory of the plains in so far as it is only of earth, air, water, is that little square within its garden walls, the work of the everlasting God. And here in the midst of the vast, the imposing, where the eye is satisfied with seeing, and the heart in some measure is enlarged to feel its own insignificance, we look down upon that little patch on the far-spreading plains and are glad with an exultation that asks for the shout of the waterfall, the song of the birds at dawn to tell it, that such as the Workman is, so also His work.

Why should we fear for His work, whether it be in a place dear as the apple of our eye to us, or in a soul to succour whom we would pour out all we have? Are the children of these lands, yes and of our cities at home and of all waste places, unregarded by Him? On many a life fell, as we looked down, what seemed like a special ray of that commanded light, and we saw, as if we had never seen it before, that we need not, dare not, fear for any single child in whose inconspicuous life is set the imperishable work of the Lord. And proof after proof of it floated from that patch on the plains, among them the Brownie's story, now to be told. The Brownie My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation.- Sir 2:1.

1.02.02. Book 2: Ch 2. The Brownie

CHAPTER II

I SAW her first in a palm wood in the evening, and so I always associate her with the rustle of the evening wind in the big fan leaves of the palmyra palm.

We had been visiting in a village near our bungalow, a stuffy unwelcoming village, and were on our way home. She had followed us with some other children, and we stopped, sat down on the red sand floor, and talked with the group of children.

I noticed her at once. She was a downy, brownie, dear little thing, with soft brown eyes that looked up in wonder, and the roundest, dearest, little fat person covered with skin as smooth as satin. Somehow I called her the Brownie in my mind, and for years that was my name for her; though a friend who saw her soon after she came to us thought her more like a wren than anything else, and always called her Little Bird. The children listened as we told them a story of the Sufferer of sufferers, Lover of lovers, their Saviour. They listened as intelligent children listen to a story of power heard for the first time and then with a brief "Amma, Salaam" they left us. Not long afterwards two little girls appeared at the bungalow. One of the two was a beautiful child, I can see her now. She was a sort of fawn colour and her eyes were like two jewels. The other was the Brownie.

"We have come to be joined," they remarked, glancing round the room as if taking stock of their future home.

"Joined to what, you dear morsels?"

"To the Way." (She meant to our Religion.) The fawn-coloured child then explained that they were children of the Goldsmith caste and, having heard us "preach" in the palm wood one evening they had made up their minds our religion was good and they wished to be "joined."

"Yes," said the Brownie, lifting her trustful eyes to ours, "we come for that. Join us, please." When Christiana told Mercy about the Wicket Gate, and Mercy believed her, Christiana then was glad at her heart for that she had prevailed with this poor maid to fall in love with her own salvation. I felt like Christiana then, but had not her further joy of a going on together, in the flesh at any rate; for the village at our gates was as Hindu in spirit as it could possibly be. With all its strength it hated the thought of any single one of its inhabitants becoming a Christian, and twice quite lately (for the first time in its history) this disgrace had befallen it. Nothing we could say or do had appeased it. We knew there was not much chance of our being allowed even to teach the little girls in their own homes, once it was known they wanted to be Christians. As for keeping them, they were, of course, too young to choose for themselves, and it is a criminal offence to keep a child under sixteen (they looked about twelve). Even if they had been sixteen, it would have been very difficult to prove it. For horoscopes (those birth-documents which in rural India are the only birth register known) can easily be faked to make the age whatever the relatives desire. The age in the civil

court, to which appeal can always be made, is eighteen, and here again the treacherous horoscope is open to manipulation. So to "join" these two dear small people was manifestly out of the question.

It was very hard to make them understand. With their reproachful eyes turned sorrowfully on me I remember trying to explain to them that they could be "joined" to the Lord Jesus, even though we could not possibly keep them. I told them as much as I could of His love for them, and promised in His Name that He would take care of them and strengthen them to suffer for Him; for the stern law of suffering would, I knew, touch their lives at once, and I dared not hide it from them. To prepare them to face it, to put them on the track of winning through, that was my one business; and often I wonder, when about such work, where in the history of our religion we first dropped the painful Cross, and forgot to go back for it. But they were desperately disappointed, poor children, and I feared did not absorb very much of all this. When it broke on them that they must immediately go back, the Brownie cried.

Some weeks passed. It seemed as though the village had swallowed them up. Not a word could we hear about them. At last I could stand it no longer, and taking a courageous Indian woman with me, I went to the Brownie’s home intending to see the head of the house and ask to be allowed to teach her. But on the way I saw her. She was in an open back yard, busy about some housework.

Now we had done nothing wrong, we had not kept the children more than a few minutes that day when they came to be "joined," but had sent them straight back, so I did not expect anything very dreadful to happen, and joyfully went towards the Brownie who as joyfully ran to me.

Instantly the place was ablaze-shouts, howls, yells, imprecations and denunciations. Men and women and, of course, the inevitable children, one on top of the other, clamouring at us and snatching at the Brownie. Can you see it? I can, and hear it too, though it happened many years ago. I can feel too the blazing sun pouring down on us all, and smell the dust kicked up in clouds all round us. But the thing that is most vivid is the memory of the sight of the Brownie in the grip of a huge man who was twisting her wrists, to punish her for wanting to speak to me.

Forsaken My spirit was greatly set on fire, and my soul was in distress.- 2Es 6:37.

1.02.03. Book 2: Ch 3. Forsaken

CHAPTER III

POOR little frightened Brownie. She turned eagerly as the man laid hold of her and tried to smile to me, as if to reassure me, but you cannot smile for long when your wrists are being twisted, and the cry that escaped her rang through me; and then the uncle did something more cruel, and lest he should do worse in his rage at seeing her look so longingly at us, we left, hard though it was to do it; at such a moment one would give all one possesses to be able to stay and share blows and miseries. The next thing we heard was that she had been turned out of her home, and sent to an uncle who lived three miles away and could be depended upon to deal severely with her. The fawn child was married in a hurry, and we never saw her again.

About this time a letter came from home asking for a book for children. I thought of the Brownie, and also of a little boy of whom we knew, into whose eyes his father threatened to put pepper if he would not give up his wish to be a Christian. To write a book just for the sake of adding another to the pile of books already in the world was out of the question. If I wrote one at all I wanted it to do something, not just talk. If only I could tell the children at home of those two children they would help them, I was sure; in the one single way they could be helped. So I wrote their short stories and sent the MS. home, praying with all my heart that it might not be a mere interesting story to be read and forgotten, but that it might work among the children of England for those two imprisoned children in India.

After a few weeks it came back again. "It was too harrowing," the friend who was deputed to write to me told me. It must be "modified, even for grown-up people." But I did not see how I could "modify" the truth; and after all, what did the word mean? Did it mean turn the pepper into flour, and the wrist-twisting into pats, smother the misery of the cross with flowers? But what good would that do? Besides how could one? So I put the unwanted manuscript back in its envelope and wrote across it words I had read a week or two before in "Aurora Leigh,"

You must not pump spring water unawares Upon a gracious public full of nerves. and dropped the envelope into a drawer, and wished I could write properly; for I had so wanted to help the Brownie and Pearl-boy, and it seemed such a failure. I would have tried again, and written better if I could; but I did not see how I could get children at home to care very much if I might not tell them in unpainted words how much those two in India needed their help. So it seemed of no use. But this lame attempt, this failure as I felt it, had something to do years afterwards, and this is what happened. A friend, straight out from home, was one day rummaging among my papers, when she lighted on that envelope which I had by that time entirely forgotten. She read the note on it, and looked inside; and she felt there were people in England who could bear to know the truth, would choose to know it indeed, if the chance were offered them. And that was the beginning of "Things as they are" and all the other books (which, however, were never intended for children, being full of far more poignant things than wrist-twisting and pepper in eyes). And if, by the kindness of our God, those books have done anything at all, it is owing in the first place to the kindly-meant advice,

to modify that unpleasant, unnecessary, harrowing thing, the downright real truth. But it is good to have been many years journeying on the road of life, for one learns so many things. For example, how easy it is to do things wrong when one most wishes to do them right, and to blunder and mistake the leading, and be altogether very trying to one’s Guide. By these matters one learns mercy. Perhaps that is why the old are so much more merciful than the young. They have so many more mistakes, and misdeeds, to be sorry for. And there is another thing one learns: the marvellous power of the Lord our God to over-rule and bring things to a happy conclusion which had seemed entirely set on going wrong. Where we have failed He comes in and takes the poor, little, mangled attempts and perfects them, and the thing we tried to do and could not do, is done. The Brownie was kept faithful as we shall see, and finally delivered. As for the Pearl-boy, he is working beside me at this moment, he and his dear little wife, who is the "M" of a "Lotus Buds" chapter, whom to save we had to fight three long battles in the law courts, winning two and losing the last. "The child will be given back," said the judge on earth: "She shall not," said the Judge of the Heavens. That was eight years ago, and here she is; and to perfect the story here too is their first-born son, David, the joy of us all. Sometimes when I look back over the years of strife, and bring to mind the fears and despairs, and the failures, the only word that satisfies my longing to tell it out is this, "Who shall express the noble acts of the Lord or show forth all His praise?" But we have left the Brownie, even as in the years that followed we seemed to leave her, very lonely, very sorrowful, a forsaken child in a cruel house. "Thou tellest my flittings, put my tears into Thy bottle: are not these things noted in Thy book?" Not Forsaken Blessed is he . . . who is not fallen from his hope in the Lord.- Sir 19:2.

1.02.04. Book 2: Ch 4. Not Forsaken

CHAPTER IV

ONE day some months after the affair of the returned MS. we were walking through a thorny, jungly place, dear Ponnammal and I, and Ponnammal was talking of the people of the village near the bungalow, and of the secret things done among them, as they are done in every village in India .

We were on our way home from work, and nothing very exciting had happened. It had been a dull, uninteresting day, but the evening was to be very much otherwise, filled as it was with a story I seemed to see, though I only heard it, just as I tell it now.

We were passing some particularly vicious bushes of long, straggly acacia, with no shade, nor at that season anything but thorns. The thorns caught at our light muslin saries as we passed, and Ponnammal stopped to unhook me. "Under these bushes," she said! as she warily fingered the thorns, "the mother of that child you have so grieved over, lay for a whole day in despair, and that night she was killed by her brother, brother of him whom you saw twist the child's wrists."

Then she told me how the mother, a widow, had, contrary to custom, escaped from the mewed-up life of the back rooms of her brother's house, the only life suitable for a self-respecting widow, and run to this jungle, and thrown herself down under these thorn bushes and longed to die. And that night when she went home her brother took her, and because she had broken the rules of her caste, he there and then slew her. And he dug a hole in the earthen floor, packed her into it, covered her over, and told no one. In the morning she was missed; his castefolk guessed what he had done; and they thoroughly approved, or if any did not, they were wise and said nothing, and a few rupees made all safe. Certainly the last thing in the world would have been to inform the authorities. Why bring trouble on the village, and especially upon the caste? The brother went to a town three miles off, where he had property, and Brownie stayed with her other uncle, and played on her mother's grave, and never knew it was her grave till one day, for some reason the floor was dug up, the bones were found, and the story slipped out. She was such a nice girl, that girl-mother, Ponnammal said; the Brownie was very like her, the same soft eyes and gentle little bird ways. But she had not known how to bear being cooped up in the dark back room, and this foolish human longing for a breath of the fresh air had been her undoing.

I looked at the thorny bushes, unfriendly even to us, how much more so to her as she crouched under them through that one day of her poor, brief freedom. And I almost seemed to see her, the Brownie, but a trifle older, with that look in her eyes that I knew, the wistful, startled, puzzled look of a hunted animal taking breath, and saw her too, returning at night to that grim room, and that stern man, whose features might have been chiselled in flint for all the kindness there was in them. And in the hands of that man, that day, was our Brownie. Not till long afterwards, when she was safely with us, did I hear of what it meant to be in those hands. The Brownie had one lesson set her now. She had to learn to suffer. The uncle had of course been told of what she had done, and

his business was to see that she did not do it again, so to make sure she would never dream of doing it, as well as by way of punishment for having done it, she was frequently beaten with a rod kept for the purpose.

Sometimes her uncle took her into a room which had no window, only a heavy door covered with brass bosses, and fitted with a huge iron lock. When that door was shut, not a sound penetrated from it to the house. To give him light to see what he was doing, he would tell her to bring a lamp, a small brass saucer with a wick floating in the oil.

Once in, he would shut the door, bid her put the lamp on the floor, and then stand before her, raining abuse upon her head till he had worked himself up into a sufficiently violent passion, while she stood trembling before him, watching the rod with fearful, fascinated eyes.

Then with a quick gesture he would tear away the one slight cotton garment worn by a Tamil child from her back and shoulders, and holding her by the arm, beat her till she fell at his feet. How she dreaded that rod, longed to break it or burn it or in some way lose it, but she never dared. The next might be even heavier. "An unbeaten bullock, an undisciplined child, they are one in uselessness," her uncle would observe, then, "Go bring the stick and the lamp." It was a hard, hard life for the little girl.

One day, after severe punishment with that detestable rod for some trifling fault (and any fault awoke, of course, the remembrance of that greater fault and aggravated the punishment), the Brownie was left alone in the dark room with not even the lamp for comfort. The door was locked on the outside, and as the big key turned in the lock it seemed to lock her in to an utterly uncomforted misery. Bruised and aching was her poor little body, bruised and aching her spirit. She tried hard to remember what she had heard that day in the bungalow. Most of it had gone from her, driven out by the events which seemed so thoroughly to contradict all that we had said. At last this memory came:

She saw, as in a picture hung up in her mind, one in pain, being beaten. Something dimly seen about a death in pain followed; the story had been outlined to her on that first evening in the palm wood, she had not heard a whisper of it since; but the Spirit, the Spirit who makes vital the things that matter, took this thing and showed it to her. Then He comforted her, taught her, but how she could never quite explain, that she was not forsaken, "He Who knew what it felt like to be beaten" was with her, the Sufferer of sufferers of Whom she had heard in the wood. It was this, the power of the truth in it held her-no glad God to whom pain was unknown could have helped her now, but the Man acquainted with grief was her Succourer. The God of Joy, she would meet later. The Loris CHILDREN’S FOREST SONG.

Dim, green forest Of a thousand secrets, When you were planted Did the angels sing?

Many things I wonder, Are they all your secrets?

Won’t you ever tell me anything?

Great; white waterfall Breaking through the forest, Where do you come from? Where do you go? Had you a beginning? Will you go on for ever? For ever and for ever will you flow?

Great, black, glistening wall Veiled in shining glory, Piled among the waters

Rock upon rock, 0, to have stood and seen Hands at work upon you Shivering you and shattering, shock on shock!

Deep, dark, silent pool Hollowed at the fall’s foot, What do you think of All the long day? Do you hear the thunder Of tremendous waters? Do you hear the laughter of the spray?

1.02.05. Book 2: Ch 5. The Loris

CHAPTER V THIS story is being written in the forest. Four miles from the Dohnavur Nurseries, the Western Ghauts rise almost straight from the plains. Hidden behind the foot-hills is a narrow valley that leads into a deep ravine carved by the river in the heart of the mountains, rising in these parts to a height of 5,449 feet. Half-way up, the mountains form a horseshoe curve, and on the only suitable level place our forest house is built.

All round us therefore, except where the horse-shoe opens, are the glorious, ever-changing mountains, hung with forests that stretch away for thousands and thousands of square miles; forests full of perpetual delights, and mysteries as perpetual. These end from 500 to 1,000 feet from the summits, and the bare, scarred, great faces of the mountains show themselves to the world. The horse-shoe opens to the east upon the variegated carpet of the plains, now pink, now blue, now pale green or gold, according to the season and the crops. Sometimes all colours mix in it; sometimes in the monsoon, in moonlight, it is so like the sea that one can hardly believe it is land; for the long reaches of shallow water look like silvery, moonlit ripples, in a misty sea. The real sea is beyond, a band of vivid glory in sunrise and sunset, and in moonlight a dream of angels. It must be full forty miles away, but we can see the flash of a revolving light on the coast, and sometimes even the white sail of a ship sailing calmly down the strip of blue, or the bright, moving light of a steamer at night. To the north of our ravine there is another lovely valley where the river is larger than ours. Suddenly, as you walk through the forest there, you see it part, and a broad band of white breaks the green. It is the waterfall we call Eight-Falls, and as it has no other findable name, and the forest people have already adopted ours, it is likely to continue. Eight-Falls, because there are eight distinct and beautiful falls racing down from that break in the forest through a wide bed strewn with boulders to the plains more than four thousand feet below. The rocks there are arranged in enormous steps, built one on top of the other. Over these in exposed places the lighter water falls in lacy patterns of living silver. At the foot is a deep, dark pool, so deep, so dark that even the pounding water thundering into it seems to make no impression. As for "the laughter of the spray," it never looks the least as if it heard it. It is too solemn to listen to such little sounds as that. But this magnificence is most delicately decorated. The steps are blue with bladderwort. Within a foot or two of the majestic movement of the water those fragile, joyful, little blue things grow, shaking their blue bells over the chasm, smiling if they do not laugh aloud in the face of the tremendous and the awe-inspiring all about them. Many a neck has been risked to get these brave blue flowers. But bare-footed children are sure-footed, and perhaps the climb was not as hazardous as it looked. This river owns for source a watershed within the Travancore boundary, and from it flows too, our little river, small in comparison with the other, but in rains a riotous, magnificent creature, capable of great deeds-at other times, gentle and dear. This river makes our pool; the pool which the children would instantly say, if questioned, was the joy of our ravine.

It is girded round with rocks, and these again are set in forest; grey and green reflections lie in it, and sometimes splashes of yellow-ochre and crimson when the sun touches the painted parts of the rocks. But its own particular colour is jade-green, clear, wonderful water-green, and when the

angels are in a very kind mood they send a blue kingfisher to fish there. Then the pool is something quite too lovely for this every-day earth, and sets one thinking what the pools must be among the green woods of Paradise. Then, too, it is deep, deep enough for deep diving, and its floor is of clean white sand, the powdered dust of mountains. In this pool we, the holiday children and whoever is up with them, daily turn into water-babies, pure and simple. You may be as old, and as serious, as we will suppose Methuselah was, drop into that cool pool and you are a water-baby and nothing else. If you have troubles, the pool washes them off. Worries are just kissed away. Water-kisses, you know, are most comforting. When I came up last week with a brood of children (the Tara set) our first thought was the pool. Into it we straightway tumbled, and forgot we had ever been hot and tired and at the end of our tether. I for one forgot that a book for Christmas had been asked for by a friendly and courageous firm in London, forgot I knew I could not possibly do it, being limp as a rag and brainless as one, forgot indeed there was a book to do. And when a week later another mail came up and in it was a letter from a Malvern schoolgirl, saying, "We want some more books," the pool had so dealt with the half-melted grey jelly in me that it had begun to "set" as the cooks say, and felt as if under the stimulus of that letter it might possibly do something again (for it is stimulating to have such things wanted). This then is the story of this story, and though it be a story of the hot plains it should be full of the sound of running water, and all loveliness and joy should somehow enter into it. Perhaps it will. In the meantime here is a forest tale. A few nights ago I was wakened by the growlings of a bear, one of the big black variety. He was grubbing for termites just below the house, and his growls seemed to come from under my bed. The forest at night is a weird place, and as our windows are wide open, only guarded by criss-cross wires which, when the house is lighted in the evening, give them the appearance of old-fashioned cottage windows with diamond panes, we hear everything from the chirp of a cricket up through various little tin-horn barks of small deer, and howls of hunting dogs, to the really awesome noises of the big cats. Sometimes a sambur bells just outside our clearing, and then we hold our breath and hope no tiger heard him. We have no elephants in our particular ravine, it is too steep for them, nor have we bison, though both are plentiful quite near; but we have found the pugs of most other forest dwellers, or heard their manifold noises in the night.

It is rather ideal for animal lovers to be thus alone in the animals' world. Our nearest human neighbours, in the next valley, are miles away, almost impenetrable forests stretch between. All day long we are out of doors; but at night it is better to be safe between walls; the beasts might resent us in their world at night.

Just about the time of the bear's visit, the Forest Ranger and his subordinates, as he calls them, came up for some work.

They were busy about it one early morning, and we were with them; for forest folk are interesting company and one never knows when one may learn something from them; but their noise had as we expected scared away every living thing for miles, and we had no hope of seeing anything special. Suddenly through the undergrowth came a peculiar kind of chirp, like the chirp of an excited cicada, only somehow more animal than insect in expression. We looked up and down everywhere, and saw nothing; but that agonising squeak rose from our very feet, and at last we saw it; It, I should say, no mere common it describes it. The night had been wet. The ground was covered with soaking leaves. In one of these curled up so as to hold a pool of water, sat shivering and crying the loneliest, the minutest being of semi-human sort I had ever seen or imagined. For

one long second we were all dumb. In that irresponsible second I believed in gnomes of the forest, goblins, elves of every sort and description. But the manikin at our feet wrung its tiny, tiny hands, held them up above its head and wrung them as if appealing to heaven and earth to come to its succour. And I lifted it out of its pool.

It was under three inches long, half its head seemed made of eyes, two great, round, amazed, amazing eyes. Hands and feet it had, like a skinny old man’s, but unbelievably small; the delicate transparent finger-nails asked for a pocket lens if they were to be properly examined. Tail there was none. The thing was a babe, new born, but it had the weariness, the dejection, the accumulated woe of centuries in its face. It nestled into the hollow of my hand; one of the children flew off to get some warm milk (for we have two buffaloes up with us, buffs being safer in the wilds than cows), and I was comforting and feeding it when the foresters drew near, gathered round, and stared astonished.

Only one of the group had seen its like before. "Worth two thousand rupees," he remarked, "very seldom found. The devil makes them." But the wee thing did not in the very least mind who had made it if only it could be warm. It drank little, and in all ways behaved as a new-made human baby does, all it wanted for the first twenty-four hours was warmth and sleep, an occasional lick, warmth and sleep again. At first I thought it was a marmoset, but it was too small, and besides had no tail; we found it finally in an animal book, Loris is its name, the Slender Loris. It is cuddled up in my hand as I type, a little soft ball of fur, not at all disconcerted by the quick movement, two fingers curled round it are quite enough to keep it happy. A favourite position is a tight clasp round a friendly thumb. It rubs its little face against the sides of the branch, as I suppose it considers it, in most endearing fashion.

We seem to have left the Brownie a long time. Not so. She has been in mind through every line of this story. The wood at night with its prowling things, the little lonely unprotected life, they bring her to mind. "Our lives are like untracked forests," said a forest man to me the other day when, in a quiet place in the depths of the wood, a group of them came to listen to talk about things eternal. "There are fierce beasts about us, and entangled thorns; we do not know the way through the forest of life." Nor did the infant Loris, nor did our Brownie; but neither one nor the other was left unsuccoured.

Succoured.

Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily; and sweetly doth she order all things.- Wis 8:1.

1.02.06. Book 2: Ch 6. Succoured

CHAPTER VI

AFTER a while the beatings ceased and the uncle tried persuasions of another sort. The Brownie was petted, given a jewel or two, told she would have many more, and nice clothes, and everything she wanted, if she would consent to a marriage the uncles had arranged for her. In India it is not necessary that a girl should consent to her marriage. Only the very kindest would feel it necessary; but it makes an uncomfortable scene if a girl resists too much. It is much better she should be compliant. And usually she is. If she has good parents she knows they have done their best for her; a curious best it is sometimes; but again it often works out fairly happily. At any rate it is the custom for parents and guardians to arrange the weddings of the girls of their families (a son has generally more say in the matter) and it is accepted as the natural thing. No one dreams of making a fuss about it. But the Brownie knew that the moment she was married she was doubly bound to Hinduism, and she had determined to "join the Way" as she would have expressed it. She knew absolutely nothing of it or its doctrines. She knew only what she had heard that once in the palm wood, and again in the five or ten minutes we had talked to her and the fawn-child in the bungalow. But there is a word which says, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," and "all men" includes little girls. In those few minutes He Who was lifted up so that this child could see Him, drew her. There is no other way to explain it. So she refused all the blandishments showered upon her at this time, risked a return to the discipline of the rod (perhaps it is quite impossible for you and for me to understand exactly what that meant of real downright heroism, for we have never felt the tingling of that rod), and she possessed her soul in patience. Her home now was in a small country town, steeped to the eyes in superstition of every sort, dense with Hinduism of the least elevated kind, benumbing in every way. And in the whole town there was only this one child who cared in the very least about the Lord Jesus Christ, and she was shut up according to the custom of her caste, within the four walls of a house, a house where she was not loved. Love can make any four walls lovable, they would feel protective to the loved child. To the unloved they were prison walls, and the air inside must have stifled her many a time, even as the air of that other prison house had stifled her mother years before; but she kept her soul alive by recalling again and again the fragment of truth she knew. Truly there must be eternal honey in the flowers of God, else she would have sucked her two or three poor little blossoms dry, for no other sustenance had she. Courage to hold on, faith to believe that somehow we should find her and help her, these were hers, and nothing could kill the faith in her. At last, some three years after the beginning of things, a queer, half-witted but sincere old Christian woman, once a devil-dancer, happened to go to that town for work, and happened (I use the word as it is useful, but it holds more than a mere happening) to get on the Brownie’s tracks. They met, held speech together, and the Brownie made up her brave little mind to escape to us, or perish in the attempt.

I cannot explain her courage except by remembering that wonderful, tiny, but exhaustless store of her secret honey. If a little of earth’s honey drunk straight from the honeycomb could make a tired-out soldier strong to fight through a long day ("See how mine eyes have been enlightened

because I tasted a little of this honey," he said) how much more the heavenly, the nectar of the flowers of God? She knew that her protestations against marriage would have small effect upon her uncles. They would certainly soon force her through the ceremony, driving her at the end of that dreaded rod through the idolatrous parts of it, choking her remonstrances with the strangling cord, which once tied round her neck made her slave for life to the unknown man they had chosen as her master, to use a common and appropriate Tamil word for husband.

There was nothing for it then but escape.

How she effected it we never fully understood. I suppose because it cannot be understood naturally. But our religion is full of the supernatural, as men call it, and a thing quite out of the ordinary is nothing, and this was that. The old ex-devil-dancer was extremely queer-headed, not at all the kind of adviser one would have chosen to deal with a difficult matter. But fools do certainly rush in where angels fear to tread, and sometimes the fools succeed in a most astonishing and blessed fashion. In broad daylight, without a single attempt at disguise or precaution, the Brownie walked out of her uncle’s house, and the old ex-devil-dancer guided her through the maze of streets which she had half forgotten, and along the highroad for three miles, and so to the bungalow where we used to live. I have often thought of that walk in the noontide heat. Did our God make of the very light a covering for her?

They reached the bungalow at last. But we were fifty miles away. The Brownie seems to have taken this news calmly, and as calmly the next announcement, that the Walkers chanced to be journeying in these parts, and were expected soon.

Now the beautiful planning of this was lost on the Brownie, but there is no need that it should be lost upon us. In all our fifteen years of life together, I only remember the Walkers once leaving their work for any private, personal reason (except illness). That once was in November 1903 when their relatives passed through Colombo on their way from Australia to England. They went to Colombo to meet them, spent a day or two there, and then returned to Dohnavur via our old home on the east, a roundabout, tiring journey; but they wanted to see the people, and revive in their hearts and minds something of that which they had been taught when we lived in the village by the palm wood where the Brownie had first heard of Christ.

Close upon the time those relatives left Australia the old ex-devil-dancer went to the Brownie’s town. The timing of the arrival of the Australian mail boat, of the Walkers’ boat as it brought them back to India, of the train which allowed them to go on at once by cart, of the bullock-cart (most notable, perhaps, for every sort of delay may occur where bullock-carts are in question), all fitted perfectly, arrival and departure dovetailing the one into the other with a precision those who have to arrange journeyings in the East will recognise as quite unusual. So all went well. The relatives who chased after the Brownie found they had the Iyer to face. Something restrained them from proceeding to violence, for they could easily have overpowered him, and carried her off again. Something? no, Someone; and that Someone gloriously namable, recognisable to those who know Him and are accustamed to His ways. How often we have seen the old story of Philip and the Ethiopian re-lived before our eyes. We have ceased to think of it as "wonderful," rather it is natural. It would be more wonderful if there were any failure or flaw in those plans that are silently planned for everyone of us. And yet looked at in a simple human way, it is wonderful: "Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is Thy name that when Thy sayings come to pass we may do

Thee honour? And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after My name seeing it is Wonderful? And the angel did wondrously, and Manoah and his wife looked on."

Thus did we look on, and thus was the Brownie succoured.

Counter Fire When this was done, they praised the Lord with psalms and thanksgiving, who had done so great things for Israel, and given them the victory. - 2Ma 10:38.

1.02.07. Book 2: Ch 7. Counter Fire

CHAPTER VII

JUST above our forest house is a huge round head of rock, jet black in certain lights, deep violet in others. It is at this moment covered in patches with grass of emerald green, greener far than any grass elsewhere. In the dry nullah running alongside this boulder head, all the scrub is ruby and amber coloured, beyond that come bamboos, a great thick field of them through which we threaded our difficult way when we tried to reach the upper watershed last year. This bamboo field is a maize yellow; round it, below, and far above hang the dark green forests, clinging like moss to the crags. A month ago a fire raged in this valley. This is why the colours are now so beautiful. We in Dohnavur watched it through the telescope, saw it crawl round the headlands and slowly descend the ravine, licking the black rocks with great orange tongues, springing high in air sometimes, as it caught some new clump of bushes or tall tree, a wonderful, but to us a most unwelcome sight.

We knew the forest people would be up, they had seen the fire long before it had turned the corner into our valley. We knew they would be fighting it hard; but what are a few puny men to a forest fire? So we knelt down by the telescope and asked that the Lord our God would be a Wall of Fire round our forest house, and protect the men now trying to beat it out, and then, for we could do nothing more, we went to sleep in peace. My verandah faces that valley. I woke several times, and always saw that bright, glowing, orange cloud hanging over it. The whole ravine was one rich glow. An awkward little thumb of rock which juts out from a foothill between Dohnavur and the valley kept us from seeing much below that fire-licked head, but we had seen enough to send us up early next day to help, if we could.

Going up, carried by four stalwarts in a kind of canvas hammock, I listened to their talk, which was not cheering, for they were sure we should find the coffee garden, if not the house, a charred heap, till I told them about our prayers round the telescope, which reassured them; and they turned to lighter matter. One delightful bit of information I gleaned, "That spider’s web (it was a glistening sheet high in air suspended between trees) is like the web the spider wove over the mouth of the cave where David hid when he was flying from Saul."

We got up to find the forest people exhausted after three hard nights and days’ fight with the ten--mile-long snake of fire. They had run short of food, and were too tired to stir even though that snake was still crawling on. It had just reached our ground, had crossed the border, and was six feet in, the very hour we got up. No harm was done to the place, not a bush scorched, only a little grass burned. The Wall of Fire had been round about it. That evening, fed and rested, the forest guard and coolies came to our house for a meeting. As they sat round the fire whose hearthstone is the uprooted Siva’s symbol, they saw it and quite visibly started. Then we told them the story of the prayer round the telescope, and to our joy the headman exclaimed, "Why, that was reasonable. We fight a fire with counter-fire." And they described how, and told of the awful devouring power of the counter-fire, and of how one of themselves had been burnt to a cinder in it

only a year ago. "The presence of your God was the Counter-Fire. No wonder your whole place was kept safe. The fire knew the Fire." Not often has a missionary's text such illustrations: the impotent hearthstone, the Almighty Counter-Fire (the memory of that devouring fire that had slain their comrade suggested another thought: "A fire shall go forth from His wrath and who shall quench it?"); together they preached in words as vivid as flames. And the men listened, and we knew they understood. Which things are allegories. As indeed is everything one sees in this glorious open-air world of God. Look at the fresh grass where the fire licked the rock. Is there nothing there? no word for the desolated of all time? But the story flashes across the years to the Brownie, flings its radiance and its glory round that story of those years, of that walk, and that arrival, writes in bright letters over the page of the life of a simple Indian girl these great words "The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done His marvellous works that they ought to be had in remembrance. Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, 0 Lord: there is not one that can do as Thou doest."

Glow-worms' Eggs

Neither compared I unto her any precious stone, because all gold in respect of her is as a little sand, and silver shall be counted as clay before her. Above health and comeliness I loved her, and I chose to have her rather than light, because her bright shining is never laid to rest.- Wis 7:9-10. R.V.

1.02.08. Book 2: Ch 8. Glow-worms' Eggs

CHAPTER VIII

ROUGHEST travelling at home is luxury compared to bullock-cart travelling in India across open plains deep in sand, on roads which, off the main thoroughfares of the land, are execrable, down dried-up water-courses, if it be the hot weather (and then sickening heat is added to the comforts of the way), or through sticky mud and muddy water of uncertain bottom, if it be the wet season. Certain parts of China sound as nice, but in those parts there is, we hope, less prostrating heat. The direct rays of the sun in tropical India have to be experienced to be understood; the mere reflected glare can kill. But had that journey across country been ten times as tiring as it was, it would have been fifty miles of joy to the three who now nearing Dohnavur on a certain memorable day could hardly sit in the carts, so impatient were they to arrive. And when they did-but there are some things too rapturous to write about.

It took a week or more to hear the Brownie’s story, settle her into the new life and begin her education. At first, too, there was the rather disquieting possibility of a law suit. We could not have proved her over sixteen and, as I said before, eighteen was the safe age. Her people would certainly have got her had they gone to court, that is, according to the courts of earth they would have got her; but to us who have seen, as I have told, the reversal of a decree set forth in an earthly court, seen the case won in the heavenly court, seen that awful, glorious paragraph in the 18th Psalm which by a powerful word rends the heavens, and reveals what is, even the Arm of the Lord stretched forth between the riven thunder-clouds-"He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters"-to us who have seen this tremendous poetry move in tremendous deed here and now, in this matter-of-fact twentieth century, nothing seems difficult, nothing impossible. But in those days we had not seen, and I remember how we prayed that the quietness of our God might be upon the uncles that they might be unable to move.

We found the Brownie extraordinarily enlightened. Continually in teaching her, as often in teaching other converts who had learned nothing before they came to us, but had only heard of our Lord in open-air preaching, we found ourselves recalling those mysterious words in St. John, "That was the true Light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

I stopped there for a moment and thought, searching for a picture to tell what words cannot. The shadows of the leaves are dancing like grey elves on the grey rocks opposite; that is the Dance of the Day, familiar everywhere; but the Dance of the Night in these forests, after rain, is something so unlike anything one sees at home that it is not easily shown. And I think it is the picture I was seeking.

Imagine a waterfall pure white in faint moonlight; see behind it a cave, black as a hollow carved in jet; see that cave one dazzle of pale, green, moving lights: that is the Dance of the Night. And in the open over the water, up and down in the shadowy wood, everywhere they are dancing, myriads and myriads of fire-flies starring the trees, lighting the stream, everywhere one mazy

movement of throbbing, living light.

We found the mother of them, one dewy early morning. She was crawling round our door as if looking for a way in, a long, dark-brown important-looking person, carefully carrying her two large lights. We welcomed her in, and that evening in the dark read by her light the words I have quoted from St. John, her lamps trailed across the page which opened by chance at those words, and we read them as easily as one reads by any small clear light, so bright were those lovely green ovals.

She was a placid creature, quite easily observed. Before we read her story in Fabre, whose insect books are useful for such purposes, we had seen all he describes, seen her project her wonderful little tidying apparatus and tidy herself after meals (it was almost like seeing a pocket-comb produced and used, only the pocket-comb "worked" itself); seen her chloroform her prey, the fat snails we gave her, before converting them into soup, seen her in fact live her leisurely, illuminated life. The wonder of that life lies in its light: the Indian firefly is a beetle; his beginning is an egg; the egg is luminous from the moment of its creation. We have seen the eggs laid in the moist sand. They were like pale pearls alight.

Light, light, shall we ever get to the end of the wonders and the mysteries of light? Think of the wealth of it there is to spare when the very beetles can begin in light, be cradled in it, nursed in it; light pure as light can be, part of their very being.

It reminds one of nothing so much as the lavishness of gold used for the decoration of the pupa case of the Danais butterfly, that exquisite blue-green pocket with its rows of golden balls, not yellow, but as if made of real gold dust. And we have butterflies whose feathers are far more golden than the under side of the dove’s wings in sunset, which the rejoicing poet saw as he looked up one evening apparently after a depressing day; we have seen exactly the same thing when the white herons fly home across the rice fields at sunset. Feathers of yellow gold, he wrote, pleased I am sure to have got the exact word. But these butterflies have on their wings something of the apparent quality of gold, as golden as gold. For the earth is full of God’s riches, and He puts these things in it for our comfort perhaps, knowing some of us are often short of the other gold which is so useful for the present. He who has gold to spare for pupae and butterflies’ wings, say the little clear voices that sound from all creation, will find enough for us to do all He means us to do; just as those lighted eggs seem to tell of a light so abundant that we need never fear we shall be left to walk in darkness.

How did that light get into the egg?

Nobody knows. We live among mysteries. No one even knows exactly what the light is. Learned words describe it. They do not really explain it, they are rather like the doctors in Matthew Arnold’s poem who shake their sapient heads and give the ills they cannot cure a name. We give the things we cannot know a name; when we go back and back to the how, we are shut up to mysteries.

"Certain tissues of the bodies of these beetles have the power of giving off light, just as other tissues exert a mechanical action or emit electrical energy. The luminosity is under the control of the insect and heat is not produced. It has been remarked that these insects can convert a quantity of energy into its full equivalent of light without loss due to the production of heat: no means are known of doing this artificially, and even the most modern devices for light production convert only a fraction of the energy into light." Wonderful, yes. Explicable, no. We live among

mysteries.

We live among them too in the spiritual world. Who can understand how this other Light, this Light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, enters into the soul of him, saturates it with light, which no darkness can entirely quench till, if, that awful day comes when it chooses darkness rather than light? Then, or so it appears to us, the light goes out. But there again we touch a mystery. Our Brownie had not so chosen; her light had not gone out; at the first glimpse of a greater, all within her had responded, and that other mystery, the will, had willed for more. To watch the effect of spiritual truth now for the first time being brought to bear upon her from outside, was like watching two lights meet and merge.

I shall never forget teaching her about our Lord’s death on the Cross. She was very ignorant, never having learned to read, and so I read slowly from the 19th of St. John, stopping only to explain an out-of-the-way word or expression, trusting to the revealing Spirit to do the rest. We were on our knees: how can anyone read such words comfort ably sitting down? How bear them? The Brownie, to whom the whole tragedy was appallingly new and vivid and awful, broke down utterly. "How could they hurt Him? How could they?" she sobbed hotly. 0 God, forgive us that we can read that story ever, and be cold. The Minor Operation

Again, there is another that is slow, and hath need of help, wanting ability, and full of poverty; yet the eye of the Lord looked upon him for good, and set him up from his low estate.- Sir 11:12.

1.02.09. Book 2: Ch 9. The Minor Operation

CHAPTER IX THE Brownie soon showed of what stuff she was made. She had, when she came to us, long trailing ears, the idea of her caste and various others of this South land being that the more the jewels hung in such an ear lie along the shoulder, the more admirable it is. But none of our girls had such ears. For this doubtless they are grievously commiserated by all but the more educated, Still the Brownie, being nothing if not thorough, wanted her ears short, and this meant a cutting, called by the nearest Government dispenser a minor operation.

It might have been major, however, in the Brownie’s imagination, nor should I greatly enjoy to lie down on the operating table in that grubby little surgery, and feel a pair of scissors snipping about my ears. This particular man not only cut, he did what he called trimmings; these were literal trimmings, and conducted with exactly as much deliberation as if he had been dealing with tuckers. Then when one was done there was the other. And this was the least of considerations. The real crux lay in the fact that, should a court case follow, the fact that a portion of flesh belonging to the caste had been deducted from the debated goods would not by any means ease the situation. Such matters expressed in legal language can be made to sound quite serious. We knew that; but the Brownie was fixed in her determination to get rid of her horrid heathenish ears, and it was done accordingly.

"And much to be approved," remarked the operator, clipping carefully, "such being remnants of barbaric age of remarkable ignorance," for he and his were of short-eared customs. And he discoursed on education, and the benefits thereof, much in the spirit of those two frank souls, who, in an essay on Friendship for the matriculation examination not long ago, wrote feelingly, "We must always have friends; they might become Stationmasters, and give us free passes, or even become Judges, which they can help us more if accused." And again, "He stuck to his kiths and kins and gave them all best posts." Not one word in fifty did the Brownie understand even when he descended to Tamil; but then her ears were fully occupied with their own affair: and did not listen much. This was a pity, for his flow was wonderful. And as always when under this sort of waterspout I wondered however he did it, till I remembered his literature. That explained it. We do not often dip into these wells, but quite lately we did. It was by mistake. An advertisement gloriously worded offered a book promising rather rare historical information; and we bought it.

We did not proceed far. Garbage is not attractive food. But a sentence or two remain with us, have become indeed household words. The pleased human face, for example: "Each undulation of the face while smiling was shedding sweet lustre like moonbeams all round"; or an absent-minded person: "Lost in a dream as it were which enveloped her as with a halo"; or a troubled spirit: "A flood of tears came gushing into his both eyes which he with the utmost effort could ill afford to keep under control"; "Her corrugated eyebrows quivering lips and convulsing bosom evinced the most ineffable anguish"; and, most lovely and lucid of all, this on fear: "The very blood running into her veins seemed to have divided itself to shallow her up into its chosen." But such were endless, every page sparkled with them: "A dreamland of felicity beaming with the effulgence of the vernal

bright moon floating in the ocean of liquid gold before their fancied vision. To picture in fancy its splendour would indeed be soaring on elysian reverie far beyond the conception of human conception. The fragrant candles burning with it emitted beautiful sweet scented odour and light of uncommon effulgence converting the hall into the pleasure hall of the gods. All the while sweetest music was pouring ambrosia into the ears of those present there." And these pleasant things happened "where all the beauties and rareties of the world conglomerated." When we retired from the pages of that book; there was, as it remarked about somebody else, "no other alternative than to run away laughing in our sleeve."

They that feed upon them are like unto them; but is it not instructive to see what beauties and rareties can be "conglomerated" with our plain English tongue? One cannot help wondering what will become of it when the new Indian policy takes effect on the schools and colleges of the land. Perhaps the soul of it will join company with those souls of which that bright book writes, "they took eternal rest under the cover of the earth." But the medical’s talk, though interesting, was unnecessary, and I tried to get him off his conversation exclusively on to his work; in vain: it was too good an opportunity to miss, and to do him justice I must say he worked well too. The ears were quite a success. I thought the Brownie might be faint afterwards, and had some sal volatile ready. Not she. She screwed her face into a bunch and never moved even under the trimmings. The minor operation over, she slipped off the table, said salaam to the operator, and smiled to me. Never was such an imperturbable Brownie. The first thing thereafter was to learn to read. After a month or two of struggle I found the poor Brownie in tears on her knees. She was explaining to her Father in heaven, Who was, she was sure, interested in the matter, that all these years she had been kept, and now she had been brought and "joined" and all was well, only she could not learn to read. Would not He Who had done such great things for her do this last little thing?

It was done. The Brownie learned to read. But the story shows her exactly, for she was not endowed with "mystigating intellect," another of our new words, she was in fact stupid. The first time she travelled by train she could not be persuaded to hurry and was nearly left behind. "I thought it would wait for me," she said, calculating as half India does the speed of all vehicles by the habits of the familiar bullock-cart. But though not clever she was very strong and very simple in her faith, and worth so much to the Father of us all, that there was nothing He would not have done to help her. For there is power in the Name. She had called upon the name of the Lord, "0 Lord, I beseech Thee deliver my soul." She had loved what she knew of the One with the Name that is above every name. Whisper that name in the ear of the Father, ever so faintly, ever so ignorantly, and instantly all the angelic forces of heaven are at your service; and energies are set in motion on your behalf, beside which the torrent of our river when a tremendous rainstorm floods the watershed, and great, mad, leaping, racing, living white thunders down the ravine, is as the trickle of a dew drop down a daisy stem. And now for this trifle He was at hand again, for there is nothing in all creation too small for Him to note. The relatives heard about the minor operation, but they did not file a suit, which was an unspeakable relief, for fights in the courts-or anywhere else for that matter-are anything but joys. There is such a thing as the joy of battle; I know it: it is a very solemn joy. But for the most part battles are full of the most prosaic weariness, toil, discouragement and fear. The glamour and the poetry, and the glory of them-who knows anything of these things at the time? It is just grim hand to throat fight.

Last night we overheard a forest fight. Crash, crash went what sounded like dry branches cracking one against the other, sometimes the trampling and crashing sounded far down the ravine, then it would come nearer, till the noise seemed to be plunging about in the river-bed by our pool; every stamp, every crack echoed through the house.

There was a little moon, but the forest lay in black darkness, and except for the racket which was doubled as all sounds here are by the precipitous rocks, it was quiet as a church. We sat up in the dark for twenty minutes or so and listened, not lighting a lamp because we half hoped to see the big forms of the two sambur emerge from the forest fringe at our doors. Gradually the noise died away, and we wondered how much of their beautiful antlers remained to either of them.

We have learned in Dohnavur to thank God for peaceful, commonplace days and quiet nights, though we do ask to be kept from that sloth of spirit which would shrink back from battle; and for everyone who offers to us I copy these words from Garibaldi to his soldiers:

"Come. . . I promise you weariness, hardship, and battles. But we will conquer or die." And these too from Pere Didon:

"I do not want people who come to me under certain reservations. In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing. . . ." And again:

"This sacred work demands not lukewarm, selfish, slack souls, but hearts more finely tempered than steel, wills purer and harder than the diamond."

Cleaning Up O holy Lord of all hallowing, keep undefiled for ever This house that hath been lately cleansed. - 2Ma 14:36 .

1.02.10. Book 2: Ch 10. Cleaning Up

CHAPTER X THIS chapter began with the fixed intention of keeping to the plains; but the forest allures: I hear its call; I feel its breath. Keep it out of our book I cannot; it will end in being steeped in it.

South Indian mountains are built of gneiss veined in parts with lovely coloured stone, which the children find in bits in the river bed, and which we turned out in quantities when the house was going up. Great boulders are strewn all over the ravine, blocks of granite-weatherworn and beautiful. Here and there buried in greenery we come across what looks like a playground of giants. Did they play ball in those days of the making of mountains? We often find traces of an interrupted game of ball; sometimes they played at making caves. Near the house there is one such, called the Cave of the Good Samaritan because a near relative of that kind man discovered it, and got a ladder made down into it; for the giants forgot the staircase. In this cave I am to-day. It has followed the fashion of the mountains and shaped itself horseshoe wise. Round me on three sides and narrowing towards the fourth are tree-crowned rocks, fifty feet or more from base to summit; ten feet from the ground at the place where the cave is contrived, there is a little level space, walled by the dark rocks and roofed by the greenery seen as a tracery against the sky. This platform drops, where the horseshoe opens, straight down to that which has come unbidden and mixed itself up in the Brownie’s story, the Ferny Rill. When first we found it, it was not a rill but noisome, choked-up swamp, a haunt of mosquitoes, of whom, alas, a few remain for the discipline of our characters. Sluggishly crawling from under the rock was water of the consistency of badly made coffee. All it could do, poor leaf-smothered thing, was to ooze through the jungly undergrowth and try to look after a clump of cane, the beautiful-cane of commerce whose palm-like foliage fills the nearer foreground where the horse-shoe opens.

We cleaned up the swamp, found a gravel bed and clear water, helped it on its way, planted ferns by it, tree ferns from higher levels, and that joy of ferneries, the lygodium scandens. At this season our rill is perfumed with an air so sweet that when it meets us as we go down to it we stop to drink it in, and wonder whence it comes: "There is no air like that which comes as through a filter made of a hundred scented trees, a subtle mingling of their clean woody odours," as Seton Merriman writes of the mountain air of Corsica, and India is a land of scented trees. Or it may be from some high flowering thing, for the trees hereabouts are towering pillars, creeper-covered, and far overhead the creepers fling out tassels and festoons. Perhaps from one of them this sweetness drops. The Rill-the Brownie. How many a might-be ferny rill in this crowded India works its way feebly through the undergrowth of life, choked by the debris of things, the crushing pettiness of the futile, losing itself finally in some poor swamp. How many in England and in all lands. Wasted lives we call them, and perhaps wonder a little sadly over them, puzzled by the scheme of things that includes them in its scope: If we had the handling of it, should we not considerably improve it? "I be creator, chopping and changing it?" No, but there is a chopping and changing open to us and intended. Somewhere is the swamp we are meant to re-create. Let us find it then, set to work to turn it into a rill, plant fair things by its edges, see it sparkle under God’s blue sky, feel it fill with the

breath of the blessed flowers of God, know something of that unearthly joy, the joy of being in the least little measure fellow-workers with the first great Maker of Gardens: And the Lord God planted a garden. Shall we ever get to the end of those words?

There was debris to clear away, of course, in our Brownie. She had thought the good things of life were to be found in getting, not giving; she had all sorts of upside-down ideas about what was fitting and what was not, the conventions of existence-and India is as full of them as any London drawing-room-had seemed important to her; of the things that really count she knew little. But the rill was cleared and ferns began to grow, and sweet airs hung about it, and there was one less swamp in the world to make the angels sorrowful. Poor angels, they must sometimes long to see all the world's jungles cleaned; and how they must wish, if they are subject to such human things as wishes, that they might join us visibly sometimes, and set to, and help us to clean up.

We had an unexpected cleaning up to do in our ravine when first we bought it. It had been owned by a Mohammedan who had bought if from a Hindu who had set up a shrine which the Mohammedan, not desiring to invite the wrath of any gods, had left untouched. When first we explored the upper river-side we found a Persian rose tree growing by the water, and oleander, and jasmine; the pink of the roses and oleander sang like a new, clear note through the harmony of green and grey, arresting us at once. Now, few love flowers in this South land enough to plant them just for joy's sake, and we were as much puzzled as pleased, for we did not know about the shrine, till one day we came upon it. Siva's symbol, a stone sacred all over India; and a cast-iron idol, called the Demon of the Chain, a most fierce godling. Set in front of it, just as the Hindu had left them years ago, were a censor, lamp and bell. At first we thought it would be good to do as Gideon was commanded to do, and throw down the altar of Baal, but we knew that would not impress the coolies who by that time were with us, nearly so much (for they would never go near the place) as would the sight of those things made impotent: so we carried them to the coolie hut, which as there was no place else we all shared with them. This hut is hardly a house, there are no rooms, only four verandahs opening on a square courtyard, unroofed of course, into which the rain pours in wet weather, and out of which it drains by a channel cut through one of the walls. It is built of stone and mud, thatched with grass, and its floor is beaten earth, cheerful mud in rain.

We, the Tara set and I, had one verandah; for coolies were hard to get in sufficient numbers and those eager children were worth more to us than twice their number of hired carriers; it was they who did most of the carrying away of the excavated earth from the house site, and with Preena as leader they took a full share in all our undertakings. On the other three sides of the hut the coolies we had been able to get, some thirty of them, cooked their rice and curry in the evening, each set by his own little fire; and after supper they and the caste-men from the grass huts all round, carpenters and masons, superior people and unable to mix with coolies, gathered round and listened for as long as we could keep awake to talk to them. This was the opportunity for the Demon of the Chain. The meeting over we all crept into our respective corners (ours was made private with mats), and in the quiet that followed the meeting we heard the coolies discussing which, of all the awful things that might be expected, was most likely to occur that night. They knew as we knew that on one occasion a tiger had jumped over the low roof into the middle of the square. Would it be a tiger? Or would the roof fall in upon us? Or would we just quietly expire, being breathed upon by the offended demon? They were really alarmed, and if it had not been too cold for them outside they would have stampeded; as it was I half feared they might at earliest

dawn, if they survived their terrors. So I emerged, and though Judith in her wisdom besought her people not to bind the counsels of the Lord, a word I always remember in such moments, I felt I must and might, and I assured them not a hair of their heads would perish that night. Neither did it. They all awoke in health. Months afterwards I heard they explained the marvel thus: "The Demon is: It lives. But as soon as the Aroma and her children came It fled from before their faces into the depths of the jungle; and It fears to return."

However that be, the village from which those men came is moving towards Christianity now; we have been asked to go and take meetings there. And of the caste-men who listened, two confessed Christ in baptism. "We will be baptised in the Forest where first we heard the Good Words," they said, and thus it was, our pastor coming up for the purpose, to the joy of us all and of our pool to whom such a joy was new. The bell we kept for ringing to various functions in the house. Siva’s symbol (God’s stone, returned to its rightful Owner) became a hearthstone to preach to every Hindu who enters the place that the gods of the nations are idols but the Lord made the heavens. And the roses and oleander and jasmine, used in the old days for garlands for the departed demon, make beautiful the house that He has given to us to set His name there. Not ... But

They shall not be sought for in publick council, nor sit high in the congregation. . . . But they will maintain the state of the world.- Sir 38:33-34

1.02.11. Book 2: Ch 11. Not . . . But

CHAPTER XI As soon as she understood about baptism the Brownie wanted to be baptised. And one glorious evening late in November, after great rain had washed the hot world and all creation sang, we went together to the nearest water, and the Iyer baptised her as he did all our converts, though he repeatedly declared he was not sent to baptise but to preach the Gospel.

It was a perfect service taken as he took it. No hint of formality in its reverence, no paralysing half reality; it was all vital, real, a visible sign and seal of the invisible. Then too, a baptism in the open air in fresh water, under evening skies, in India at any rate, is something very good. We almost heard the angels sing as we walked home together. The matter of her name had been important to the Brownie. Her own original name was Six-faced, the name of a pleasing demon. There was therefore no question about changing it. She had a shy little under-longing to have my name, but I persuaded her out of that. It is poor enough in its mangled English; in Tamil it is even less desirable. Consolation finally came through the translation of my second name, Beatrice, which, from the day when I pored over Dante in the Manchester Free Library and came out into the street afterwards wondering what the people who brushed past me would be like if they had seen his visions, had felt too high for me, and so had tucked itself out of sight.

Suhinie (Happiness, or Blessedness) she then became. The name fitted her, for she was a blessing to everyone she came across, though she would have been much astonished to know it, and she made a kind of sunny happiness all round her. She would have been a perfect wife and mother, but unfortunately in our district the Christians keep caste in marriage and there was not a bridegroom of Suhinie’s caste: So the Church lost the greatest gift we could have helped to give it, a new true Christian home set up in its midst. Not that it minded, or minds. Caste-keeping comes far first.

How far first can only be understood by remembering how important marriage is from an Indian point of view. Witness, for example, the following petition brought to our door not long ago, by the poor Christian brother himself, a man from Travancore, miles away from us. He was perfectly sure we should feel ourselves obliged to help him to buy the required jewels, and so on. Why not?

"The bearer (followed a description of the stalwart working man) is under troubles owing to expenses of a daughter’s marriage which is to take place soon, and therefore I invite the help of every true and duty-bound Christian to meet the demands of this poor Christian brother." It was signed by the pastor of the Church. And yet more important even than something considered so imperative that if it cannot be done on one’s own money it must be done on somebody else’s, is this matter of caste-keeping-the exceptions few and shining prove the rule-and never for one single moment is it questioned. Marriage is important, inevitable, imperative. Yes, but more so ten thousand times is the keeping of caste.

Still, marriage is the goal of life. Suhinie had been brought up to think so, and it had never crossed her mind that she would be unmarried. She did not break her heart, being an eminently sensible

person, but being woman all through she would have pined away if she had been shut up to some dull life, and mercifully that was not necessary. The nursery work had just begun, and it held in itself enough to satisfy the latent mother in her; for it is mother-work, demanding those qualities of truth and unselfishness and patience and limitless love which shine forth in all the true mothers of the world, and it offered those sweet, secret consolations, those dearest of little human loves that return, oh so generously, all that is poured forth. Who that has known it does not bless the Love that first created the fresh, warm, ever-forgiving love of a child? For the Brownie had come to us at the right time. A work was beginning which in the purpose of our God was to grow beyond our thoughts for it, and during those first years we were feeling our way back through innumerable obstacles to the simplicity of New Testament Christianity, to an ideal which has for its very central word, Sacrifice. This ideal has never been wholly dead in India; disguised under many a false cover it walks about all over the land; here and there it is found in naked truth among the Hindus: among Christians, it is not more popular than it is at home.

It is not easy to write of how it worked out into practical action with us, and perhaps the less written the better. We at Dohnavur had proved that the words, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," were quite literally true. There was an hour, never to be forgotten, when alone in my room I faced what then seemed the utmost worst that could befall these children should no help come. Literal hunger unto death, so easy to accept for ourselves, was not easy to think of for them, and there are many practical difficulties in connection with it when it comes to the point of facing it for a family. But what was it in comparison with that other death to which, if we refused them, they were condemned? But help came. The steps of faith that day "trod on the seeming void and found the Rock beneath." So we had proved Him Enough for the care of the children. We were now to prove Him Comfort and Defence when the scourge of the tongue fell upon us, as it did, when the group of workers, so small when the Brownie came that we hardly knew how to compass the day’s work, grew larger as one and another drawn by the love of the Lord joined us at Dohnavur.

Those who thus came knew the children could not be saved if no one were willing to lose life’s usual best for their sake. They had been smitten to the heart by the wrong wrought through uncounted cruel years, they had looked at Calvary and seen that which melted the heart thus stricken. Surely if He could suffer so much they could suffer a little? And so they turned from what would have been their life, had they not felt that smiting, seen that heavenly vision; and they asked to be allowed to break through the law of their land, wise law, the land being what it is, and they said, "Let us pour out all we have at the feet of the Crucified." Could we refuse them? Could we, dare we set limits to their love because what they asked was difficult and dangerous and new? Difficult and dangerous indeed, for India is not England. We who have been long enough in the East to become more than half-Easternised find ourselves looking with wonder at the pictures of our illustrated papers which show English girls going about safely and freely where they will, none making them afraid. The unsafest country in Europe is safe in comparison with India; and many a black night of fear has rolled over the head of the one responsible for allowing these girls to choose, fear beside which that earlier fear of mere death for the children was as nothing. But what is faith if it is never to rise to anything but the safe and the easy? And does not our Lord sometimes call us to the new?

Just then, to our exceeding help, a little book published by the C.M.S. came to the house, a book to be read on the knees of the spirit. It was called "When God Came." We heard it was being studied and discussed. We did not find it possible to discuss it. It took us to a place where all talk ceases, and the cry of the spirit is, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

There in that secret place, that which had seemed impossible to do was done, the group of girls and young women already in being, was fashioned into a fellowship simple but recognised as the very core of the spirit of the work at Dohnavur. And a new quickening was granted to us all, a new love. This band of unmarried women Suhinie found entirely amazing. To work without pay (some lost all to join us, some who had a little shared it, some who had nothing received daily bread and raiment to put on, but no one wanted "pay"), this was the first astonishment.

Then the work they did: it was humble work, for from the first we took all work to be royal service; and there was no distinction of rank, all were one. Arulai Tara, just then herself walking through fires of trial, was the oldest sister in that little group and she led the Brownie on by sheer force of bright example, till upon that simple mind great thoughts dawned, and the life purchased at such cost was spent out in service to the uttermost, as one of a band so lowly, so weak in itself, so handicapped in various ways, that there can be no fear surely that any will mistake and give to it the glory that belongs to Another. Sometimes we think our God must have been looking for something very small when He chose us to do this work for Him in India. But such a life asks for a clear-cut separation from the things that are not of the Father. The two lives will not mix. And those who are seeking so to follow will feel as we feel more and more every day we live, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

Lover of the Unlovables The remembrance of Josias is like the composition of the perfume that is made by the art of the apothecary: it is sweet as honey in all mouths, and as musick at the banquet of wine.- Sir 49:1.

1.02.12. Book 2: Ch 12. Lover of the Unlovables

CHAPTER XII THE mosquitoes of the Cave proved too disciplinarian. Sella, who thoughtfully came to enquire after my welfare, suggested the Mosquito Song, and she balanced herself on one foot on a projecting stone, and began hopefully:

I'll speak to you in Tamil, Po, Polite and pleasant Mosquito.

I'll speak to you in English, Go, You horrid little Mosquito. And if you won't I'll shortly spill Your sinful little soul, and will Gloat on your mangled corpse, and so Take good advice and promptly go, Abominable Mosquito. But the creatures took no notice. It was we who had to "po," and we dropped down to the Ferny Rill and found our way to the river, and sat under The Tree. He is a tree by himself. His uplifted arms seem to pierce the blue. From his branches hang the great curly ropes of the liana* we call the monkey-swing creeper from its habit of making most wonderful swings for the monkeys, who cross these tree-tops sometimes in troops of forty or fifty at a time, or perch like huge fruit in most precarious positions, or swing in their perfect swings. Great black monkeys they are, some with long tails and white caps, others with short tails tufted like lions', and big ruffles round their necks; these last huge beasts are dangerous, and attack man. A friend of ours had one which had killed a child. Sometimes the common brown monkeys come, but they are interlopers and seem to know it; this is the Black Monkeys' land, and of the two kinds the White Caps are the more interesting for they are the kind King Solomon's sailors brought to him from these parts, whose Tamil name is in the Hebrew Bible. "Whoo Whoo," they say, "Who who was he, that King who made us famous: who who?"

*Entada Scandens.

These monkeys seem to fear nothing except tigers. The foresters tell us they are so petrified by fear when a tiger comes, sits under their tree and grimaces and growls, that they seem tin able to escape as they easily could over the roof of the forest; and sooner or later one drops to the waiting beast below. But since we watched potter-wasps putting caterpillars to sleep, and glow-worms snails, we have comforted ourselves. Must there not be other ways of which we do not know, as merciful as those of which we do know a little, by which what looks harsh is made gentle?

We experienced something of the same sort ourselves once. Some of us were coming down the hill when a snake crossed the path, and lashed out at us. I had never seen a snake attack before.

Very few do it. There was no time to recognise it; its movements were so rapid. First at me, then at one of the children, then at another it sprang, and we all stood absolutely fascinated for those few seconds, not one of us even thinking of moving. Another spring and it was in the jungle. "We weren't even frightened," said the children, and it was true. Surely the tender mercy of the Lord reaches to His creatures of the forest. My tree-to return to him-because of the way he co-operates with his brethren and a great lichen-painted, overhanging, green-grey rock to make coolness and shade, is to me at this moment the tree of trees. High above, mixed with his foliage, streamers of his liana tendrils swing like pennons in the blue air. From these hang curved brown pods, in pairs,

thirty to forty inches long, each containing a dozen or so large seeds, polished like chestnuts, perfect playthings for babies, as they are much too big to swallow and cannot be broken or bitten. These seeds we find everywhere, and carry down to the Dohnavur nurseries in basketfuls. But his birds-all day long they whirl and flutter and sing among his branches. Sometimes there is a shoot of blue, and the fairy bluebird, that gem of creation, flashes like a jewel through the air; or it is the dear little green bulbul hard to see among the green leaves; or the woodpecker, who is always in a tearing hurry, talks rudely and hardly lets you catch, a glimpse of his gorgeous colours. And all the time the river and the woods about it ring with the grass-green barbet's kootroo-kootroo, and the whistling schoolboy's whistle rarely twice alike.

It is he who haunts mountain rivers, and whistles us awake, dear bird, half an hour before sunrise every morning, and in the evening calls us to vespers; wet or fine matters not to him. His whistle is never what the correct call perfect, so in their folly they call him the idle schoolboy, whereas he is not idle at all but always practising even if, like most of us, he never quite attains.

Then there are yellow bulbuls and little flame-coloured and copper-coloured and withered-leaf-red and orange minivets, whole aviaries of them, and butterflies almost as large; one brought to me a moment ago measures six inches across and she is quite ordinary. These float drowsily down by the water, or to their own surprise apparently, find themselves gallivanting high in air, caught by a playful breeze. But of all the sights my tree sees, and of all the sounds he hears, not excluding the beasts' at night, I think the most amazing is the great-hornbill's. When first the children heard him they fled. It was like an animal noise, and a very snarling noise at that, dropping down from the sky. We could hardly believe it was a bird's, till we saw the cause of it flapping his great black and white wings and stretching out his enormous yellow beak high above the tree-tops. Always when he appears there is a rush to see him for he is a truly wonderful bird.

He frequents dense forests. In nesting time he builds a wall round his beloved, who is comfortably ensconced in the hole in the trunk of a tree-it is our ambition to find that tree. In the wall he leaves a window, and through it he feeds her till her work is finished and the young birds can fly out.

All this my tree must know and see and hear; and something of the joy of life, this wonderful wild-wood joy seems to swing in his topmost branches, and slip down his long trunk, and touch me as I write. There is so much sadness in the world, so many hearts ache, so many tears fall, it is rather wonderful to be away for a little while in a tearless world, left just as God made it. There is something exhilarating too, in companying with these elemental things; they seem to carry one back to the beginnings, the fundamentals, the things that cannot be shaken, ancient verities of God. And to those weary of the stifling and uncertain in Oriental life, the ceaseless effort to get things done, the equally ceaseless effort to retain and to develop to ever finer perception one's sense of eternal values, to maintain sincerely the fight of faith-to such the calm strength of mountains is an uplifting, steadying thing, the pure clean joy of forests is precious, the ministry of rivers blessed healing.

Just at this moment, my river, pleased because it has been raining lately, is singing and dancing for joy. Sometimes we spend a whole day with him; climb his boulders, up which you scramble if you are young, and hoist yourself by means of a kind brown hand and a hooked stick if you are old, and he takes you to his secret places, far, far up. Pools he keeps there, no human eyes ever saw before, little falls that catch the light and weave their spray into rainbows; fairy rainbows we

call them, but angels' rainbows would be a better name, for the delighted angels must oftener enjoy them. By one of these upper reaches is a cave, cool on the hottest day, and you can sit in it and hear the gurgles of tiny runlets slipping between stones mixing with the deeper tone of the song he sings among his dripping rocks. A great tree trunk has fallen across him just where he creeps out of the upper forest, making a kind of boundary beyond which he will not easily suffer even his personal friends to pass. This trunk is covered with orchids, for through the rainless months a mist rises up from the earth and waters the whole face of the ground, and things that love damp places grow all about, treasure new to us, and the lastrea, and blechnum and rare lovely davallia and sellaginella of our home ferneries, and, even more eagerly welcomed, the lady ferns and hart's tongues, and mosses of home. And it is all dim and green and cool; and being tropical river and wood there is always that alluring mystery of the unknown hanging over it all. One never knows what new joy may be waiting round the next boulder. But we cannot linger long or we shall be belated. In all our climbing expeditions it is an unwritten law that we go up where we can, and trust to a friendly fortune to help us to get down. But we must leave time for it. It takes time to negotiate what sometimes, from above at least, looks like the edge of the eaves of a house, the wall being what we have to descend. More than once we have all but had to sleep out in the woods, and as this would mean lighting a fire, a thing to be avoided in the reserved forest, we have been thankful when, somehow, anyhow, we got down before nightfall.

Sometimes we forsake our river, and make friends with the mountain that he thinks of as a father and we as the king of the hills, though he is not the highest; 5,017 feet is his registered height. Upon his summit are huge boulders naked to the winds of heaven, and the story is that on him Rama rested when he went to search for Seetha, and that he ate some fruit up there and left the kernels lying about. Nothing more likely in a land where "Bury or burn" your debris is a dictum unknown.

First, there is a belt of forest to get through as best you can, then steep open fells, if anything so uncertain as those upper grassy levels can be called fells. They have a way of dropping suddenly from under your feet, and when they drop they drop far. From a rock up there which we call the Cathedral Rock, the house appears like a little neat doll's house, so extraordinarily neat and nice that we wonder how our clumsy selves ever got into it. From that rock which is we reckon about 2,000 feet above the house, every word spoken by us drifts down; not shouted words, but an ordinary, "Take care, Neela, don't slip," spoken to the child next one. And the dolls belonging to the house below hear and call out to us; and the thin little voices float up. Once one of the children started a song, "Lord, here Thy great Cathedral stands," and instantly the dolls' voices joined ours and we sang together, the voices from below floating up in the most solemn way in the great silence.

It was like listening with God. Do our words, our common everyday words, rise up like that? Is there anything to stop them from reaching very Heaven? (How awful then, are words.) Suddenly on that still mountain-side words lost their trifling aspect. It was stripped off them. How many words would be left unsaid if we thought of them setting forth as soon as spoken on that infinite journey through space. But the children are seldom for long impressed by any serious reflections. The vastness of the great cathedral solemnises them for a minute or two and they listen, hushed, to the curious unfamiliar voices of their own below; for the voices are like wires for thinness, something like the voice heard through a telephone. Then tired of being quiet enough to listen they clamber

off to hunt for grass orchids, warily, for a slip would mean a very long fall, and shouting so excitedly when they come upon a find that the grave old mountain wonders at their ways. Not an animal do we see though we come across their tracks. They too have heard the shouts, and disapproving have retired. But they will come back, for they know no one carries a gun here. The ravine is sanctuary to them. But we have wandered far from my tree, and now on the other stone underneath it sits Rukma, watching the great black and blue butterflies flickering up-stream.

"Rukma, what do you remember of Suhinie?"

"She was fatter than the rest of us and could not run as well, but she used to come and join our races, and take it so good-naturedly if we laughed." Thus Rukma the athlete, who runs like the wind and dives like a kingfisher, and knows nothing out of reach in the world of joyous physical activities. But Rukma had other remembrances. "Afterwards when she was a nurse, if there was a poor, thin, cross baby anywhere, she took to that baby, and loved it, and played with it till it got happy. That's what I remember best of her." And she added, "If she did anything wrong she was sorry at once." For the Brownie was not perfect; though indeed she was to be quickly perfected. She had little flaws of temper, in spite of her exceeding good-nature. But as Rukma says, she was sorry at once. And after all this book does not profess to be more than the slightest of life-sketches. It does not poke into all the holes and corners of our Brownie girl's existence; there is hardly time for that. But if it did we should meet nothing worse than, if she did anything wrong she was sorry at once; and Preena who was the small, charming but distinctly wilful Elf when the Brownie reigned in the nursery, remembers her thus: "She was the sister who never was cross," for as Ponnammal once put it in speaking of her devotion to an unattractive baby, "she was a lover of the unlovables."

What an affliction a sense of the comical is: even as I write this more or less serious chapter, the remembrance of a toilsome day when the forest house was being built, attacks me.

We were trying hard to get the roof on and tiled before the monsoon rain was due. Premonitory thunderstorms had begun and the roof had stuck: for the carpenters depended on the wood sawyers, and these again on the wood fellers, and these on their coolies, and these last had failed to appear, having a feud with the head carpenter, a most unsatisfactory person, so that all down the line there was confusion. The stone and mud walls were of course open to the weather; we were trying to get them covered with cocoanut mats brought up for the purpose, were indeed in the middle of forking up the slippery things to the men on the tops of the walls, when a coolie arrived from Dohnavur.

There seemed no urgent reason why he should have been sent, and four annas of apparent waste troubled my spirit, already tired by the mishaps here, but here he was; so I gave up forking mats and sat down resignedly to make the best of the unnecessary coolie. And this cutting from our daily paper fell out of the first letter I opened from the bungalow:

"The Great Poetic Movement in India proceeds apace. Its latest adherent is Dr. F., etc., etc., author of etc., etc., issued by the Bardic Brother- hood. In a composition entitled 'Britannia and Mother Hind,' he triumphantly proves that the East is more spiritual than the West, thus:- O pardon me, Britannia sister mine, The Indians have a great spiritual shine: In morals mine is a higher code than thine.

Although a serious critic of British administration, he recognises that the great heart of the British democracy is sound, and he is able to represent Britannia as saying eventually:- Let us now hope that Indians' needs at once Shall answered be, so that th' Empire British Be stronger and consolidated well, Of grievance there be not the slightest smell.

But, whether because we are reactionary or for some other reason, we prefer Dr. P. in the mood of 'The Angel in the House.' For example:- Of friends, relations all, A mother's love is best, . . At baby's rhymeless squall She takes it to her chest." That paragraph cleared the air, though how, perhaps only the Maker of us could explain, and now shall do duty for describing in a way I could never attain unto, this dear little Brownie of ours.

"At baby's rhymeless squall She took it to her chest."

Tiger Pugs They fought with gladness the battle of Israel.- 1Ma 3:2, R.V.

1.02.13. Book 2: Ch 13. Tiger Pugs

CHAPTER XIII

SOME years ago, when we were very needy indeed, an English girl who had read of the temple children of India offered to come to us. She seemed keen and loving, and arrangements were made for her training with a view to her coming out if she proved to be truly called to us.

She was not, and therefore never came. Part of her training was of a sort she thought too ordinary and humdrum for anyone going to be a missionary. When she was asked what she supposed we wanted her for, she said she expected to skirmish round with me and raid temple houses, and carry the children off to Dohnavur. A fine life it sounded, most exciting, a sort of border-foray existence only unfortunately not in the very least ours. Government would have something to say to it, if it were.

It is true that many a time we have been tempted to wish things were a little so. It is hard to see the dear little children playing about in the temple house courts, or swinging in their hammocks from the rafters of the inner rooms in the temple houses, without wishing, but wishing is too cool a word, without just burning to carry them off that very minute and set them playing in our far happier gardens or swinging in other hammocks in the big open porches which are the healthful delight of the Dohnavur nurseries. But to do anything of the sort would not be right, and that settles it. That it would not be possible is another and lesser matter; and yet sometimes it has happened that we have done what if told in a certain way might sound extremely like it, though there was always a difference which made it possible and right.

Only, and here the English girl was quite out of her reckoning, it is never we white people who do these things, that would be to defeat our own purpose; we are far too conspicuous in daylight at any rate to be any good at raids. No; to us belongs the humbler part of inspiring others to do.

Such a raid once fell to the Brownie’s lot, to her mingled fear and joy.

Six miles from Dohnavur is a temple town; that town is given up to idolatry, feasts and festivals are frequent, the people seem to live to gad about, to use an expressive old word. So of course the temple houses are well supported, and the brightest of children are there. Over and over again we had tried to get some of those children, but never up to the date of this chapter had got one.

Truly our God does often seem to choose things that are not to bring to nought things that are. The things that are in that temple could not be plainly told. A private document in connection with it was once brought to me, and I read in it of little girls known to us who had been sold to people known to us, our own near neighbours; men no wickeder than most, but utterly infamous and conscienceless where those little girls were concerned. To be a temple child means cruelty. It means a worse thing, even the turning of that child’s mind from all that is good to all that is bad: it means killing the soul. And of all killings in the whole world, that is the worst.

We had been trying to get a little girl before this killing process was completed. She was only thirteen; but she was ready to run all the six miles alone at night (for of course she could not come by day), if only she could get to us.

Legally, we could not have kept her if she had; but we would have tried; we would have fought for her, whatever happened; we could not have given her up if she had dared so much to reach us. But first, there would almost certainly have been a riot in that town as an I.C.S. friend told me very seriously; and secondly, a lawsuit, with no human chance of winning; for we could have proved nothing against those who would have called themselves the child's own relatives and had any number of witnesses to "prove" their new-made facts. Back of it all would have been the age-old system of this ancient land; and back of that the devil. These are some of the things that are. The things that are not? But they are too small to talk about. The child did not escape, her plan was discovered and she disappeared. We never knew what became of her and probably never shall. This, which had happened just before the day Ponnammal and the Brownie went to that town, made everything a little more difficult. The reason they went was that we had heard of a young child there whose mother was willing to give it to us. Such a thing is rare and we knew all manner of influences would be brought to bear upon her to make her change her mind. But we hoped. The interruptions to a forest book are almost as many as to a book in the plains. But somehow they do not seem to disturb. They fit into it, slip into it, become part of it. Tara and her set have departed. Bala and hers have arrived, and at this moment comes Bala, with a large leaf-ful of something carefully laid thereon, a tiger's pug, unmistakable, every toe clear. Early this morning she and Jullanie went down the wood and came across the spoor, and to their delight were able to scoop up the slab unbroken to bring up to show to me.

Here it lies beside me on the stone which serves as table, the surface of the large pad of the foot is clear, no little earth-castes tell of the work of small worms in the night, so that it is probably an early morning footprint. Also, no leaves lay on it when they found it, Bala says, though they were thick all round it. The tiger then must have passed through our wood not very long ago. Interesting all this, and pleasantly exciting in broad daylight. But in the grey dawn or at night? And it is always night where human tigers be.

Under suave smiles they were hiding now, as Ponnammal and the Brownie entered their town. They had heard of the proposed visit and its purpose, and had determined to come between us and that little child, their lawful possession; for the child had been all but dedicated, and they were of the priestly caste.

Ponnammal and Suhinie reached the house, they hoped unobserved; not so; they were watched. The house stood in a back street, quiet and unremarkable, with its bare walls turned to the road, and opening inside upon a courtyard. In the verandah hung the white hammock with the baby asleep in it; the Brownie pushed the white stuff aside and looked in. Is there anything more heart--drawing than a sleeping baby? The thought of all that lay before it, if they failed, now swept over them and every string of purpose in them was tuned to one deep note of longing to save that child. But they found the mother had been tampered with. She had previously vowed the little one to the temple by way of expiation for the death of her husband, and then she had come in touch with one of our friends who had persuaded her out of this; but to take back a child once all but dedicated and keep it herself was against the feeling of her kind; moreover, it might be unsafe, provoking the

wrath of the god. If we had the baby, she would be safer, for then that wrath might be expected to fall on us; this at least is the curious reasoning one gets at if one goes deep enough. So that the mother had come to be almost eager to give her child to us, and Ponnammal and the Brownie had gone full of hope, though we know well there is many a slip between a hope and its fulfilment in India. But now the mother was cold. In the house next hers, was at that moment a pleasant-faced, grandmotherly-looking old dame, head of the chief temple house in the town; she was waiting for the child. And she purred to herself as she waited like a cat sure of its mouse. The two houses communicated with each other by way of an inner courtyard. Ponnammal did not know this till afterwards. At last the mother yielded to Ponnammal, realising afresh some little of what lay behind the specious promises on which she had been fed; and instantly by unseen means word was sent to the men.

Presently they came, not apparently the least concerned, or come on purpose, but just friends drifting in, by pleasant accident. They were surprised to find Ponnammal there, and very much pleased, having heard of our "good works, doubtless much reward will accrue."

While they talked the cat purred. The mother, though not a word was said to her or any notice taken of her, drew back; the long, long tussle began allover again. And all this time the little Brownie prayed. That was her one work. She was Ponnammal’s aide-decamp, with only one thing to do, and she did it faithfully. Ponnammal told us afterwards she could feel the Brownie’s prayers, feel them working. At last the mother inclined to Ponnammal; the men had sauntered in and out all this time, there was no way of getting rid of them: now seeing the prey slipping from them they showed their claws, turned on the meek inoffensive Brownie, and ordered her off, poured torrents of wrath on Ponnammal, and scathing denunciations on the mother, snarled at her, Ponnammal said, hissed at her, utterly confounded her. But Ponnammal and the Brownie had resources of which they knew nothing, and they fought their battle far out of sight of the angry men. What happens round about us and above us when such fights are fought? If we could see, what should we see? Gradually there was a sense of rest in turmoil, the men drew off, the mother overwhelmed at first, suddenly pulled herself together, all but flung the baby to Ponnammal, and said, "Take her. Preserve her from evil."

Then did Ponnammal and Suhinie fly. In two minutes they were in the bullock-cart, and off. For weeks it was uncertain what would happen. Men of that type count among life’s sweetest joys a case in the law courts. We had to risk that for the baby’s sake, not for the first time or the last, and there were moments when the thought of the innocent, easily mystified Brownie in the witness box, as chief witness against Ponnammal and me, had terrors. But she was spared that, and so were we. We named the baby after her. Suhina has the same meaning as Suhinie, and though it was by no means an Unlovable, she took it to her chest. A Woman or Some Such Thing But . . . they are Thine, 0 Lord, Thou lover of souls.- Wis 11:26.

1.02.14. Book 2: Ch 14. A Woman or Some Such Thing

CHAPTER XIV THE loris still survives, and becomes more and more interesting. He has just now breakfasted, and is engaged in slowly sucking his fingers, much as a baby might. But he looks wiser far than any baby. Bala has offered to take care of him to-day "so that you may get on with your work," as she kindly explains. What useful things babies are when they grow up. Our forest house has four rooms-three bedrooms, and one, called by the masons "the had," is everything a room can be. It is there we gather in the evening when it is cool enough to require a fire; (cold it rarely is, we have open windows always, and sometimes it is hot, 92° and thereabouts, but the fire makes the hall such a welcoming cosy place that on the slightest pretext we have it, wood being of no consequence here). When the Ranger and his people were up it rained. They were in tents, and we could not happily think of them so uncomfortable and invited them in, quite against the rules of the house, but they are both nice, inoffensive, oldish men, and they camped thankfully in our little Prophet’s chamber, and pondered over the sentences on the wall, put there to refresh the tired-hearted who occasionally inhabit that room: "He comforteth them that are losing patience .... For as His majesty is, so also is His mercy." In the evening we sat round the fire and drew the Ranger and his foresters to tell us forest stories. Such stories do not feel worth writing down; but heard in that long brown room-for its walls are plastered with earth and sand worked into a kind of distemper-with the firelight flickering on the brown coils of the monkey swings thrown over the rafters, twisting fantastic shadows on the walls and the red-tiled roof and red-tiled floor, and touching with bright reflections the glass panes of the quaint little bookcases, full of a mixed multitude of books, and the bowls of jasmine on the tables which are curious shaped slabs cut straight from a forest tree, and the dresser with its blue china, and the fawn-coloured tips of the sambur’s antlers which, as Tara observed when first they were put up, "do with the curly swings make the room into like part of the forest"-heard thus the stories were all alive and walked about by themselves.

It was a calm evening and the young moon glimmered on a very still forest, so still that we could hear the forest noises coming through the open windows, the bark of the spotted deer which never fails to make us feel real children of the woodland, and the little almost similar call of a night-bird flying past. We forgot about bed, forgot the great world outside with its agitations and vexations, kingdom rising against kingdom, trouble chasing trouble’s heels, forgot everything but the lure of the primeval forest at our doors, where though death reigns, life is singularly care-free. Sometimes we see the big grey form of a sambur emerging slowly from the darkness of the wood above our house, out upon one of the little open places where the grass is yellowing; there the quiet thing will browse, as if no tiger ever were; if we exclaim, as the juvenile part of us seems unable to refrain from doing, there will be a quiet glance of enquiring eyes, a flicker of long ears, and then an imperceptible dissolving of grey into green. You do not see the sambur go. You only see him gone. The children led off that evening with a rollicky nonsense song sung to a mad tune which rises an octave higher with each repetition. Its equally mad words cheer our souls on the dullest day. Another which the children now produced is made up of the tale the Ranger himself told them, and

I rather wondered how he would take the joke. The story tells how he and his six subordinates were out together in the forest "when suddenly from one of them proceeded a piercing scream,"

" ‘A tiger? Oh what did you do?‘ And he did smile and say, ‘Why, what do you expect we did?

We more or less ran away,’ " and the chorus prolongs the "more or less ran away" which always finally collapses in laughter.

I watched the old Ranger’s face, as they sang, but I need not have been anxious. Both he and his nice old forester beamed like grandfathers, not in the least seeing the point of the joke and so not being pricked by it. The laugh over, the forester observed gravely, "Doubtless it was the right thing to do; probably it not being a man-eater. Now with that species there is but one suitable course to pursue." And he told us that it is necessary to stand still till the instant the beast springs, then swerve aside, and he will plunge into the jungle and not return, for you at any rate, though he may for your companion, for a tiger never turns to spring again after a miss. It sounded easy enough, but unpleasant as an experience. And by way of corroboration, the forester told us of a man-eater who had eaten "a woman or some such thing" and was finally shot by an Englishman. Two hunters went out that night, each made his machan (platform of boughs tied up among the branches of a tree wherein the hunter sits and watches for the tiger to return to his kill, or if a bait is fastened below for him to spring on it). Each had an unfortunate dog for bait. The first shot missed, and the tiger missed his spring and slunk off.

After a while he returned for the other dog, and was hit. Poor dogs and poor tiger. But man-eaters are impossible. "I myself have never been in such great danger from tigers. From monkeys, ah much," added the forester, and encouraged to proceed on what sounded an alluring path he told a blood-curdling tale. He was alone one day in the forest, when he heard the war-cry of the lion--tailed monkeys; the fierce beasts were all but on him, grimacing and showing their sharp teeth. Once on him, a whole troop of them together, he knew he would be torn to shreds, he had no gun, only a knife, and it would be almost useless. So he stopped, picked up stones happily lying near, and hurled them at the creatures, who gave way for a minute, and he tore along the forest path towards safety. On they came again, and again he found stones to throw, three times they came on thus, and each time he repulsed them with stones, till at last with a wild spurt he got clear of the forest and was safe. But of all wise beasts a rogue elephant is wisest in his furies. A herd of elephants does no mischief. You may watch them graze, they won’t harm you, they will go away if they see you, frightened by the sight of a human. But a rogue (one turned out of the herd) he, poor beast, is too miserable to be frightened. He will attack, he will chase, he will watch his victim climb a tree, then go, fill his trunk with water. "Why?" exclaimed the children for whom this was almost too much. "To loosen the roots so that he maybe able to butt it down," was the astonishing answer.

"But if the tree is too big?"

"Then he will wait till the man comes down." This, the spectacle of the man up the tree and the elephant below, created a long diversion as every separate child wanted to tell what she would do if she were a man in similar circumstances. And then they having the field for the moment told their tales, of which they have a fair stock by this time.

They told of the monkey, the White Cap, one of King Solomon’s sort, who showed two of them the way home when they were far in the wood and were not sure of it; and of the tiger who dashed

down the bank like a big cat, taking no notice of their two accals on the path, and of that other tiger who walked round their nurseries one night at Dohnavur, when they were asleep on the verandah, without even sniffing one of them (both tigers were seen later, one being in his own world went his ways in peace; the other poor beast was shot); and of the panther which came round our forest house one night, making a noise like a sawyer in a sawpit sawing timber. And of that other panther who stood long enough for their sittie, who was going down the wood one early morning, to see quite perfectly his beautiful markings and clear green eyes. And of the python our servant found and captured, it being sleepy after a meal of deer.

These things and many more they told, and the talk streamed on till at last we remembered to-morrow and went to bed. And all the time that little unintended phrase in the forester's first story was running in and out of my head, "A woman or some such thing"; and when the talk ended and the children lay asleep, each in her scarlet blanket, sleeping the sleep of peace, those words took me by the hand and led me to strange places.

I saw again the temples to which they were to have belonged, those hateful temples with their huge towers and ancient tremendous masonry, their secret ways, their cruel ways, and the solid age-old feeling of Hindustan behind. What did it matter how many little woman-children those ways ensnared, those stone walls smothered? "A woman or some such thing," what mattered it what befell her? And yet in another way it mattered. Come between the tiger and his prey, even though she be only a woman or some such thing. Try to drag that morsel of prey away. Then see what will happen. And the Dohnavur nurseries, and many other places where hard fights are being fought, came to mind then, and I rejoiced as I remembered what the children mean to the Lord Who redeemed them, they are not "things" to Him. As it Was, and Is, but shall not ever Be The heart of the inhabitants shall be changed, and turned into another meaning. For evil shall be put out, and deceit shall be quenched. As for faith, it shall flourish, corruption shall be overcome, and the truth, which hath been so long without fruit, shall be declared.-'- 2Es 6:26-28.

Chapter 27

1.02.15. Book 2: Ch 15. As it was, and is, but shall not ever be

CHAPTER XV IN the seventeenth century there was, we read, an extraordinary kind of commerce in children. A set of men existed in Europe, even in England, who bought little children, drugged them, and then by divers secret means known to those who practised the wicked art, changed them. Changed their forms, if mountebanks were wanted; kneaded their features, and so dealt with them that they were for ever spoiled, if things to laugh at were required. In the reign of William and Mary this iniquity was stopped. The men and women who did such things were hunted out of England. Now it is almost forgotten that such a crime ever existed. In the East something similar to this has been, in various shapes throughout all time. In India it is going on to-day, only instead of mutilating the faces of children, it is their minds and spirits that are dealt with till what was innocent and lovable is turned to the contrary. And this is a trade, a commerce, premeditated. It is part of a huge system; it is that which we exist to fight.

Here in this peaceful place of mountains and forests and clean glad waters, it is quite difficult to realise what lies on the other side of the mountains, and down and all round about us on the plains. And yet our forest house is so situated that we can never quite forget. From its porch, we can all but see into a temple known to us in its every intricate corridor, a wicked dark place. Through our open windows in festival times come the glimmer of its lights and the sound of its tom-toms. From the rocks above we can count five or six temple towers, each the centre of a system stretching to the east where by the sea great temples rise; and over the mountains to the west where, in the beautiful Travancore country, things go on that are never told in books; and south, to Ceylon, connected by invisible lines across the sea with this same traffic; and to the north how far only God and the good angels and bad demons know. So even here we cannot ever forget why we are in India, and our forest life is in its way as much part of the warfare of life as any other part.

Among the Brownie’s nurslings was one from the west; forests of palms surrounded her home, forests like seas of dark green palm. Backwaters, dreams of beauty; broad, shallow, lovely rivers; quaint old-world towns and villages, make the land beautiful. But Eden was beautiful, mere beauty does not keep out serpents; a serpent in the shape of a very evil man on the watch for little children, found this child at play among the palm trees, decoyed her away, and disappeared with her.

He reappeared on our side of the mountains, a devout worshipper at a particularly famous temple, and now the child had a new "mother," who attended her everywhere.

If Zora’s own poor mother could have seen her then what would she have felt? Zora had cried for her mother; she had been punished by being burned with a red-hot blade of a knife. She had tried to run away; they had drugged her then, so that she could not run.

It was night, "pin-drop silence" as the book afore quoted puts it. The festival had not begun properly yet, or it would have been far from pin-drop in that crowded town. Most people, tired out

after long journeying, were asleep. Near by ran a wide river, on whose stone platforms many slept within a foot or two of the water. It was full now, the south-west monsoon had turned it from a hot sandy waste with a trickle in its heart, to a glorious, broad tide, strong enough to sweep down an elephant as a straw to the sea. But it had risen to its highest and the sleepers stretched themselves on the stone calmly, though many a man had been washed off those same platforms in the time of the rising of the river. On the farther side of the river, quietly moved through the darkness an old woman and a man. Alone awake in that sleeping town they walked fearlessly but very quietly in and out of its lanes, and on to its great central temple. Here they stopped. The man went first, cautiously threading his way through the white-sheeted forms spread about like corpses on the ground, till he reached a certain low window, then he beckoned to the woman.

Agile as a cat was that old woman. In one moment she was through the window, left unbarred by some blessed mistake. Down she dropped into the little dark room, picked up a child sleeping near, touched the woman, the child's reputed mother, and beckoning to her, with the power of all heaven in that sign, she handed the child out through the window to the man who was waiting, climbed out herself, and was followed by the other, who walked as a woman walks in her sleep.

Much had happened between that first carrying off of little Zora, and this. But the middles of stories are often tedious and sometimes not very profitable, so Zora's is one of beginning and end only. The end, which however was really a happy beginning, began at Dohnavur a few days later. At first it seemed anything but happy; Zora was ill, terrified, lifeless; we almost feared those cruel manipulating hands had spoiled the poor little four year-old mind beyond repair. For two whole years we feared it, but we do not fear it now, and among the first of the many healing influences which in the end wrought such a change that Zora is now one of our merriest as well as keenest workers for other children, was the Brownie's faithful love.

How she loved that desolate morsel, petted her, played with her, comforted her, was a little child with her. With such a little child she was in her element, and in a work like ours such a worker never need be idle. Even as I write a tiny boy has been brought (for because those traffickers in children take boys as well as girls, we too do so now), and I hear he is more pitiful even than Zora was, though he has what she had not at first, a very sweet smile. So the happy years passed, and the Brownie learned to pray with us as we prayed the prayer of the fighting sailor, "Make it appear that Thou art our Saviour, and mighty Deliverer." Make it appear, it will not so appear unless children are mightily delivered. Deliver them then, 0 Christ, our Lord.

Running Water A SONG FOR ONE IN LIKE TEMPTATION.

No, not for you He thirsted as He died:

No, not for you my Lord was crucified;

Woods, streams, and mountains, innocent are ye: Not yours, but mine, the shame of Calvary. And dear as ye must be to Him, ye trees, And running waters in your purity, To heart that broke to save them, deafer these, Sons of a poor undone humanity.

O stainless things, I would not love you less, How could I, you being what you are to me? But I would love th' unlovable, confess Mankind as something more beloved than ye.

Give me Thy thirst: kindle, 0 Christ, Thy fire, Passion of fire, and love’s sincerity; My wild-wind harp, take, make of it a lyre Whose music shall win men to turn to Thee.

1.02.16. Book 2: Ch 16. Running Water

CHAPTER XVI

WHAT does running water do for one? I do not know. It does different things at different times. Be tired, be disturbed in mind, feel for the moment out of harmony with your forest world, and it flows over you, whispers little unrepeatable things to you, cools certain little unsuitable heats, "gentles" you all over. For of one thing I am very sure, it knows the way into the inward parts of its lovers, and it knows how to soothe till all is comforted and composed.

We call our creamy sweet-scented flower which grows in water-lands, Meadow-sweet. River--sweet should be the name for this sense of all deliciousness known nowhere but by running water.

Two days ago when Lavana, Kumarie, and Mala were coming up attended by a trusty servant, they saw to their surprise, squatting by the River of Rest, which is our name for the river when it first meets us in the hot lower jungle, a large man in a shiny black coat, sure sign of a certain profession much affected in India.

Now Indian etiquette demanded that he of the coat should be blind to our girls, and they to him. They were passing on when he called after them, "Ho you, I am coming to see your Amma. Will she give me milk and bread? I cannot eat your other food, but I can eat that and shall require it. Also will she put me and my servants up? I shall require that also." But the girls had seen what had hurt them sorely. Just as they came up, the large man’s servant, riding a poor little hack pony which he was thrashing mercilessly, had passed them. They heard as they passed the reason for the thrashing. The pony had spilled his master on the path; or in other words, his master being loosely put together had slipped off, and the pony had not raised so much as a hoof to help him. Therefore he was to be beaten all the way down the hill, whence the servant was to hasten to fetch a dhooley and carriers so that the aggrieved one might be carried up in comfort.

Also the girls knew their manners, and were not going to forget them, so with the briefest word in Tamil they went on. "Can you not speak English to me?" he called after them. They took no notice, beyond another quiet word in Tamil. Then he tackled the servant. "Hai! Has your mistress soda water? Will she arrange for my convenience when I come up?" The poor man was nervous. Brahmanhood was oozing out of every inch of the large man, and he, the servant, was as dust under his feet; so he fumbled out that as I had a house it might be all would be as was desired (forgetting there were already twenty in it), but as to soda water, he was unable to promise, there being unfortunately none. When the little party reached the house and I heard all this, I sent down to assure the Brahman he had made a mistake. We were not in a position to offer either to him or his the hospitality he demanded. And I hoped that was the last we should hear of him; for to open the gates of our ravine to such would be to end all privacy, and even safety for the girls and the children. But no, on a peaceful Sunday morning, in the midst of the Sabbath quiet, like a stone falling plump into a clear still pool, the Brahman dropped upon us. The first I knew of it was the

sound of a scramble down the steep path leading to my tree and the cook-bay's rather startled voice announcing, "A Brahman has come to see you, and with him many men, and he himself is very fat." And I knew it must be the same.

"Ask him to come here."

"Here?" There was much doubt in the boy's voice; the great of the earth are usually entertained in bungalows.

"Yes, here." For I knew Preena and Leela were in the house at that moment, and thought it as well to let it be clearly understood it was a woman's house.

Presently there was the sound of small stones rolling excitedly down the path, and a good deal of puffing, and then the large smiling face of the gentleman in black broke through the surprised green of the bushes, and rounded the grey rocks. Never before had they seen such as he.

He dropped heavily on the other stone under my tree, and the tree looked down and wondered. He did not look at it, saw nothing to look at, did not hear the river's music, only his own weary grunts as he settled himself on that uncomfortable stone, and he visibly mildly marvelled at the taste of the mad English who, some of them at least, prefer stones and wild woods to chairs and respectable houses. And the birds, their feelings ruffled, flew away.

I could not either sincerely or wisely receive him with any particular warmth. I had the mishandled pony in mind, and the girls so impolitely accosted in the wood. Also by coming in this unannounced way he had again broken his own country's rules. It is well known that we of Dohnavur follow Indian customs in so far as they are good and possible; our Indian dress, little simple sign of our kinship with the women of India, would be a mere farce and wholly useless, and even hindering, if we ignored the customs of women. Alone as we are, a company of women in the midst of a large Hindu population, we have over and over again proved the helpfulness of a careful observance. All this the Brahman knew. Finally it was our holy day, which fact he also knew, and he knew our habits. For not one single thing connected with the ordering of our lives is unknown to the people about us. We live in glass houses in India.

I reminded him, then, of the laws he had transgressed, and he apologised till the oil flowed; then observed that the day was hot and he was thirsty.

Now a big, luscious, middle-aged man without a firm line anywhere in him, and self-indulgence written allover him, is not a tender plant. So, taking it for granted that of course he could not drink of our drinks or out of our vessels, I suggested the river.

"Shall I drink of it?" was his answer as amazed he turned his great face upon me. "I of it," and feeling it was really too much to ask the river to allow him, I offered milk if he did not mind the inevitable contamination. There was no one to see, no one that is who counted, and so he condescended, and I asked the cook-boy who had lingered politely to bring a cup of milk.

"Stand aside!" was the word to the boy, when he returned with the milk. "Stand aside!" This in the tone a badly brought up hippopotamus might conceivably use in addressing vermin; and the boy, feeling his worminess, retired hastily. Then the Brahman, making a long arm, gingerly accepted the milk, poured it down his throat without touching the cup, in the clever Indian fashion, and with a

lordly, "Here, take it," dropped it neatly into the humbly outstretched hand. "Rama!" he exclaimed with a deep sigh as he did it. Perhaps he was apologising. And I sat still on my stone, and said all sorts of reproving things to myself; for once the large man had accepted our milk he had become in away our guest, and I did not like to dislike him. But it was no good. I could only think of a text in the Apocrypha: "0 how desirable are the works of the Lord,'-and how undesirable this man's. And now he proceeded to business, or rather attempted to do so, but found to his consternation that our laws regarding our holy day were as inflexible as his own (not that he would have minded talking business on his, but other things would be taboo). And he tried to skate over the awkwardness by a few well-chosen compliments and failed; and he tried to sail round it, and failed, and at last desisted, feeling sick.

I knew his business before he began. Briefly it was a quarrel which had gone to the law courts, over "who was to bow to whom," which, that is, of the two disputants was the greater religious celebrity. Three times I had been approached about it and three times had refused to touch it. It concerned Government, whose action it was hoped might be influenced by "a little letter" attesting to the virtues of the one who claimed to be chief holiest. "Unlike many others," as a note written to me by a local official assured me, "he is a man learned and cultured, and full of public charities " (a word intended delicately to hint at much), "and occupies a position so unique, that," etc., etc. In vain had I tried to explain to the three previous messengers that Government minded its own business and missionaries theirs; that it would not be in the least gratified to receive the "little letter," would in fact be more annoyed than otherwise; that not knowing the one who claimed the pre-eminence I could say nothing about him, it not being our way to write guarantees to unknown qualities; and that altogether, I could do nothing.

After a contemplative pause, the large man tried what the wise Tamil calls "face-praise." Now this is impossible anywhere, but in the forest it was quite dreadful. I felt ashamed for my tree to hear it, and the clean, clean river; so with what must have seemed the most barbaric lack of appreciation of the good things of life I cut it short, and tried to reach what might still remain of the soul of the man, only to be interrupted by those oiled tones, as the one matter that mattered was slipped in again under a new skin.

Three times out of a possible three hundred have I broken my rule of refusing these coveted "little letters," and the last of the three was fresh in my mind and stiffened my present "No." The applicant, brought by a leading Christian, was a young man, a Mohammedan, from a near town, and his argument, "Madam, having proceeded to Failed B.A." (quite a good degree here) "in Government college, I think it least thing Government can do is to give me billet" struck me as so reasonable that I weakly yielded; for if a paternal Government will persist in educating to Failed B.A. it hardly seems fair to turn the product on to a cold world which by that time may not know what to do with it. So I wrote that though I did not personally know this lad, he came of good folk, his people being the most respectable in the village-a fact; and not affected by the discovery made a week later, that at that very hour the aforesaid family was giving cover to a man wanted by the police for the trifling sin of slaying another, the slayer of course being a relative. My note remained quite true: but somehow I felt it a mistake. So, reinforced by this and other strong reasons, I held out under that most wearisome application, oiled conversation, impossible without churlishness to end.

Now I knew that the man and his powerful clique could greatly hinder us in our search for children, one word from a similarly offended man had years ago closed hundreds of houses, and inside those houses were children in peril; so all through this interview, had been the little, quiet appeal to a Greater than he, "Suffer him not to hurt us: let not a single child perish because of this." One does not live for long in India, the real India unknown to dwellers in that other more westernised India which is the shell of the real, without learning much of possibilities in such connections. And the eyes that watched me across the stone though apparently seeing nothing, saw all, knew what I knew might be. At last convinced that his really toilsome and expensive journey had been in vain the poor Brahman ponderously arose. His farewells were effusive, and his face never lost its smiling creases, but he had less control over his back, and as he stumbled up the path (how he must have hated that steep little path) the whole of him was just one mass of disgust. And as he went, all in me was much distressed; for to the foolish stuff used in the making of some of us, to say "No" to any breathing thing is an uncomfortable experience, and I felt rude all over. Then, too, who could care for India without thinking troubled thoughts as the vision arose of such as this man anywhere near the helm of events before the great lesson had been learned that to rule means to serve. And who can say that this lesson has been learned? Not that all who seek that power are like this one.

There are of course some of very different calibre, but they are exceptional. What wonder then that the peasants of India, and the great mass of the people generally, dread the day when the white hand goes. Never does a Government official come to our bungalow at Dohnavur but dozens of the surrounding villagers, scenting out the blessed fact, come beseeching us to let them have speech with him. "He will be just," is their one word. "He will do justice." And no sooner has the motor reeled out of our drive on to the village street, than we see it stop, for the best sort of Englishman is the kindest-hearted man on earth, and we know a petition is being thrust before his eyes, maybe false but as likely true, by some poor wretch who has wasted half his substance, and plunged his posterity in debt to get justice in one or in fifty native law courts. If only the white man will give it five solid minutes' consideration, he believes somehow it will prosper in the end. And finally, when I thought of that man as he once was, a nice, sincere baby in his hammock, and then grievingly of what man has made of man, I felt it was worth everything to give our God the chance to make something very different. And I rejoiced in the thought of the little lads now in the Dohnavur nursery, boys of the selfsame stock, the kind so hard to win, and of whom so few have been won after the formative influences of life have had time to play upon them. But the Brahman had left a feeling behind him, it took the river an hour or more to wash that greasy feeling off. I felt as if I ought to apologise to the clean good world about me for this unlovely intrusion of mine. For after all his world is mine, trying though it be to admit it, and the call to the forest to which thousands of little voices within respond so eagerly is, rightly heard, a call to come apart awhile in order to return the keener to that other world where the need is, because there only is the sin.

Two happy butterflies are honeymooning in the still blue air above the river, the birds have come back, all the green leaves of all the green trees are busy about their work and I am at peace with my forest world, forgiven for being a human, taken into its heart again, and it is the river's doing, even now it is murmuring words of quietness, singing its unforgettable songs, washing the last little worrying dust off me. 0 praised be the Maker of all running waters, for every caressing way in them, and praised be the kindness that makes such places as this in the world, sought out of all

them that have pleasure therein. Of the Self-same Stock Now therefore I bow the knee of mine heart. The Prayer of Manasses.

1.02.17. Book 2: Ch 17. Of the Self-same Stock

CHAPTER XVII

CRASH and scuffle among the tree tops, then a spring of that huge black creature, the monkey of these forests, white-capped, long-tailed, big as a middle-sized man. Down he leaps from branch to branch, and as his tree is high this takes two or three seconds. Then there is a single wild vault across an unbelievable void to the opposite side of the ravine, where upon another tree top he resumes his interrupted breakfast. A minivet, blood scarlet, and another glowing orange, flicker among the leaves, or are they autumn leaves alive? That jewel of joy, the fairy bluebird, dressed in black and blue, with babies in attendance in pure electric, flashes across the valley, showing bright against the darker blue .of the precipitous hills. Up in the rain-filled sky the swifts dart about like little pictures of aeroplanes. Two rainbows are lying on the mountains; two waterfalls leap sheer several hundred feet, and the rainbows are so laid that each has caught a fall and painted it. A rainbow seen close to, against forests and water and mountains, is quite another thing from one seen against distant sky. The colours show in a different way. We are at the rainbow’s foot, place of dreams and fairy fancies, the place every eager child wants to find.

* * * * * *

Here I am, but here I am not. "Not where I breathe but where I love I live," not where I breathe but where I was I am. I see again things seen for the first time only a month ago.

It was night in the great Indian city, far from its pleasant places were we, an Indian sister and I, down in the deeps of the city among its buried old temples let into the streets, its curious endless maze of bazaars, blind alleys, drain-lined lanes. There were crowds everywhere, but not a white face had we seen for hours.

Down a side street we walk, inconspicuous among the people, turn into an odorous yard where small boys are thumping a tom-tom. We glance at them, but not so as to attract attention; they are among the boys we have come to seek, but they are the most easily found. Here they are in the open, dark-skinned little lads, happy in their tom-tom beating, cracking jokes with one another, stopping when they feel inclined to play, but soon resuming their exciting business, tom-tom, tom-tom, tom-atom, tom-tom.

We pass them, buy two second class tickets ("No need to waste eight annas more on first, second are nearly as good," whispers my companion), ask when the performance of the night is to begin, find that we have some time to spare, and wonder how it should be spent. Swings through me then quite a new thought: "Where do the children live?" I ask the ticket seller. Having no idea of our identity he tells us, and we are off before he has time to discover it.

Through an intricate tangle of streets we run, our double rickshaw blundering through the crowd like a beetle bent on business among a swarm of ants. The rickshaw coolie knows his city, every runlet among these countless arteries of streets is familiar to him. At last he stops before a big

ordinary looking house in an ordinary street. The door is open. Without stopping to give the people within time to consider us, we walk straight in. "I have come to see the children," I say to the first man I meet, as if it were the most usual thing in the world for a foreign woman to penetrate into this den. But does he recognise the foreign? The central hall in which we stand is ill lighted; with Indian garments worn in the Indian way there is little foreign to notice. He lets us pass. What next? How get further? A boy runs to meet us, holds out eager hands. "Come, Amma," he cries in welcome; it is as if he had been waiting for us, "Come," then in English, "Shake hands," and he holds out his hand gravely. As gravely I shake it.

"These are my friends," continues the child, introducing with an easy grace two little lads, who advance politely. "Shake hands." We shake hands all round.

"Where are the other boys?"

"Here, I will show." And he "shows," leading us straight to a room whence proceeds the sound of boys' voices chanting their parts aloud.

It is a large room, stone-paved, high-walled, with two heavy black doors, one leading to the hall, the other opening into the recesses of the house. And it is full of boys. Twenty-five or more immediately surround us, lads of all ages between seven or eight and seventeen or eighteen; beautiful boys, Brahmans of the Brahmans. The little lad who has led us in is ivory-fair, a very lovely child. "Sit down, Amma," say the others, surprised but delightfully polite as they drag in a chair from somewhere; but it feels too amazing to be true, for no power on earth could have opened those doors to me; I can hardly believe I am here, inside, with the boys of whom I have heard so much but whom I have never seen before. And the feeling of strangeness does not lessen as they crowd round, friendly and lovable and keen to make the most of this welcome interruption to the apparently strictly enforced routine. For twenty wonderful minutes we talked together, they told me about their lives, their training, their habits-would have taken me to the back regions to see their oil-bath arrangements, had I not feared to lose precious minutes in mere seeing; there was so much to hear. They were in full flow, and I was learning all I wanted to learn, when the outer door was flung open and an angry man rushed in upon us like a whirlwind.

"Off to your lessons, boys!" and he blew them off with a storm of words through the other door, and turned the key upon them.

We waited till the hurricane had spent itself, then calmly rose and departed with the usual salaam, which he returned, apparently too confounded for speech with us at least. But we heard the house-door bang behind us and knew that our adventure could not be repeated. Was it "chance" that had opened that door? Was it chance that years ago led us through the wood just as a child was being taken to the temple there to be married to the god?* Were not forces· of prayer unloosed that day that have never lost their power? Has the time come for the boys in perilous places to be delivered too? Is this night's work to unlock new powers on their behalf? Who knows? "That which thou seest write." To him, to her, who reads belongs the answer.

* "Things as They Are," chapter xxiv. But there was more to see. And we found our way back to the great open iron-roofed shed, called by courtesy a theatre. Nothing more unlike the English idea of such a place could be, except that there was a stage, with its curtain and footlights. All the rest of the inside structure was frankly Eastern, and, as it filled, the roar of voices was like the roar at a

large railway station in India, where every man shouts down his fellow as a matter of course. But when, after much agitation, the curtain rolled up and a throne was discovered on which, robed in a shimmer of pink and gold and jewels, sat a little queen, the roar subsided into a murmur like the murmur of waves on the shore.

Spellbound we too gazed. The child-it was our little first friend-was playing an Indian musical instrument, which showed to perfection the delicate sensitive hands, and as he played he turned his little head slowly from side to side and bowed in the approved fashion of beautiful queens. From that point on he held the audience. The roar from some fifteen hundred throats would burst out again between the acts or when others were acting; but let that exquisite child appear, whether as frolicsome boy or dainty queen, and the whole mass of excited humanity gave itself up to gaze. Now I understood why such children are practically priceless. Every seat in the theatre was filled: it was that child who drew the crowd and held it. His acting was very wonderful. As the sordid plot unfolded he was the central figure. There was a king, a handsome youth gorgeously apparelled, excellent in his way; numbers of court ladies, the boys of our brief friendship; a clever fool ("he is the fool," the dear little lads had said pushing that bright boy forward); a musician who pattered on a kind of harmonica, his nervous fingers working interminably, whether he was actually playing or not. Every word of song and dialogue was clearly sung or said in perfect Tamil, but only the front seats could have heard much of it, for the railway station roar prevailed always except when that child and his attendant children were the chief actors. Once the pandemonium was such, though never for a moment did it seem to surprise anyone, and the audience so much occupied with its conversation, that it did not perceive the child who, after a dull interlude, had come forward again, and for that one moment he stood, his little hands stretched out imploringly. Evidently it was very necessary that he should succeed. There was an anxious look in his eyes then, but it passed. With a great shout the crowd returned to its allegiance and the rumble and the roar stopped suddenly. The charm of the child had won. And we left the theatre that night with hot hearts and wet eyes, for from the hour we had entered it, behind and below the apparent it was as if we had seen kneeling in a comer among the stage scenery the figure of a little girl, and through the clamour we could hear her pray aloud, "Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, take care of me to-night." That child is safe in Dohnavur now, but who could forget her story? Kidnapped or bought by a certain dramatic company, she had been carried off to a far city, and the whirl and terror of new sensations, helped possibly by some benumbing drug, had dazed her memory as regards her past. But some things stood out clear. She had somewhere heard of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who taught her had spoken in English. All she knew, therefore, was in English. She had seen "at the time of the lighting of the lamps" those about her kneel down and pray-"Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, 0 Lord; and by Thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ." And there in her desolation, alone among strangers, that little eight-year-old girl used to pray in the words heard in that dim other life for the protection she needed even more than she knew. For life in a dramatic company in India is no safe life for a child. The temple service and the drama are inter-related; not officially perhaps, but certainly spiritually. The only women in the theatre that night were temple women, and women of their kind. Theirs was the influence round about such children. Of the clean gladness of normal child-life they knew nothing, would never know anything. And yet we had held their hands in ours, looked into their eyes, listened to their talk. It was hard to recognise that we were a million miles away from them. Chasms divided us. 0 to find a bridge across! God help us to find a bridge.* *Brothers

of the Lotus Buds, by Godfrey Webb-Peplos, tells the story of the boys. From Pool to Sea In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die.- Wis 3:2.

1.02.18. Book 2: Ch 18. From Pool to Sea

CHAPTER XVIII AND now my story, like the happy little river that runs before me, runs gladly to the sea. The river near my tree has broken from the swimming pool, and flows over coloured pebbles. Golden lights play on the pebbles, turning them to jewels. Then come grey boulders, and there is a short white leap into a small black pool below. When we first found this place, after many searches among the valleys of these mountains, we looked with some apprehension upon the pools, for the children had not then learned to swim, and the pools, whose steep rocks run sheer down into unknown depths, looked most perilous. This black pool in particular we dreaded, and knowing the power of a name we called it the Death Pool, and the children dutifully avoided it. Now with what different eyes we regard it. The overhanging cave holds no terrors. We have explored every inch of it. The children may roll down the rocks if they like-and as their latest achievement, the excitements of diving having somewhat paled, is to race down the sloping face of the rock and jump feet first into the middle of the pool, it is not improbable they will-we do not mind; they swim like fish under water or on it. So the darkness of the Death Pool suggests not danger now to us, but coolness and the shadow of peace. But from my rock, the river seems to end there. In he leaps, white and glad, and loses himself in the shadow. And yet I know he does nothing of the kind; on, on he goes, leaping and laughing, lingering sometimes to enjoy the living green of the forest, or the crimson wild-olive leaves that carpet his bare bed in places; and all the way down for a mile or more, till it gets too hot for thrushes, the Malabar thrush, that bird of blue in sunshine and of deepest purple in shade, whistles his wonderful changeful notes, and many a little wild thing comes to drink; and life is all one glorious, shining, unmarred, unmarrable joy. And then, in the end, the sea, the sea where he would be. And now this last chapter seems looking at me out of the river, with its waterfalls and pools. For the last chapter in our Brownie’s life came as suddenly as that plunge of out little river into its pool. And after that, we lost sight of her, though we know that she goes on.

She had not been quite well, but had given us no particular anxiety, and of course she never for one moment thought of leaving the nursery. We were all together. A dear and faithful fellow-worker had come from England, Mabel Wade, and the extra help that meant made it possible to be together. * One day Mabel came to say the Brownie seemed tired but she did not want to leave Suhina, and would not, till the baby had finished her bottle; that event over, Mabel said she would bring her down to my room to rest, which a few minutes later she did, the Brownie looking mystified but pleased. It was a new experience, and we all like new experiences. "Salaam, Amma," she said as she snuggled under her blanket, that joy of the Tamil mind and body except in the most sweltering weather, and I said, "Salaam, go to sleep," and tucked her up with a sort of good-night kiss, though it was afternoon. I can see her amused little Brownie-smile now, and the cosy way she nestled down more like a little brown wren than ever; and she fell asleep, to waken six hours afterwards in Paradise.

* See "Lotus Buds," chapter xvi.

Those six hours were agonising enough for us. Mabel was new to India then, and the horror of a mysterious, sudden, deadly seizure such as now rent our poor child's mortal frame, without a doctor to take the responsibility, was no light trial to her. To me it was bad enough, but I had grown accustomed to accentuated trials; they are part of life here. And we very soon saw there was no human hope. But of all this the sleeping girl knew nothing. She slept in love, as the old word has it, and at midnight woke: but of that awakening how little we know, only we know the river had leaped; the dark Death Pool for the moment had swallowed up its joyful white. But the pool was only a passage to the sea. The sea, what must it be? Surprises, powers all unimagined, wait us there. And is it not perfectly splendid to know that every God-planned life, however circumstanced, is no mere flat expanse of sameness of days stretched out in the plain, but a river, flowing among forests of joy and of mystery, open at places, however deep the ravine may be sometimes, to the good glad light of heaven, with pools set in it here and there, and waterfalls, where spray rainbows make beautiful the air, and lovely sunlit reaches, where the ripples dance over golden-brown pebbles, and happy things come down to drink. And all the time, without one lost minute, it is hastening on to its best and gladdest time; for the best and the gladdest is always on before.

Chapter 31

1.03.00. Book 3: God's Missionary (1910)

Chapters

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1.03.000. Book 3: Prefaces

NOTE TO FIRST EDITION The vows of God are on me, and I may not stay To play with shadows, or pluck earthly flowers Till I my work have done, and rendered up account.

While this MS. was being written, and afterwards before it was posted, a little group of missionaries waited upon God about it, and one of them prayed:-"Lord, we know that it will go to those who have left home and all for Thy sake. If it must wound-bathe it in tenderness, Lord." With this prayer we send it out: "If it must wound-would that it need not-but if it must-bathe it in tenderness, Lord!"

DISENTANGLED No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."- 2 Timothy 2:4.

SEPARATED

"When man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto Lord: He shall separate himself from wine, and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk:'- Numbers 6:2-4.

CROWNED

"Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, . . . for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him."- Leviticus 21:12.

NOTE TO THIRD REPRINT

IT is a surprise that such a book has been wanted again. If criticism fair, and perhaps sometimes otherwise, could have killed it, it would have been dead long ago. Its fortunes have been varied. It has been tossed into the fire, flung across bungalows, torn into fragments and thrown into waste-paper baskets, dissected, misquoted, written against in "opposition tracts," used as a foil for opposite thought in at least one missionary training-college, and sometimes all but smothered by too appreciative affection. And yet it refuses to die. As it goes out again, it goes with prayer for forgiveness for anything amiss in it, and with longing that it may help some young soul (it was not written for old souls) a little nearer its goal. "To which end we also pray for you that our God may count you worthy of His calling and fulfil every desire of goodness, and every good work of faith, with power."

NOTE TO FIFTH REPRINT THIS little book has gone out very quietly; and now very quietly it goes out again. May the Lord, at whose feet every page was laid as it was first written, carry it whithersoever He will.

A. C.

DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP.

O PRINCE OF GLORY O Prince of Glory, who dost bring Thy sons to glory through Thy Cross, Let me net shrink from suffering, Reproach, or loss. The dust of words would smother me; Be all to me anathema That turns me from Gethsemane, And Golgotha.

If Thy dear Home be fuller, Lord. For that a little emptier My house on earth, what rich reward That guerdon were. And by the borders of my day The river of Thy pleasure flows, The flowers that blossom by the way Who loves Thee knows.

God’s Missionary

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to renew Thy people inwardly and outwardly, that as Thou wouldest not have them to be hindered by bodily pleasures, Thou mayest make them vigorous with spiritual purpose; and refresh them in such sort by things transitory, that Thou mayest grant them rather to cleave to things eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Leonine A.D. 440.

1.03.01. Book 3: 1. Crooked Patterns

1 CROOKED PATTERNS

IT was convention week in a hill-station in India. The afternoon meeting was just over. A few Christian station-people, some English-speaking Indian friends, and the sixty or seventy missionaries who had been listening to the Bible-reading were hurrying out to get a cup of tea before the evening meeting. An Indian lady lingered in the empty hall, and the writer, seeing her alone, and thinking perhaps she had no friend at hand and might be feeling lonely, sat down beside her. Conversation turned upon the Bible-reading, the Indian lady’s face darkened and she said bitterly, "What is the use of such meetings? You missionaries say one thing, and do another!" It was easy to see she had been wounded and soured, but not knowing her history, I could only urge that the meetings were held just because we felt our need of being better than we were. But this did not satisfy her, and in quick, eager sentences she began to explain herself. She said that her people had noticed that when a missionary came out first, he was usually warm and loving, and keen to win souls. Then gradually, she said, it was noticed that he cooled. "And who can say," she concluded, with an intensity that went through her hearer, "who can say you missionaries lead specially holy lives? We Indian Christians observe. We observe you not only when you are at work, but when you are off work too. Is there anything remarkable about you? Are you burning-hot people? We look to you to show us patterns, and you are showing us crooked patterns." The words scorched. Discount what we may because of some inward hurt or warp; granted, thank God, the picture painted thus is not wholly true, there was enough truth left to lay at least the one who listened low down in the dust. This writing is not meant for old, experienced missionaries who long ago have made up their minds concerning the questions discussed. It is only meant as a little word offered in all humility to younger fellowmissionaries who have not made up their minds. Comrades, in this solemn fight, this awful conflict with awful powers, let us settle it as something that cannot be shaken; we are here to live holy, loving, lowly lives. We cannot do this unless we walk very, very close to our Lord Jesus. Anything that would hinder us from the closest walk that is possible to us till we see Him face to face, is not for us. We need to be sensitive to the first approach of the hindering thing. For the sake of the souls that may be stumbled if we turn even ever so little aside, for the sake of our Master’s glory-dearer surely to us than all else-let us ask Him now to show us whether in anywise we have been showing "crooked patterns."

If this message should reach a new recruit, one would say the same word, only turning it a little: Will you not wait upon your Lord before you come out, and every day thereafter from the first hour on board ship onwards, asking Him to keep you, as we ask Him now to keep us, from showing "crooked patterns"?

1.03.02. Book 3: 2. Facts which Compelled this Writing

2 FACTS WHICH COMPELLED THIS WRITING

SOME years ago three missionaries in India, in three different mission-stations, were, unknown to each other, seeking light upon the question of separation to God for service.

They had been trained in various schools of thought, but each had learned that to show out the life of our Lord Jesus, and to be a soul-winner, one must live close to the Master, and each came to the mission-field longing to win souls. But they felt themselves befogged, for the traditions of the stations to which they had been appointed did not lean towards separation to the Lord and to His work as they, at least, understood it; there were things crowded into the life for which there had been no room before, there were things crowded out for which much room had been made in the days of earnest preparation for this very service, and they were bewildered and distressed, fearing on the one hand lest they should be lacking in humility if they withstood the influences brought to bear upon them by those whom they sincerely respected, and fearing on the other hand lest they should lose touch with their Lord if they did not so withstand. Of the three, two gradually gave in, but they lost ground, and went on losing ground, till, startled at finding how much they had lost, they went back to the point from which they had started, the position they had been taught to take at home, of simple untrammelled separation unto God.

Afterwards, in speaking of it, one of them said: "If only I had been warned before I came out! But I knew nothing whatever about it. Why was I never told?"

Perhaps she had been told, but not in plain language. Perhaps she did not understand that all over the mission-field the sent reflect the senders. Is the Church at home one upon this matter? The third stood strong, but she found it hard, and in telling us about it she said much as the other had said: "If only I had been prepared! Could not something be written to give new recruits an idea of what they may have to go through when first they come out?" To the objection that to do so would involve a sort of "telling out of school," which is of all things most against the grain, she answered: "Perhaps one ought to be willing even for that for the sake of souls." A young clergyman, straight from home, stood on the veranda of a mission bungalow and talked with one who had just come down from the up-country station to which he was bound. Later on he spoke of what he had heard: "I wish I had made up my mind," he said, "but, the fact is, I never realized the thing would meet me out her." And he told us how Society had been a snare to him at home; "but I thought I had done with it when I became a missionary."

He had not done with it. He went off to his station without making up his mind as to what course he should pursue. He found the stream too strong for him; he was wrecked on the rock of compromise; he is at home to-day. But what of some who are not at home today, whose influence could not be described as spiritual? What of those who are hindrances to the deeper life in the mission-house rather than helps?

Remembering these things, we are writing. We are writing to "ourselves" from the standpoint of one who has come to the East for the sake of the people of the East. We do not touch upon any other phase of life, or any other branch of service, and we take it that equally among our countrymen when we find ourselves with them the rule holds good:- We are to know nothing among any save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. For our Calling, by its very nature, calls us apart from everything else; it has for its object nothing less than this: the showing of Christ, the living of Christ, among those who do not know Him. The love of our God must shine through us unhindered if we would live to Him here, and whatever makes for holiness of life, for the clearing of the glass through which the light shines,· this is for us and nothing else.

So-is not our Calling a special Calling? The world so regards it. We are supposed to have understood this, and accepted it, at the beginning of our lives as missionaries. "We have good hope that you have well weighed and pondered these things with yourselves long before this time, and that you have clearly determined by God's grace to give yourselves wholly to this office whereunto it hath pleased God to call you: so that, as much as lieth in you, you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way." This applies, of course, to the missionary's life on board ship as much as to his life on shore. Take St. Paul as our example. He stood forth in the midst of them-"God, whose I am, and whom I serve." Can we imagine him frittering away his time in aimless trifles, which had not as their end the salvation of the people on board, or his own preparation for the battle before him? Could our attitude of life on board ship be always described in that single sentence: "God, whose I am, and whom I serve"?

1.03.03. Book 3: 3. Entanglements

3

ENTANGLEMENTS

WHAT is the ideal of God’s missionary? He is to be a Soldier, disentangled; a Nazarite, separated; a Priest, crowned. God’s missionary is a Soldier on service out on campaign, and he cannot be entangled in the affairs of this life, "the little affairs," as the Greek has it. They are so little as compared with the great affairs of the War. Does not the word "disentangled" run straight across much that is sometimes accepted as admissible, and even desirable in the Lord’s soldier?

There is the social entanglement: such and such things are expected of us, and we cannot do what is required in this direction, and at the same time get the quiet we know we must secure if we are to go on in strength and in calmness of spirit. There are afternoon functions which to a conscientious worker often involve a crush somewhere, if the countless things that do not show when they are done, but are missed if they are not done, are to be peacefully accomplished. There are the late hours, simple enough for those whose duties do not call them up at dawn; but for those who, to have any sort of undisturbed quiet, must not only be up by dawn but awake the dawn, quite another matter. "It was so late when I got home that I was too tired to read or have proper quiet time," said one in speaking of these social duties so called. Quiet time-the word is vital. This little book was about to go out for the fourth time when a girl who had read it at home said, "There is nothing in it about modern women’s dress, and nothing about useless talk." It is true there is not and, to be frank, it is not easy to write about either; thorns and briers lie round about these subjects:

Dress:

Dead to the world and its applause, To all the customs, fashions, laws, Of those who hate the humbling Cross. Are the words too old to matter now? I cannot think so. But let us go to our Lord, the Crucified, and ask Him what He thinks about it. And if He asks us to change our ways even in this, for His sake and for the sake of those whom we might help if we cared more for Him, and our windows were open towards Jerusalem, and not towards any earthly city, shall we not do it? And talk: if we write it down as a law of the house that the absent are not discussed to their detriment, that no belittling stories are told of anyone, nor anything said about any one unless it passes through the three sieves, Is it true? kind? necessary? if we humble ourselves if ever, unawares, we break this law, we shall be astonished at the amount of talk of the kind that harms the spirit which it rules out with a stroke. And the frothy talk of nothingness, the mere noise of words that can dull and make dusty a whole table of Christian people, will not taste good to us if by His grace we keep that law. Talk can pull down as well as build up, and it can entrap and weaken in a very curious way. But the talk that is the kind He would enjoy, frank and simple and sincere and happy as the song of the birds-this kind of talk lifts up and helps. Imagination is in place here. Imagine the Lord at table or in the room (and He is); how would our talk sound to Him? All we need, all we want, is

to have His ungrieved Presence with us always. And there is the entanglement of overwork. Who has not known it? The more we love our work, the keener we are to do it well, or the more the burden of souls unreached weighs upon our hearts, the greater our joy in reaching them, the subtler the form this entangling peril takes, and the more likely we are to slip into it before we are aware. And there is another. I would not touch upon it were it not that it is so terribly familiar, so deadly in its entangling: the unconfessed, perhaps unrealized, awakening of ambition, the love of the praise of man that bringeth a snare.

Suddenly, to us thus entangled, comes a call for the exercise of special spiritual energy. Someone has to be dealt with in some definite way. A trial, from which the flesh shrinks back dismayed, waits for us round the next corner. There is a sense of coming conflict; we feel the air thick with contending forces-good and evil-and the evil so terribly strong. 0, those bonds-invisible cords-why do they hold one so? "As a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire"-we think of that, and call upon the God of fire to burn the bonds and set us free to fight this fight for that soul, to enable us to stand ourselves peaceful and strong in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. But is it that the Lord is farther from us than He used to be? For we fail. And thus-and who that has gone through it can ever forget it?-is there not a grief too grievous to be borne, as the very heart breaks with the shame and the sorrow of the thought: If I had spent more time with God for souls I should have had more power with souls for God, and been more calm myself in this turmoil of great waters? For the powers of darkness are as strong as ever they were. Times have not changed since the days of St. Paul. The fight with the spirits of evil is just as desperate now as it was then. The stern condition still holds good: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." We cannot go in for entanglements of any sort, and for spiritual power at the same time.

"The evangelization of the heathen world"-it is Coillard of the Zambezi who said it-"is a desperate struggle with the Prince of Darkness, and with everything his rage can stir up in the shape of obstacles, vexations, oppositions, and hatred, whether by circumstances or by the hand of man. It is a serious task. It should mean a life of consecration and faith."

It is not for nothing that the soldier’s word "entanglement" is used only once again in the New Testament, and then in connection with something dangerous. It is used of those who, having escaped "the miasmas of the world," are drawn back into them and "overcome."

We dread malarial fever, and fear lest it should get hold of us and drive us out of the mission-field. Should we less dread this spiritual malaria, the fever of a restless soul, which has a power, we know not how, to enervate the very fibre of our being, and so unnerve us for the fight? Surely this is the most dangerous form of fever possible. A fit soul in an unfit body is doubtless uncomfortably crippled, but it is not wholly ineffective; but what is the good of a fit body with an unfit soul inside it? It may as well go home at once for all the fighting it will do in the mission battlefield. But is there not a better way?

Searcher of spirits, Try Thou my reins and heart, Cleanse Thou my inward part, Turn, overturn and turn.

Wood, hay and stubble see, Spread out before Thee,

Burn, burn.

Saviour of sinners, Out of the depths I cry, Perfect me or I die:

Perfect me, patient One; In Thy revealing light, I stand confessed outright,

Undone.

O to be holy!

Thou wilt not say me nay Who movest me to pray.

Enable to endure:

Spiritual cleansing Fire, Fulfil my heart’s desire.

Make pure.

1.03.04. Book 3: 4. From the Kernels Even to the Husk

4 FROM THE KERNELS EVEN TO THE HUSK

GOD’S true missionary is a Nazarite, who has "made a special vow, the vow of one separated, to separate himself unto the Lord." This "special vow" meant total abstinence from certain things which were not wrong in themselves, and which, to others, might be beneficial. "All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the grape vine, from the kernels even to the husk." Do we never, as missionaries, hear the question, "What is the harm of it?" asked about reading certain books, following certain pursuits, taking our recreation in certain ways?

We have been hard at the language, and need change of thought and rest of brain. "What is the harm of the latest novel, even if it happens to be rather unprofitable?" And we (who have not time to read one out of a thousand of the real books that have been written) spend a precious hour by deliberate choice over something not worth while, and when our immediate world interrupts us, breaking in upon us with some call, do we find that we come back to it with quite undistracted gladness? Or do we feel that we have, as it were, to try to come back from somewhere, and pull ourselves together, and gird up the loins of our mind, before we are ready to throw ourselves heart and soul into the thick of the fight again?

Then, to rise higher in the scale of desire, in a land where, on every side, almost unexplored regions lie waiting for the coming of the pioneer, ancient literature, the history of nations, of religions, strange tribes, customs, folk-lore, languages-there is a fascination and a "draw" which appeal strongly to a mind with a bent towards research. Up to a certain point-and no one can draw the line for another-such knowledge is power. But beyond it---?

Let Dr. Roberts, of Tientsin, speak. He recognized it as his clear duty to give necessary time to the consideration of every case, so that he might do the best possible for each patient. "But then," he said, "I might easily go a step beyond that, and yield to the temptation that comes to me as a professional man to study closely cases rarely seen in England, with a view to special proficiency. If, to do this, I must neglect Chinese study and spiritual work in the wards, life is not long enough for everything." So he preferred to fill up his time with work which seemed most likely to hasten the coming of his Master’s Kingdom, laying these possibilities of greater professional efficiency at the Lord’s feet as free-will offerings of love. He said he thought all Christians felt at times a longing to let others see that the followers of Jesus could successfully compete with others in various spheres of work. There was nothing absolutely wrong in this desire; yet he thought, if we were only willing to give up for the Lord’s sake possibilities of success in other fields than those which tended directly to the advancement of His Kingdom, He would give us a very real sense of His approval and acceptance of such free-will offerings. And so he "narrowed down" his life, bent the whole force of it to what "tended directly" to soul-winning. But was earth the poorer to him, and is Heaven the emptier to him, because he did so? In Bishop Paget’s Spirit of Discipline he speaks of lives which, by their clearness and freedom, their successful resolution not to be brought under the power of things which domineer over most men, arrest the attention of those who look on. The

men and women who so lived were born and nurtured, as that powerful paragraph puts it, in conditions like our own, and yet they were "so splendidly unhindered by the things which keep us back." We think of such and are ashamed. How far, how very far we are from any such great living!

What was their secret? Is it not worth while to find it out? Some of them have told it to us:

I do not think there is anything so essential to real service for God. . .as an entire separation and devotion to the work. Thus speaks Arnot of Central Africa; thus speaks every man and woman whose life has made more than a passing flicker in the spiritual realm. Whether among our fellow-countrymen or the people of the land, it is the life that has no time for trifling that tells.

We all long to live to the uttermost, Not with the crowd to be spent, Not without aim to go round, In an eddy of purposeless dust, Effort unmeaning and vain, in very truth to live, to touch souls to eternal issues. Is there no less straightly marked path to reach that goal? There is not. But is not this strange talk for the Lord’s own lovers? Ours be the love that asks not "How little?" but "How much?"; the love that pours out its all and revels in the joy of having anything to pour on the feet of its Beloved, love that laughs at limits, rather does not see them, would not heed them if it did. How such talk as that feeble, futile "What is the harm?" falls from us and is forgotten when we see Calvary, the Crucified, the Risen again, Rabboni of our souls. Who that one moment has the least descried Him, Dimly and faintly, hidden and afar, Doth not despise all excellence beside Him, Pleasures and powers that are not and that are- Ay amid all men bear himself thereafter Smit with a solemn and a sweet surprise, Dumb to their scorn and turning on their laughter Only the dominance of earnest eyes?

Chapter 37

1.03.05. Book 3: 5. Surely there is no Harm in Raisins?

5 SURELY THERE IS NO HARM IN RAISINS?

"SURELY there is no harm in recreation?" This is a question we have heard asked in tones of reproach, surprise, or disgust, according to the frame of mind of the questioner. To this question we answer, "No, if by recreation is meant re-equipment for future work with no leakage of spiritual power." We must have a fresh influx of life for soul and body too, or we shall dry up, and become deserts in a desert. But where are our fresh springs to be? That is the main question. "All my fresh springs are in Thee." Can we say so truthfully? Or, is it not a fact that, with some of us at least, certain forms of recreation have, perhaps quite insensibly to us, got out of their place, and hinder, rather than help, all-round robustness of life? And here we must remind ourselves again that we are writing to ourselves, we are not dealing with the question of the rightness or wrongness of this and that for others, but whether we, as God's missionaries, have not something to learn from the Nazarite's special vow, and how it bore upon harmless indulgence in harmless things. The essence of that vow was abstention from things which were lawful in themselves, but not expedient for him. Even raisins were contraband. Surely there is no harm in raisins? In the Student Movement of March I900 there is an article on "Prayer and Fasting." We quote from the last paragraph. The speaker has just referred to the discovery of the papyrus in Egypt, upon which were inscribed a few of the supposed "Sayings of Jesus," one of which was this: "Unless ye fast from the world ye shall not find the Kingdom of Heaven."

"It is not a difficult idea to follow, and it takes you to the very heart of the thought of Jesus. It is for you as missionaries, and it is just as much for us who are trying to serve our Lord at home, to treat the world not only in its corruptions, but in its legitimate joys, in all its privileges and blessings, as a subject that we should touch at a distance, and with strict reserve and abstinence, feeling that if we are caught by its spirit, or fed upon its meat, we shall not feel the breath of the Highest nor receive the manna that falleth from Heaven. Therefore we are bound to look upon the world, with all its delights and all its attractions, with suspicion and with reserve. It is not for us, not for us. We are called into a higher Kingdom, we are touched with a Diviner Spirit. It is not that He forbids us this or that indulgence or comfort of our life; it is not that He is stern, making upon us the call of the ascetic: but it is that we who love our Lord, and we whose affections are set on the things that are in Heaven, voluntarily and gladly lay aside the things that charm and ravish the world, that, for our part, our hearts may be ravished with the things of Heaven, and that our whole being may be poured forth in constant and unreserved devotion in the service of the Lord Who died to save us." "A pure heart," says Tauler, "is one to which all that is not of God is strange and jarring."

If the first question a missionary asks about a hill-station concerns the amusements there; if more important things are crowded out by a tournament of some sort, or a whirl of picnics, or a game of bridge; if private theatricals are the order of the day "because they are better than gossip" (but why gossip at all?); if a word spoken upon the subject of excessive devotion to recreation is bitterly resented; if this booklet, not only because of the way it touches the subject, but because it touches

it at all, calls down a storm of criticism-if these things be so, we say, "Comrades in the war of God, has not something got out of its place? Is it not time we called a halt, and searched ourselves in the searchlight of the Cross?"

1.03.06. Book 3: 6. First things First

6 FIRST THINGS FIRST

GRANTED that we all need exercise, could we not take it more than we do with the people for whom we are here? Could we not make them more our friends, and find recreation in being with them?

Many a college-worker has found games with his students not less invigorating than the perhaps more perfectly appointed game elsewhere. Some have proved that the exercise taken in the walk to the village for the evening preaching has been none the less recreative because we had the Lord for our Companion and were out on His business; and we have found it true that, while we communed together, Jesus Himself drew near and went with us, and made our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way. What better recreation than the re-creating of the holy Fire? The glow of it makes one strong.

Or, if rest rather than exercise is the need of the hour, there are those who have found it close at hand, or rather it has found them, as they "let the elastic go." Trench, in his Synonyms of the New Testament, tells us that the word used in 2 Thessalonians 1:7, and translated "Rest" means the relaxing or letting down of cords or strings which have before been strained or drawn tight. Perhaps we need to know more of this perfectly simple form of rest, the "letting go" of the strained strings-the relaxation of the tension. And this, in the writer’s experience, is greatly helped by a book which carries the mind far away from the life which presses all around. God’s blessing on those who send such books. For, after all, the mind needs change of air as much as the body. One of the secrets of going on is to get away. This may sound like crossing out a sentence on a previous page; it does not do so. All depends upon where you go when you get away. Breathe tainted air or air that is merely relaxing, and you come back no better. Breathe sea air or mountain air or any kind of air that is pure and strong, and you come back refreshed.

Then, as regards being with our Indian friends not only in work-hours but in play, such a life tends to make us become more and more one with them, and we have opportunities of helping them unknown to those whose recreation is taken entirely, or as much as may be, apart from them. So, even if it meant something of sacrifice, is it not worth a sacrifice? And one of the best of results is that we are on the spot if we are wanted. Suppose by being away out of reach, for the time being at least, we missed a chance to win a soul for Christ or help one nearer Him? Would an eternity of recreation with congenial friends make up to us for that one loss? But some will smile at all this as feeble and foolish, and some will say, "Very unpractical." We can only say, "It works." There are men and women in the mission-fields to-day who began by going in for the usual round, because they were told they must. But they are just as strong and well now that they have given all up in favour of a life lived with the people and for them; and they can witness gladly to the bond that binds them to their Indian brothers and sisters, all the closer, surely, because they come first in real love, and because they know they do. We can never know an Eastern people-it is fallacious to imagine we do-while we find our chief recreation to be an escape from their companionship into

the society of our fellow-Europeans. The people of the land are keenly observant: they mark our preferences in the choice of our friends, as in everything else; if we find our rest and pleasure in being away from them, will they open out to us and let us understand them? No, we shall be farther away from them than we know, and however affectionate they are, there will always be a certain reserve in their confidence, unrecognized by us, perhaps, because we are not near enough to them to know that it exists. Do not misunderstand. The thought of these paragraphs is not to lay down a hard-and-fast rule for which bondage would be a fitting name. It is rather to suggest that to be recreative, recreation need not draw us away from our people. Sometimes it will, but need it be so always? The tendency of English society to keep us apart has been noted again and again by missionaries in every land. Bishop Steere of Africa writes with force that the company of Europeans keeps a man separate from the people of the land and no one will ever be a good missionary who cannot be happy among them. And Ragland, of India, urges the new recruit to cultivate close contact with the Hindu mind before he has lost his first missionary aspirations, and begun to prefer European society and work, and to look wistfully towards home. A plea urged on behalf of such forms of recreation as take us away from our people not only in the flesh but in the spirit, is that unless we "get some variety, we grow rutty, groovy, morbid, liverish, unsociable, narrowminded." And so, for the sake of our own character and mental development, we "really must indulge in a little harmless dissipation occasionally." But does it answer? Does it tend to make us gentler under the stress of the contradictions of sinners, more able in quietness to bear up under their burden and their strife? Does it make the work for which we are here more precious? Does it help us to see more to love in the people and less to criticize? If these good things or any of them are wrought in us by that which we call "harmless dissipation" (but try to think the word anywhere near Calvary, and it withers or ever it shapes), then let us continue as we are. But if it be not so, shall we not have done with it?

We are variously made. What rests one wearies another. The great thing is to find what rests us most, what sends us back to our work most truly strengthened and refreshed in body, soul, and spirit. Our thought here, as all through this booklet, is not to define another’s duty, but to urge that each of us should be sincere in finding out our own. Let us be honest in the determination that we will not sacrifice the spiritual to anything whatever. Recreation for our threefold being is possible. He who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust, has wonderful ways of leading us in this matter, if only we are single-hearted enough to be led; and there is a sense, even physically, in which the Joy of the Lord is strength.

Comrades, "First things first," we all say it. Let us do it. And the first thing first of all. What is the missionary’s first thing? Let a missionary speak: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

Jesus, Redeemer and my One Inspirer, Heat in my coldness, set my life aglow;

Break down my barriers; draw, yea, draw me nigher, Thee would I know, whom it is life to know.

Deepen me, rid me of the superficial, From pale delusion set my spirit free;

All my interior being quick unravel;

Pluck forth each thread of insincerity.

Thy vows are on me, 0 to serve Thee truly- Love perfectly, in purity obey- Burn, burn, 0 Fire; 0 Wind, now winnow throughly;

O Sword, awake against the flesh and slay.

O that in me Thou, my Lord, may see Of the travail of Thy soul, And be satisfied.

1.03.07. Book 3: 7. The Cross is the Attraction

7 THE CROSS IS THE ATTRACTION

SEPARATION to God in this sense does not mean narrowness. St. Paul seemed to think it should have quite the opposite effect. "You find no narrowness in my love, but the narrowness is in your own" (Conybeare and Howson's translation), and in order to get rid of that narrowness he advises the Corinthian Christians to come out and be separate.

He strikes the note again: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Liberty for what? Liberty to reflect as in a mirror the glory of the Lord.

"But to win the world we must meet it half-way." Must we? Who says so?

It is true that, for example, Elisha's touch brought life from the Lord of Life to the dead child. But is the easy, light-hearted, costless touch of which alone we are speaking here, quite the same thing as that shutting of the door and prayer unto the Lord and intensity of purpose and persistence? Did Elisha play with death?

It is possible to touch the spirit of the world at many points with the best intentions, without making any appreciable difference in its worldliness. We may influence the tone of a community for the space of the hour we spend in it, but does our presence there lead to opportunities for direct unequivocal work for our Lord? If not, is it worth while?

"But there is no 'world' in that sense now. The word has gone out of fashion." Possibly; and with it certain tremendous words in the New Testament. We know this is vain talk, a veneer that deceives no one. The world is, and in many an open port in the East and in many a city and country station too, a line has to be drawn, however unwillingly. The nebulous simply cannot be.

Sometimes the question hardly rises. There are civilians who serve India in Christ's name, and where they are there is no question of joining forces or crossing gulfs. We are one force, and there is no gulf. What we are considering now is the far more difficult position where alongside is a life in which there is no room for the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet those who live it need Him as much as any. Can we reach them by being as like them as possible (only possibly a little more decorously dull)? Is that the line of power? We hold that it is not. How then are these to be won? The Cross is the attraction. What if this short, forceful sentence contains the answer to the question that rises in the heart as, convinced of the futility of one way of approach, it seeks another, a more direct? Over and over again it has been proved that to those who go straight on, unswerved by any argument or inducement to turn aside to more roundabout ways of access, opportunities no wile could have created are most freely and wonderfully given. The only responsibility is not to miss them as they pass. To speak for Him, then, is not to write on sand. Blessed be the Lord our Strength, strong to allure, mighty to save, who uses the very Cross of shame to attract the wandering souls of men. In its first form this little book was read by many of those true knights of God whose duty and whose joy it is to serve in the high places of the field, those most difficult places where a Christian witness

is less tolerated than even in a Brahman street. They knew the word was not meant for them, but they went behind the word to the spirit, and there, as always where the aim is single, we met and touched.

It is good to think of such; they have splendid chances of serving. Read the beautiful little "Especially" books 1 and you catch glimpses of that life being lived in and out of a hundred, as it might seem conflicting circumstances, as the officer’s wife who writes so unselfconsciously shows it. He shall choose (Hebrew choose after testing) our inheritance for us. It is not for nothing that the Spirit uses the same verb here as that which tells how the shepherd boy chose out of all the pebbles in the brook the five best for his purpose. Out of all the possible circumstances of life, the best for His purpose are chosen after testing the others for us. Congenial or uncongenial to the natural man, hard or easy, simple or complex, viewed from the angels’ side they are just this, the excellency of Jacob in whom He delighted.

1 Especially William, Bishop of Gibraltar, and Mary, his wife. Longmans, Green and Co., London. And we are one, God’s knights and we, if only we walk in white with our dear Lord in Sardis when He sends us there, or, and it may be harder, in our own mission-station.

1.03.08. Book 3: 8. The Two Crowns

8 THE TWO CROWNS

WE have come to the last thought. God’s true missionary is an anointed Priest. He is crowned. "For the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him." He does not want to win the crown of earthly glory, or of worldly popularity, or of literary fame. The crown of his God is enough for him. He may not leave the Presence-chamber. He does not want to leave it. "Am I not enough for thee, Mine own?" He has heard the voice and answered, "Thou for ever and alone art enough for me." And the end of it all? Does not our heart burn as we look "beyond unto the reward"? "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing; are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye-these whom we love better than life, very soul of our soul-ye are our glory and joy." Even as one writes the words, borne along by the great wave of the glorious gladness of them, a thought comes about the two crowns: the crown of the anointing, the crown of the rejoicing-they are made, as it were, of the same piece of gold. For if we, even we, less than the least though we be, do by this grace receive the anointing of our God, and if constrained by that solemn anointing, we stay with Him, and do "not go out," then by His wonderful, infinite love we shall be crowned with that other crown, the crown of converts won for Him, when we stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, to go out no more for ever.

Crowned with crowns to lay at His feet, who was crowned with thorns for us-is not the joy of the thought of it enough to set us singing as God’s birds sing, for very bliss of being? Think of the joy that is set before us-joy after joy in endless perspective-joy after joy.

.Here, then, is the way through the fog, straight and clear and all lit up:- Christ the Son of God hath sent me Through the midnight lands;

Mine the mighty ordination Of the pierced Hands.

* * * * *

We stop and read what we have written, and we feel, more than even its critics can, how very inadequate it is, how crudely expressed, how unconvincing where we most want to convince. We can only let it go, trusting to our Lord to use it, if it speaks His truth; trusting it may steady some waverer somewhere to stand, or win someone who has been drifting downstream to fight up against the current again. Or-God grant it-help ever so little to save even one from shipwreck on the rock of compromise.

Comrades, let us be resolute. Let us, by whatever name we are called, be Soldiers, Nazarites, Priests. Some will praise us, some will blame us; let us not care too much about either praise or blame. Let us live looking up, looking on-true by His grace, who has called us. Shall we go away somewhere alone with our Lord, and ask Him about it? We may be perplexed. He will explain. Things may be badly put. He will put them perfectly. We may be distressed about what will happen if we act upon the thoughts that are growing strong within us. He will make that all right if only we

follow and obey. Have we not proved this true before? Shall we not prove it true again?

Some years ago a young girl, while absent from her mission-station, waited upon God for guidance about this matter. She settled it on the less usual side, and wrote at once to explain her position to her senior missionary. She dreaded returning to her station, and prayed much for courage and humility to take her stand and hold to it bravely and yet in the evident meekness of Jesus. But upon her return she found that God had been working for her, and she wrote joyfully- Better hath He been for years Than my fears.

But, however it may be, surely there is nothing to fear. It is inconceivable that our Master would leave us to stand alone when we are standing for Him.

How could He, for He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"? And the word "forsake" conveys the idea of "leaving comrades exposed to peril in the conflict, or forsaking them some crisis of danger." He could never do that. Even if He had not told us so, we should have known it. It would not be like our Lord. Do not let us fear to follow the inward leading of Jesus. "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be."

Chapter 41

1.03.09. Book 3: 9. Love is the Answer to All Things

9 LOVE IS THE ANSWER TO ALL THINGS

IT is possible that all that has been said is wide of the mark where some of us are concerned; we may have few or no temptations to what is known as open worldliness of life, but are we "other-worldly" in the secret centre of our soul? Is there no compromise ever there? Does the rush of work never get in between our Master and ourselves? Is there no failure in this direction, or leakage of spiritual strength? Are we looking at others and what they do, or expect us to do; and are we trying to do it at the expense of time for rest and quiet with our Lord? "Let Me see thy countenance; let Me hear thy voice." Have not these words, so full of wistful love, come to us sometimes, and stopped us in some outward whirl, and bidden us go into inward calm, and let Him see our countenance, and let Him hear our voice? For there are forms of compromise-in the depths of our hearts we know it-that pursue the missionary beyond the outward bounds of worldliness. God search us, and try us, and show us if we are living on lower levels than He intends for us, living in the shallows when He meant us to dwell deep in the heart of eternal love.

* * * * *

Lord, Thou knowest: Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee. "But, because I am as yet weak in love and imperfect in virtue, therefore do I stand in need of being strengthened and comforted by Thee. Wherefore visit me again and again; and instruct me by all holy discipline.

Free me from evil passions and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that, being inwardly healed and thoroughly cleansed, I may become fit to love, strong to suffer, constant to persevere.

Love is a great thing, a great good indeed, which alone makes light all that is burdensome, and bears with even mind all that is uneven. For it carries a burden without being burdened; and it makes all that which is bitter sweet and savoury. The love of Jesus is noble, and spurs us to do great things, and excites us to desire always things more perfect.

Love desires to have its abode above, and not to be kept back by things below.

Love desires to be at liberty and estranged from all worldly affection, lest its inner view be hindered, lest it suffer itself to be entangled through some temporal interest, or give way through mishap.

Nothing is sweeter than love; nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in Heaven and in earth; for love is born of God, and can rest only in God above all things created. The lover flies, runs, and rejoices; he is free and not held.

He gives all for all and has all in all, because he rests in one supreme above all, from whom all good flows and proceeds.

Love knows no measure, but warmly glows above measure.

Love feels no burden, regards not labours, would willingly do more than it is able, pleads not impossibility, because it feels sure that it can and may do all things.

It is able, therefore, to do all things; and it makes good many deficiencies, and frees many things for being carried out, where he who loves not faints and lies down.

Love watches, and sleeping slumbers not; weary, is not tired; straitened, is not constrained; frightened, is not disturbed; but, like a living flame and burning torch, it bursts forth upwards and safely over-passes all.

Whosoever loves knows the cry of this voice."-So the Imitation, Book 3, Chapter 5.

Love is the answer to all things: Love ends all questions. Lord, ever more give us this love.

1.04.00. Book 4: His Thoughts Said... His Father Said (1941)

His Thoughts Said... His Father Said... by Carmichael, Amy

Chapters

Title

About

Numbers 1-20

Numbers 21-41

Numbers 42-62

Numbers 63-73

Numbers 74-94

Numbers 95-115

Numbers 116-136

Numbers 137-158

Notes His thoughts said . . . His Father said ...

Amidst the multitude of thoughts Which in my heart do fight, My soul, lest it be overcharg’d, Thy comforts do delight.

Those that are broken in their heart, And grieved in their minds, He healeth, and their painful wounds He tenderly up-binds.

Psalms 94:19. Psalms 147:3.

Scots metrical version. His thoughts said... His Father said...

Dohnavur Fellowship And every thought of holiness is His alone

LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W. C. 2 About this little book:-

"Though some Men should not find it relish’d high enough for their finer Wits, or warmer Pallats, it will not perhaps be useless to those of lower Flights.’

WILLIAM PENN, 1702.

1.04.01. Book 4: Numbers 1-20

1 LEAVE THAT BOOK His thoughts said, I have been reading a spiritual book and I am confused and tired with trying to understand. His Father said, Leave that book and read the Book that thou lovest best; thou wilt find it much simpler.

2 FLIES His thoughts said, When I would seek Him whom my soul loveth, confusions like flies buzz about me. His Father said, Press through these confusions as thou wouldest press through a swarm of gnats. Take no notice of them. Be not stayed by them. Be not occupied with them. Be not entangled by them.

3 THE QUARRY His thoughts said, The time of preparation for service is longer than I had imagined it would be, and this kind of preparation is difficult to understand. His Father said, Think of the quarry whence came the stone for My house in Jerusalem.

4 THE TOOLS His thoughts said, I wonder why these special tools are used? His Father said, The house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.

If thou knewest the disappointment it is to the builders when the stone cannot be used for the house, because it was not made ready before it was brought thither, if thou knewest My purpose for thee, thou wouldest welcome any tool if only it prepared thee quietly and perfectly to fit into thy place in the house.

5 YE SHALL BE TRUSTED The son knew that if he came to serve the Lord he must prepare his soul for temptation; but he had never expected the particular temptation that confronted him now. His Father asked him if he had expected to choose his temptations. The son said, No; but he longed to have done with temptation for ever. His Father said, One day it shall be so. As a dream when one awaketh, so it will be. That dream will never come again. But thou must learn to endure and to conquer. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. And He told him of the hidden manna prepared for the overcomer. Watch for the hidden manna, He said, it will come in hidden ways. Then to the son it was given to taste of the manna hidden in a word he had not found before: "Put your trust in the Lord God, and ye shall be trusted." The son was greatly delighted with that word, and he prayed that he might be made worthy of so great a thing as the trust of his Father.

6 PRESS ON, PRESS ON TO THE SUMMIT His thoughts said, The coil of circumstances is beyond anything I ever experienced before. His Father said, All this assemblage of complicated circumstances is the massif of the mountains thou must climb. There is a way among the boulders of the moraine, between the seracs of the glaciers, over the snow-bridges that cross the crevasses, round the overhanging snow-fields and up the precipices and long aretes. There is a way through the deep shadows that will seem to bar thy path at times. Press on, press on to the summit.

7 IS THINE HEART SET ON ASCENTS? His thoughts said, The rocks are far too steep for me. I cannot climb. His Father said, "With Me as thy Guide, thou canst. I have not given thee the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of discipline. Whence then this spirit of fear? His thoughts said, But who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord or who shall rise up in His holy Place? Shall I ever pass the foothills? His Father said, Is thine heart set on ascents? The son answered, 0 Lord, Thou knowest. And the Father comforted him, Commit thy way-thy way to the summit-to thy Lord. Only let thine heart be set on ascents. And the Father added, Dear son, I will keep thine heart set on ascents.

8 THE SECRET PLACE OF THE STORM

After a time of tension his thoughts said, It is written of David, David was dispirited. I am dispirited. I cannot speak to anyone of the cause. It is private. His Father said, I heard thee in the secret place of the storm. In the secret place among the unspoken things, there am I. The son answered. When I am poor and in heaviness, Thy help, 0 Lord, doth lift me up. And his Father said, Cast not away therefore thy confidence which hath great recompense of reward.

9 BITTER WATER His thoughts said, As I journey, sometimes the water is bitter. His Father said, Let My loving Spirit lead thee forth into the land of righteousness. Do not ask Him whether He will lead thee to Marah or to Elim. Do not ask for the Elims of life. If thou must pass through Marah, fear not, for He will show thee a Tree, which, when thou shalt cast it into the waters, shall make the bitter waters sweet. One thought of Calvary will make any water sweet.

10 DURING SLEEP The son wished to continue his journey while he was asleep, and to be as near to his Lord during sleep as when he was awake; and he wished to awaken into the love of his Lord. His Father showed him a mother who all through a long journey had carried her little child in her arms, whether it were asleep or awake, so that it travelled on in sleep. And He said, I have made and I will bear, even I will carry. His Father told him also that if he fell asleep peacefully resting upon some word of peace, he would awaken into love.

11 MIST His thoughts said, I would not seek for deliciousness and yet I fear lest a mist come between me and the Face whose light is my life. His Father said, If the mist be the deadly mist of sin, hasten thee to the Cleanser; confess and be forgiven. Then as the mist of the morning flieth before the light of day so shall that mist disappear. But if it be a mist of weariness, be patient. Ye have need of patience. Let patience have her perfect work. Do not mar that work by impatience. Be patient through the dim days. They will pass.

12 SUNBEAM AND RAINBOW The son remembered how straightly a ray of sunlight will cleave through dusty air, and he knew that the dust could never forbid the sunbeam; it could only serve to make visible the straight path of that ray. And he thought of the words, The bow shall be seen in the cloud, and he knew that always in past times when mistiness had perplexed action, sooner or later a rainbow had appeared.

Pondering this he found strong consolation.

13 DARKNESS His thoughts said, A sudden darkness descendeth. His Father said, On which side of the Cloud of My Providence art thou living? The cloud that was darkness to the Egyptians gave light by night to My people. Is it night with thee? Doth the shadow of fear that thou wilt give way

begin to creep over thy spirit? Look up. The Cloud of My Presence is made known by the Cloud of My Providence, and for thee in any darkness that cloud will be light.

14 A POWER THAT WAS NOT OF EARTH His thoughts said, My heart is overwhelmed. His Father said, Thou art not the first to feel so. Here is a word for thee, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path." And his Father poured comfort into him saying, 0 man greatly beloved, Fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong; yea, be strong. And when He had spoken unto him, the son was strengthened.

Then he remembered how often at midnight, or in the small hours of the morning when all life's mole-hills become mountains, some familiar Scripture flowing through the mind had renewed his strength. And he knew that in those words was a power that was not of earth.

15 WHEN THOU PASSEST. WHEN THOU WALKEST As the son went on he had to cross rough waters, but before he stepped into the swirl his Father said to him, When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. Later, when fiery trials came, When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, was the word on which he lived. And in grateful wonder the son said, O Father of spirits, Thou dost wonderfully shine forth from the everlasting mountains. The inward thought of man shall give thanks to Thee; and the memorial of his inward thought shall keep a feast to Thee.

16 KNOWING ONLY TO FOLLOW His thoughts said, How can I know that it is the time to move? His Father said, And it shall be when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle. Thou shalt certainly hear that sound. There will be a quiet sense of sureness and a sense of peace. The son said, If another also heard that sound it would be easier. His Father said, That may not always be. The sound of going is like the voice of the shepherd that the sheep know, but how they know they could not tell, knowing only to follow.

17 THE TOKEN The son said, But how be sure? His Father said, When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him; for they know His Voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. Therein lies the token. Thou wilt recognize the Voice of the Shepherd. The voice of the stranger will be nothing to thee.

18 NO POWER CAN BAR THE WAY His thoughts said, I wish that the sea might be made into dry land and the waters divide-then all would understand that Thou art leading me. His Father said, That crossing of the sea was the first and the easier obedience. The crossing of the river later on asked for a more daring faith. The way did not open in Jordan till the feet of the priests were dipped in the water. But it did open then. Rivers turn to roads, mountains become valleys, when He who is named the Remover of Hindrances goeth before. Then no one can forbid. No power can bar the way.

19 NOT OF DOUBLE HEART But the son still wondered what he should do if he did not hear a Voice directing him, till he came to understand that, as he waited, his Father would work and would so shape the events of common life that they would become indications of His will. He was shown also that they would be in accord with some word of Scripture which would be laid upon his heart. This Scripture in the light of these events, and these events in the light of that Scripture, would work together under the hand of his Father, and point in the same direction. And as he

followed step by step the way would open before him. Only he was warned to be careful that his eye be single. He must be like David's soldiers, who were not of double heart.

20 LOVE AND THOU SEEST The son thought of Absalom, who dwelt two full years in Jerusalem and saw not the King's face. What if he be like Absalom? And he remembered Bartimaeus, and how, casting away his garment, he sprang up and came to the Lord Jesus. Was there a garment that he had not cast away? His Father said, 0 foolish one and blind, if there be any hindering thing known to thee, cast it away now; if such there be and thou dost not know it, I will discover it to thee. Be not anxious even about that. Dost thou not love? I know that thou lovest. Love and thou comest. Love and thou seest.

1.04.02. Book 4: Numbers 21-41

21 TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME His thoughts said, There are days when little things go wrong, one after another, and, like poor Martha, I am distracted by much serving. Such days are very trying. His Father said, On such days take to thyself the words of thy Saviour which thou hast so often given to others. Let them be thy solace and thy tranquillity. But tell Me, when thou art under pressure, dost thou turn first to thy companions or to Me? Thy companions hearken to thy voice: cause Me to hear it. Let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice. And the son said, Such love as Thine is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it, but I stretch forth my hands unto Thee.

22 JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING His thoughts said, The way is rough. His Father said, But every step bringeth thee nearer to thy Home. His thoughts said, The fight is fierce. His Father said, He who is near to his Captain is sure to be a target for the archers. His thoughts said, The night is long. His Father said, But joy cometh in the morning.

23 AS IN A DAY OF FEASTING The son prayed, Let them that love Thee be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. Let all tediousness of spirit pass from me. But he felt tedious in spirit.

Then upon his listening ear quiet words distilled as the dew: "He shall bring joy upon thee, and shall refresh thee with His love; and He shall rejoice over thee with delight as in a day of feasting."

24 ALL WEATHERS NOURISH SOULS The son remembered how when he was a very little child he had sympathized with the grey sea. The blue sea was a happy sea. The green sea, when the waves thereof tossed themselves and roared, was a triumphant sea. But the grey sea looked anxious. So the child was sorry for the grey sea. Grey weather he abhorred.

Something of this feeling was with him still. Grey weather was not among the things for which he gave thanks, His Father said to him, All weathers nourish souls.

25 TRAVELLER’S JOY The son asked that he and his fellow-travellers might find the plant called Traveller’s Joy. But did it grow alongside every road? His Father told him that it did; for by every road where His travellers walked He had sown some seeds of light, and those seeds springing up became Traveller’s Joy. His Father also showed him that everything he touched was meant to be a source of joy: Ye shall rejoice in all the things on which ye shall lay your hand.

26 AS A CORIANDER SEED His thoughts said, I feel famished. His Father said, This need never be. The Lord will not suffer the soul of His servant to famish. Art thou early enough upon the ground when I rain bread from heaven? In the morning the dew lay round about the host, and when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as hoar-frost on the ground. Are thine eyes open to see just a little thing, as little as a coriander seed?

27 WHEN THE DEW FELL IN THE NIGHT The son said, Thinking of manna I feel reproached. So many hours are spent merely in sleep. His Father said, When the dew fell in the night, the manna

fell upon it. While thou sleepest I prepare heavenly food for thee. But it is written, "The people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day;" and one who watched the birds and beasts and fishes said, "That Thou givest them, they gather." Thou hast thy part to do. Go out, then, and gather thy portion for to-day. Thou canst not live upon yesterday's portion.

28 HEM IT WITH QUIETNESS His thoughts said, What if I have not much time to gather my portion? His Father said, Hast thou only one minute? Hem it with quietness. Do not spend it in thinking how little time thou hast. I can give thee much in one minute.

Then the son remembered the Jewish tradition about the manna and the dew. The manna fell on the dew, they said, then more dew fell on the manna so that it was found between two layers of dew. And he thought of the quietness of dew and of how far it was removed from bustle of any kind. And he understood the word that his Father had spoken to him.

29 LITTLE SIPS The son wondered how it would be if because of press of business or illness he could not go out early in the morning to gather his portion. His Father understood, and he caused him to know that if the business concerned the Kingdom, or if illness or any such real hindrance interrupted, he should be at rest. Only he was warned to be careful lest the interruption should slide into a custom. He was not meant to be easy with himself. But he was reminded that the living water was never out of reach. If he had not time to drink long in the morning, he could take little sips now and then through the day from the Brook that is always flowing in the way.

30 A SONG OF LOVELY THINGS The son greatly wished to make a Song of Lovely Things to sing to his Beloved, but he could not find singing-words. Then he heard a Voice saying, Thou art walking in the road where all My lovers walked, and some of them walked singing. They have left their songs behind them. Find them. Sing them. They will be thine to Me. But the lover was grieved because he found no words, neither his own nor those of others; and yet his mind did truly desire to ascend. While feeling so, he read, On Thee praise waiteth all hushed, O God, in Zion; and He who is Love Eternal said, I will be silent in My love. And he entered into Silence and met Love Eternal there.

After a while there was a sound of gentle stillness and it said, Thy silence is to Me a Song of Lovely Things.

31 I WILL REMEMBER His thoughts said, The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped, and yet at times the waves sweep up and almost overwhelm me and I feel like Job, Thou dissolvest my substance. His Father said, At such times say to thyself, "I will remember the years of the Right hand of the Most High, I will remember the days of old." Have the waves ever covered thee? Hast thou ever sunk as lead in the mighty waters? As it was, so it is; as it hath been, so it shall be. And in the end, with Mine own hands, I will bring thee unto thy desired haven.

32 NO CONDEMNATION His thoughts said, There is no foundation for hope in anything but Calvary. His Father said, That is true. But Calvary is an eternal fact. Thou hast been redeemed with the precious Blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, even the Blood of Christ. Didst thou pray, "Wash me throughly"? Then I did wash thee throughly. I have cast all thy sins into the depths of the sea. Who ever found anything again which was cast into those depths? I have pleaded the cause of thy soul. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Now,

forgetting the things that are behind, press on.

33 JACOB, JACOB His thoughts said, There are some things that I cannot forget. His Father said, The humbling memory will help thee to walk softly with Me and tenderly with others. But even so there is relief from all distress. 0 thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? When I spoke unto Israel in the visions of the night, I did not use that glorious name; I used the old name which had so sorrowful a meaning. I said, "Jacob, Jacob," and he answered, "Here am I."

Jacob, Jacob, the deceiver, the supplanter, that name is a reminder of thy fall, but also and far more of My mercy. It is to thee I am speaking, to thee, not to another, worthier one, but to thee, My child Jacob, Jacob.

34 LET MY LOVE RESTORE His thoughts said, I am not what I meant to be, or what others think I am. His Father said, It is written, "He restoreth my soul. The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul." Let some word of Mine restore thee. Let My love restore thee. Didst thou think thou hadst a Father who did not know that His child would need to be restored? I will restore health unto thee: I will heal thee of thy wounds. I will restore comforts unto thee. I will restore unto thee the joy of My salvation. I will renew a right spirit within thee. I will not cast thee away from My Presence.

Child of My love, trust thy Father. If the Spirit speaketh some word in thy heart, obey that word. And, or ever thou art aware, thou wilt know thyself restored.

35 LOST YEARS His thoughts said, But the lost years, what of them? His Father said, I will restore to thee the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm and the caterpillar and the palmer worm. I know the names of all the insects and worms which have devoured thy beauty and thy power. I will deal with them all, and cause thee to help others in danger of like injury. So shall thy years be restored.

36 BE STILL AND THOU SHALT HEAR The son’s troubled thoughts could not see how one so marred could ever be of use, but he remembered the comforting figure of the potter who did not throwaway the clay that was marred in his hands, but made it again another vessel. And his Father said, Take some promise of Mine, fulfil the condition attached thereto, and thou shalt be astonished at the change that will be wrought in thee. The son asked why he did not hear more clearly and more constantly the pleasant Voice of the Mighty One; to which his Father answered, There was a Voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings. The wings of thy work, the wings of thy will, the wings of thine inmost longing, the wings of thy cherished desire-let them down. Be still, and thou shalt hear.

37 IN THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE IS LIFE The son found himself in a barren place. His Father said, In this place will I give peace, and there I will nourish thee. Son, thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is thine. And his Father with great gentleness drew him to Himself, saying, I humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna; that I might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Then the son said, Lord, evermore give me this Bread. When he thirsted his Father said, The Lord will not suffer the soul of His servant to famish. And the son answered, 0 Thou who art the Gladness of my exultation, in the light of Thy countenance is life.

38 EXPERIENCE WORKETH POWER TO HELP The son greatly wondered why one so generously succoured could ever feel poor and needy and thirsty. His Father asked him four questions: Can he who hath never thirsted know the preciousness of water? Can he who hath not found rivers on bare heights lead his fellow to those rivers? Can he who hath not walked in the deep valleys of the spirit help the fainting to find fountains? Can he who hath never seen the glowing sand become a pool bear witness to the marvel of My power?

39 THERE IS NO OTHER WAY His thoughts said, Is there no other way of learning how to help another but by the way of suffering? His Father said, Had there been another way, would I not have found it for the Son of My love, whom no thorn of pain had ever pierced, who was tender as a child to the touch? If it became Me in bringing many sons unto glory, to lead the Captain of their salvation by that way, wouldest thou win souls without a pang? Settle it once for all; there is no other way.

40 NOT EVEN A CUP OF TEA The son said, My heart is disquieted within me. My soul cleaveth to the dust. Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, 0 God. His Father said, In My hand are the deep places of the earth. Is there no blue sky? Have roses forgotten how to blow? Have birds ceased to sing among the branches? Hast thou not the sweetness of the love of a single little child? Hast thou no pleasant food-not even a cup of tea? Have tears been thy meat day and night?

Gather up thy comforts, the greatest, the smallest, and thou wilt be surprised that thou hast so many to gather.

41 WHILE WE LOOK NOT AT... BUT AT... His thoughts said, The affairs of the present press so closely upon me, that I cannot live as one should who is seeking a better Country, that is, an heavenly. I am bound to earth by very many ties. The things I hear fill my ears, the things I see fill my eyes. His Father said, Read again the words thou hast often read before about the things that are seen and the things that are not seen. Ponder the word while. Let the power of this revelation penetrate thy soul.

1.04.03. Book 4: Numbers 42-62

42 THE HEALING OF THE TONGUE His thoughts said, Nothing that I have been able to say to those whom I have tried to help seemed to do much for them. What is the use of saying anything? Perhaps it would be better to say nothing. His Father said, The healing of the tongue is a tree of Life. Hast thou ever seen a tree bear fruit in a day?

43 IS IT MY CUSTOM TO FORGET? In the late evening the son looked back over the day and was discouraged. But as one whom his mother comforteth, so did his Father comfort him. He said to him, Didst thou not in the early morning bear upon thy heart thy beloved ones, as Aaron bore the jewels on his breast? Didst thou not offer to Me every hour of the day, every touch on other lives, every letter to be written, everything to be done? As the hours passed over thee perhaps thou didst forget; but is it My custom to forget?

44 CONCEAL NOT MY LOVINGKINDNESS His thoughts said, If it were anyone else I should not feel so doubtful. His Father said, Because thou art what thou knowest thou art and what I know thou art, the glory will be all Mine when anything is done. Look not at thyself at all; let thine eyes be ever looking unto thy Lord.

Then in grateful wonder the son said, Thy lovingkindness is ever before mine eyes. And his Father said, Conceal not My lovingkindness.

45 WHO IS THIS THAT COMETH UP FROM THE WILDERNESS? The son knew that his Father's desire was to deck His priests with health and joy and vigour. A wilderness experience did not seem to be His choice for them, and yet for many the wilderness was appointed. The son was perplexed about this. Then the Spirit, the Comforter, brought to his mind words from the Gospels about his Lord's sojourn in the wilderness, and the figure of the true in the Song of Songs: Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness? And he saw that no child of the Father was asked to walk where the footsteps of his Lord were not clear on the road. But he saw also that always there was a coming out of the wilderness: Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved? No dwelling-place was ever built in any wilderness for any child of God.

46 NOT A NEW WORD TO THEE The son said, The children of Ephraim being armed and carrying bows turned back in the day of battle. I am armed. I have no excuse for a single backward look. O make my spirit stedfast with Thee. His Father said, Thy help standeth in the Name of the Lord who hath made heaven and earth. The son answered earnestly, Stablish the thing, 0 God, that Thou hast wrought in me. And yet his thoughts persisted, But if I slip? The God of all patience answered, Then Love, travelling in the greatness of His strength, will gather thee up. There is nothing that Love will not do for thee. "When I said, my foot slippeth, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up," is not a new word to thee.

47 WOULD IT MATTER? His thoughts said, My work is not important. Would it matter very much if a floor were left unswept or a room left untidied? Or if I forgot to put flowers for a guest, or omitted some tiny unimportant courtesy? His Father said, Would it have mattered very much if a few

people had been left without wine at a feast? But thy Lord turned water into wine for them. And the son remembered the words, Jesus took a towel.

48 SOME CROPS MUST BE HANDPICKED His thoughts said, When I hear of wonderful things done elsewhere I am glad, and yet with the gladness is unsettlement of mind. There is a strange allure in all I hear. There are days when I fly from the place where I am to the place where souls are flocking to Thee. There is a wavering in me which I do not understand. His Father said, This wavering is a temptation. Many have known it. Thy times are in My hand. Thy time today is in My hand. Would I waste My servant's time? Remember thy Lord's hour by the well. He who sent thee is with thee. Not all fields are reaped with the sickle. Some crops must be hand-picked.

49 DWELL DEEP His thoughts said, My longing is to heal the broken and the weak, to defend the maimed, and to lead the blind unto the sight of the glory of the Lord. My choice is to be a corn of wheat and fall into the ground and die. Then why these waverings? His Father said, Too much of thy surface is exposed to the breath of every wind that bloweth. Thou must learn to dwell deep. And the son who had wavered answered humbly, Renew within me a settled spirit. Establish me with Thy directing Spirit. My heart is fixed, 0 God, my heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise.

50 I AM THE GOD OF THINE EXPECTATION AND THY HOPE His thoughts said, It is too much to hope that such a one as I should truly please my Lord. His Father said, But it is written, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." In My servant Paul I wrought an earnest expectation and a hope, that in nothing he should be ashamed, but that always Christ should be magnified in his body. I am the God of thine expectation and thy hope.

51 THOU ART MY SHELL The son said, But, my Father, Thou knowest that I am not St. Paul. His Father said, Hast thou watched a wave fill a shell on the shore? Thou art My shell. Wave upon wave I will flow over thee, poor empty shell that thou art. So shalt thou be filled with the fullness of the sea. For I am able to give thee an overflowing measure of all good gifts, that all thy wants of every kind may be supplied at all times, and thou mayest give of thine abundance to every good work.

52 ASHAMED ON MY ACCOUNT The son said to his Father, If this new campaign to which I am committed come to grief, then some who trusted me, believing that Thou wert leading me, will be ashamed. Let not them that wait on Thee, 0 Lord of hosts, be ashamed on my account. The Father said to His son, They shall not be ashamed that wait on Me. And the son said to himself, Return unto thy rest, 0 my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. I will sing of the Lord because He hath dealt so lovingly with me.

53 IF ANY LACK, LET HIM ASK His thoughts said, Suddenly a question is asked, suddenly a decision must be made. The answer and the decision affect the lives of others. In me is no wisdom at all. Sometimes it is as if I could not even pray. His Father said, A breath may be a prayer; I hide not Mine ear at thy breathing. But be a simple child with Me. Ask for the thing that thou needest most. I will not upbraid thee. If any lack wisdom, let him ask. And as thou goest on thy way thou shalt do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee. Dost thou lack strength? The Lord of hosts shall be for strength to them that turn the battle at the gate.

54 FENNEL AND CUMMIN The son felt that if the matter were one of warfare he would not be anxious. There are great promises for warriors. The matter just then on his mind was smaller than

that, and yet a mistake might injure a soul. And he mourned over past failures.

Then he remembered, fennel and cummin, wheat and barley and spelt, each a small grain, but not forgotten in his Father's counsel to farmers. He found comfort also in the assurance, He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. And he believed that he would be taught how to train aright each of those committed to his care, for his God would teach him; for this also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. Thus, casting his burden upon the Lord, he was nourished, and received from the God of Hope all joy and peace in believing; that he might abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

55 STAND STILL IN JORDAN The son felt that his days were becoming a breathless rush. His Father searched him with questions: What of the minutes before the rush of the day is upon thee? Art thou filling them too full? Thy day may indeed be as Jordan that overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest; but when thou comest to the brink of the water of Jordan dost thou stand still in Jordan? Rise from thy knees and stand. Stand still and know that I am God. Stand still and know that I am Peace. Give Me time to bathe thee in peace. Then, as the brimming hours pass by thee, give Me time to renew thee in peace.

56 PEACE ALWAYS IN ALL CONDITIONS His thoughts said, If only things continued in a regular order I should find it much easier to maintain a restful spirit, but as it is, there is no continuance in anything, ever. His Father said, Think it not strange if it be so. Thou hast here no continuing city, thou art seeking one to come. These changes are merely the changeful landscape of thy life as thou travellest to the City which hath foundations. But thy journey may be restful; if thou art inwardly at rest nothing outward can disturb thee. Peace always under all conditions-that is my word for thee. Do not let it slip. Do not drift away from it. Hold it fast; for it is not a vain thing for thee; because it is thy life.

57 INTERRUPTIONS The son wondered how it could be possible to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus when life was so full of interruptions. Hardly an hour was without something that broke its ordered flow.

One day as he sat by a mountain stream he noticed the lovely way of water when interrupted by the boulders that broke its ordered flow. The river turned each into an occasion for beauty. And he understood that it was possible to live the river's way if only he took the interrupting things, not as interruptions, but as opportunities, and indeed as very part of life. And while he sat there by the water, his dear Lord said to him, As the ripples of the river glance up to the light, let thy heart glance up to Me in little looks of love very often through the day.

58 EVEN MINE The son said, Every day my enemy seeketh my soul to destroy it; 0 God, my Saviour, overlook me not. His Father said, Saul sought David every day, but I did not deliver him into his hands. I will not overlook thee. Am I not mightier than ten thousand Sauls? And the son remembered the words, They that be with us are more than they that be with them. There is a greater with us than with him. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. And he said, The Lord is my Rock and my Fortress and my Deliverer, even mine.

59 THY REREWARD There was a time when the thoughts of the son saw the foe as a pursuing host. His Father said, Am I not thy Rereward? The Angel of the Lord which went before the camp of Israel removed and went behind them. It shall be again as it was long ago when I blew My wind

and the sea covered the pursuing host. Fear not therefore. Thou shalt know whether My word will overtake thee or not. And the son knew that long before the foe could overtake him, the Power of his God would overtake and enfold him. And he said, My soul trusteth in Thee; and, under the shadow of Thy wings shall be my refuge until this tyranny be over-past.

60 WITH YOU EFFECTUALLY But again his thoughts said, Terrific powers are set in array against me. His Father said, And thou art as a little child who knoweth not how to meet them. But with thee is a Stronger than they. Do not forget to sing: When they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments. Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the Lord, the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. Therefore be not afraid nor be discouraged by reason of this great multitude. The Lord thy God, He shall fight against them together with you effectually.

61 TO-MORROW His thoughts said, But what of tomorrow? His Father said, Thus saith the Lord to thee, even thee, Fear not. Fear not, neither be afraid to go forth tomorrow. No evil shall be sent to meet thee. But the son knew that trouble might be sent to meet him. His Father said, Before the trouble can meet thee it must pass through the brightness of My encompassing Presence, and passing through that brightness it loseth its darkness. It hath no more any power for evil. Also, as thou knowest well, I will be with thee in trouble. On this word the son stayed his heart, saying, The Lord will take care of me. I will trust and not be afraid to go forth to-morrow. I will praise Thee, 0 Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises to Thee, yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful. And he marvelled that he had ever been afraid.

62 I DREAMT His thoughts said, I dreamt a distressing dream last night. I was threatened with torture for Christ’s sake, but I escaped it. I did not endure. His Father said, When did I promise to give strength and grace in a dream of the night? My grace is for that which is, not for that which may never be.

1.04.04. Book 4: Numbers 63-73

63 GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED

Then the son was caused to understand that just as his dream had deluded him, so, very often his imagination had misled him. He remembered the assurance, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose imagination is stayed on Thee because he trusteth in Thee; and he knew that he must learn to discipline his mind and its powers of imagination. If this happen, or that, what then? But if neither happen? The imagined need is not a need at all. And the son fastened his faith upon words which were indeed as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times:

Let us therefore come boldly, that we may find grace to help in time of need.

64 I WILL PERFECT THINE IMPERFECTIONS His thoughts said, I am ashamed because of my poverty of love and my interrupted obedience. His Father said, I know it all. I know thee as thou art and yet I love thee. His thoughts said, I often pray to be delivered from slothfulness that all the spaces of my time may be fruitfully filled by Thee; and yet the spaces seem to me quite empty, and the little that is done is so imperfectly done that I am ashamed. His Father said, Commit thine empty spaces to Me, and let thy trust be in the tender mercy of thy God for ever and ever. I will perfect thine imperfections.

65 MUCH INCENSE

Very often the thoughts of the son spoke thus: How can I offer my poor work to my holy Lord? Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. I see His holiness as fire, white as purity. I see my work as dust. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins. Let them not have dominion over me. Is not even the thought of offering dust of earth to the Lord of heaven a presumptuous sin? And the son was about to withdraw the work which he had brought. But he saw the Cross, and a Voice spoke: Lay thy dust in the dust at the foot of the Cross. And he did so.

Then he saw the likeness of an angel who stood by a golden altar having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar. And he was caused to understand that the Much Incense of the merits of his Saviour sufficed for work as well as for prayer. And he offered his handful of dust.

66 SOME ONE TOUCHED HIM The son went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and there he found a juniper tree, where he sat down, and he said, Let it be enough. And behold, Some One touched him. And in that Touch was Life.

Then the son said to his Father, Blessed be God who hath never turned away my prayer nor His mercy from me. 0 let me show how true the Lord my strength is. And his Father, giving patience to the faint-hearted and life to the brokenhearted, healed him and comforted him. And the son rose up in vigour and served his Lord again.

67 THEY FOUGHT WITH GLADNESS The son, considering the life-stories of explorers, scientists and others in whom is the great quality of valour, and also the many patient toilers of the earth, noticed that all were one in accepting the conditions of their calling as a matter of course.

Why then did the follower of a Leader who never offered ease, so often make much of trials he met in the way? And remembering certain ancient words, They fought with gladness the battles of Israel, the son desired to be one of that great company.

68 LIKE A FLINT The son said, I am nothing. His Father said, Did I ever tell thee that thou wert something? The son said, But I do not feel fit for this that is given to me to do. His Father said, Canst thou not trust Me to make thee fit? The son said, But I am not successful. His Father said, At the end of the day will My word be, Come, thou good and successful servant? If only thou wilt walk humbly with thy God it will be, Come, thou good and faithful servant. The son said, But I do not care for what I have to do. His Father answered, At last thou hast touched the root of the matter. Did thy Saviour "care for" Calvary?

Then the Eternal Spirit opened to him those terrible Scriptures which show Gethsemane and Calvary, till all his paltry "Buts" were shrivelled as withered leaves in the fire. And he saw Him whom he followed as He set His face like a flint; and he was utterly confounded and ashamed.

FROTH His thoughts said, It is strange how often the scourge of the tongue is the cause of difficult travelling. And he said, Words, words, words-how futile they are, but how bewildering they can be, and how grieving, how breaking! How long will ye vex my soul and break me in pieces with words? His Father said, The noise of words, the dust of words, the wind of words, they are not worth thy grief. Wilt thou grieve over them to-morrow? Thou wilt have forgotten them. Forget them now. They are froth.

70 LIFE IS TOO SHORT FOR ANIMOSITIES But as he went on doing his appointed work the son found that sometimes it was impossible to avoid the froth of words. He was taught then to seek in that froth for anything of value. There might be something even in ignorant words which would help him to do his work better. As for the rest, he learned that, like the molten images of heathendom, there was no breath in them, they were vanity, the work of delusion, they would perish. His wisdom lay in going on quietly, not turning aside for any man’s talk, loving the talkers if they cared for his love, refusing to take up a reproach against any. Life is too short for animosities.

71 NOTICE THE SILENCE OF THY LORD His thoughts said, It is difficult to bear with injustice and rudeness, especially when directed towards a courteous and noble-hearted friend. His Father said, If the rudeness be toward a friend, commit him to Me. I will be his shield and his exceeding great Reward. If it be toward thee, remember thy Lord. He never met rudeness with rudeness: He ignored it. But He observed it, and being very man, He suffered under it. He felt as thou feelest-yet without sin. Notice His silence: He was often silent. Notice His speech: it was never struck from Him by a rude act. His words were spoken in gentleness of spirit, after a pause: Thou gavest Me no water for My feet. Thou gavest Me no kiss.

72 COME UNTO ME AND I WILL REFRESH THEE His thoughts said, I can no longer. His Father said, Thou canst. Thou canst do all things through Christ which strengtheneth thee. Is tribulation a new thing to any child of Mine? Shouldest thou expect to be without pressure, batterings, toil, tears, discouragements, disappointments, ingratitudes, obloquies? All My servants had these in

abundant measure. Look and thou wilt see their footsteps in the dust of the road. But they had strong consolation and so hast thou. Not to be pitied, but happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

Doth the burning sun distress thee? There shall be a shadow from the heat. Art thou beaten by the storm? There shall be a covert for thee from storm and from rain. Or is it that thou art too weary to know why thou art so weary? Then come unto Me and I will refresh thee.

73 THE STUNG AND THE STINGER His thoughts said, The sting of the grief abideth. His Father said, My word to thee is, "Pray for them which despitefully use thee." The word is not, "Wait till the stinger be sorry for stinging." Art thou stung? Thou wilt find as thou prayest that the sting will lose its power. Thy thinking will be kindly. Thou wilt remember Him who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously Thy Saviour hath left thee an example that thou shouldest follow His steps.

1.04.05. Book 4: Numbers 74-94

74 DO NOT BE UNJUST The son was troubled, longing that confidence should be restored and yet not seeing how that which snapped in an hour of stress could be counted upon again. His Father opened the matter to him: Thou canst not recreate confidence. But do not be unjust. What ground hadst thou for thy confidence? Didst thou ask sand to be rock? Iron to be steel? Cane to be oak? To do that is to expect what cannot be. It is to be unjust.

Now turn from these sad thoughts: think of the faithful and loyal in whom thy heart may safely rest. Are not their words as honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones? Be grateful, make much of them, and go on thy way as one who is girded with gladness.

75 LEAVE ME TO TAKE CARE OF MY GLORY His thoughts said, It is the wrong done to others that is most painful. 0 to comfort them! His Father said, Lovest thou thy beloved better than He who made them? I Myself will be their Comforter. His thoughts said, I am anxious about the good name of my Lord. It cannot be to His glory that untruth should be spread abroad like smoke. His Father said, Thy part is to walk softly. The smoke of earth cannot reach so high as the place where My honour dwelleth. Leave Me to take care of My glory.

76 THOU ART NO BIRD His thoughts said, Arrows are shot, as it were, from darkness, from nowhere. I cannot see whence they come and I do not know why they are shot. I only know that I long to escape out of their reach. His Father said, That is not a new temptation. Meet it as he did who wrote, "How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? They make ready their arrow upon the string that they may shoot in darkness." Arrows shot in open day can be seen and countered. Arrows shot in darkness test the temper and poise of the spirit. But do not flee as a bird. Thou art no bird.

77 SPEECH AND SILENCE The son was unhappy because he had been compelled to speak of something he greatly wished to wrap in silence. When should he speak? When be silent? His Father caused him to understand that when the wrong done was personal, his lips must be silent. And he must see to it that in the hidden man of the heart there was always the gentleness of Christ. But when the good of others required it, then he must speak even as Paul did when he wrote of two who turned away, of two whose word ate as doth a canker and of some whose influence hindered. Let Love be without dissimulation.

Then the son took for a law of life these words: "Silence, unless the reason for speech will bear the searchlight of Eternity."

78 LET THE REST GO BY His thoughts said, How wearisome is the chatter of earth. His Father said, The world passeth away and the lust thereof (and the talk thereof), but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Fix thine heart on the doing of My will and let the rest go by.

79 THY GOD BEARETH PATIENTLY WITH THEE His thoughts said, I looked for clearness in souls. I do not always find it. His Father said, One day thou shalt look everywhere and see only

spirits made perfect, clear as the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, pure gold as it were transparent glass. But even now where thou art, as thou well knowest, there are some like that river, that gold. Again I say, rejoice in them. And with others, be patient. Thy God beareth patiently with thee.

80 BE OCCUPIED IN THE GREATEST THINGS The son, though consoled by the love of his Lord, found himself so preoccupied by the grief of disillusionment that he was bound in spirit and not free for his rightful work. But his God uncovered his eyes, and he saw this preoccupation as a bond from which the Spirit of Liberty was waiting to unbind him. And he knew that he must be occupied in the greatest things. He was doing a great work and he could not come down to these little things. If they did not seem little things to him, he must ask himself this question: Was He, whom he called Master and Lord, always understood? Was He never misjudged? They laid to His charge things that He knew not, to the great discomfiture of His spirit. Is it not enough for the disciple to be as his Master and the servant as his Lord?

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prayerful, were often in straits. The meaning of this matter was opened to him thus: Those who receive abundantly have many sharp tests which are secrets between them and their Lord. The world knows nothing of them. The appointed way for them to show forth His glory is simply to tell out His goodness, and use His gifts as those who must give account. But to the others, another and a special charge is given. No angel ever received so delicate a charge. For, strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man, as they show forth the peace of God amid adverse circumstances, their fellows watch and wonder at His grace. The Unseen Beings of the Heavenly Places watch also, and adore. To be trusted to live, strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness, giving thanks unto the Father, is the highest trust that can be conferred on man.

1.04.06. Book 4: Numbers 95-115

74 DO NOT BE UNJUST The son was troubled, longing that confidence should be restored and yet not seeing how that which snapped in an hour of stress could be counted upon again. His Father opened the matter to him: Thou canst not recreate confidence. But do not be unjust. What ground hadst thou for thy confidence? Didst thou ask sand to be rock? Iron to be steel? Cane to be oak? To do that is to expect what cannot be. It is to be unjust.

Now turn from these sad thoughts: think of the faithful and loyal in whom thy heart may safely rest. Are not their words as honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones? Be grateful, make much of them, and go on thy way as one who is girded with gladness.

75 LEAVE ME TO TAKE CARE OF MY GLORY His thoughts said, It is the wrong done to others that is most painful. 0 to comfort them! His Father said, Lovest thou thy beloved better than He who made them? I Myself will be their Comforter. His thoughts said, I am anxious about the good name of my Lord. It cannot be to His glory that untruth should be spread abroad like smoke. His Father said, Thy part is to walk softly. The smoke of earth cannot reach so high as the place where My honour dwelleth. Leave Me to take care of My glory.

76 THOU ART NO BIRD His thoughts said, Arrows are shot, as it were, from darkness, from nowhere. I cannot see whence they come and I do not know why they are shot. I only know that I long to escape out of their reach. His Father said, That is not a new temptation. Meet it as he did who wrote, "How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? They make ready their arrow upon the string that they may shoot in darkness." Arrows shot in open day can be seen and countered. Arrows shot in darkness test the temper and poise of the spirit. But do not flee as a bird. Thou art no bird.

77 SPEECH AND SILENCE The son was unhappy because he had been compelled to speak of something he greatly wished to wrap in silence. When should he speak? When be silent? His Father caused him to understand that when the wrong done was personal, his lips must be silent. And he must see to it that in the hidden man of the heart there was always the gentleness of Christ. But when the good of others required it, then he must speak even as Paul did when he wrote of two who turned away, of two whose word ate as doth a canker and of some whose influence hindered. Let Love be without dissimulation.

Then the son took for a law of life these words: "Silence, unless the reason for speech will bear the searchlight of Eternity."

78 LET THE REST GO BY His thoughts said, How wearisome is the chatter of earth. His Father said, The world passeth away and the lust thereof (and the talk thereof), but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Fix thine heart on the doing of My will and let the rest go by.

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1.04.07. Book 4: Numbers 116-136

116 THE FOUR ANGELS OF THE FOUR CORNERS The son grieved because of many little unprotected things, as well as because of the great and noble who were lashed by bitter winds. He found solace in the vision of the four angels who stand on the four corners of the earth. No smallest leaf on any tree may be shaken by the wind till the word is given by the angel who ascendeth from the East, having the seal of the living God. But the evil one tried to distress him by saying, It is folly to stay thy heart upon a vision of the future. So the son found a declaration of his God made long ago; and on that rock he stood :

Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy: and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord: and will help every one from him that swelleth against him, and will set him at nought.

117 THE END WILL EXPLAIN ALL THINGS His thoughts said, What of the two witnesses to whom was given power to shut heaven, and over waters and to smite the earth? Even they, Thy faithful ones, were overcome when the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit made war against them. His Father said, After three days and a half the Spirit of Life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fen upon them which saw them. And they heard a great Voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

Beware lest thou stay thy thoughts at the beginning of My dealings with any nation or with any soul. The end will explain all things. Till then, great peace have they which love My Law and nothing shall offend them.

118 AT THE END OF THE DAYS His thoughts found relief in a torrent of prayer, Righteous art Thou, 0 Lord, when I plead with Thee: yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Up, Lord, disappoint him, cast him down. Break Thou the power of the ungodly and malicious; take away his ungodliness. 0 let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end. Make their faces ashamed, 0 Lord, that they may seek Thy name. 0 let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee. Thou seest the oppression that is done upon the earth; Lord, how long wilt Thou look upon this? His Father said, Dost thou think that it hath not grieved Me at My heart? But there is an end. Thou hast not seen to the end. At the end of the days thou shalt understand.

119 IT IS MINE OWN INFIRMITY The thoughts of the son said, The end is far away and trouble is near. And he found himself akin to one who, long ago, had communed with his heart and searched out his spirits; and he said, Will the Lord absent Himself for ever? and will He be no more intreated? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? and is His promise come utterly to an end for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? and will He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure?

Then he was quiet for a while as braver words flowed over him. And he said, It is mine own infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest.

120 THERE SHALL BE AN END But still the son felt like a long shore on which all the waves of pain of all the world were beating. His Father drew near to him and said, There is only one shore long enough for that. Upon My love, that long, long shore, those waves are beating now; but thou canst have fellowship with Me. And I promise thee that there shall be an end; and all tears shall be wiped from off all faces.

121 THE SCALES The son saw a pair of scales. In the one scale was sorrow. In the other was joy. Sometimes the scales hung even. Sometimes one out-weighed the other. But as he watched he saw a change pass over the sorrow; it was turned into joy and poured into the scale of joy. And he understood the words, "I have more than an overweight of joy for all the affliction which has befallen me." For he saw his travails, tears, watchings, strivings increase by just so much the more his shining heap of happiness. With awe and with wonder he also saw that each experience of distress had put into his hand a golden key called Comfort. And as he used this key the innermost rooms of troubled hearts opened to the Comforter. Then the son rejoiced as he thought of the Man of Sorrows, Christ Crucified. How much more surely will His sorrow be turned into joy when the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand, and He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

122 WITH DESIRE I HAVE DESIRED

Everything in the son felt with him who said, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, and yet he said, 0 when wilt Thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart; for I know that Thy commandment is life everlasting. As his thoughts were occupied thus, he found himself on the shore of the sea. And he took a grain of sand from the miles of sand about him and he held it in his hand. Then he knew that his desire for the Presence of his Lord was like a little grain for smallness in comparison with his Lord’s desire to come under his roof, for that was like the measure of the measureless sands. And as his thoughts followed this great thought, Jesus his Lord answered and said unto him, With desire I have desired.

123 HIS FATHER PROMISED The son said to his Father, Father, wilt Thou strengthen me to live through this day? His Father promised to strengthen him and took his fears away. The son asked for peace; his Father promised to garrison his heart with peace. The son asked that he might rejoice in his Lord, whatever happened to distress him. And his Father promised that too. Then the son asked that nothing should come between him and his Lord. And he was persuaded that neither things present, nor things to come shall be able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

124 A GRACIOUS RAIN The son said, I should be stedfast and victorious; but the house of my soul is not always so with Thee. His Father said, Though thy house be not always so with Me, yet I have made with thee an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Though thy feelings may be changeful as the changeful form of clouds on a windy day, yet I, thy God, am stedfast for ever. And with a quickened gratitude the son said, Thou, 0 God, sentest a gracious rain upon Thine inheritance and refreshedst it when it was weary.

125 PICTURES The thoughts of the son ran thus: My hopes painted beautiful pictures, but they are fading one by one.

Then his Father spoke to him: Thy hopes painted pictures? Destroy all those pictures. To watch them slowly fading is weakening to the soul. Dare then to destroy them. Thou canst if thou wilt.

Thou must if thou wouldest be My warrior-son. I will give thee other pictures instead of those thy hopes painted. Look up, 0 thou son of My love.

Then the son looked up, and he saw a Cross raised high against the sunlight, then a darkness that might be felt. And he heard, as it were, an echo of a voice, "Father, glorify Thy name"; and a Voice that answered, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." And he knew that strength and beauty were in the Sanctuary and would presently pour forth. Calvary was not the end of that day's story. And his heart stayed itself upon this assurance: He shall choose our inheritance for us-no fading picture that, but the excellency of Jacob whom He loved.

126 BETTER THAN AT THY BEGINNINGS The son said, Forgive me, my Father, but sometimes I wonder if even in the Other Life there will be that for which my heart longeth. His Father said, In My Presence is fulness of joy; can fulness be less than full? At My right hand there are pleasures for evermore; can pleasures be less than delight? Dear child of My love, trust My love, Would I leave one longing unsatisfied? Thou dost not know thy Father if thou thinkest that I would. Thou shalt be satisfied with the plenteousness of My House; I will give thee to drink of My pleasures as out of a river. Dost thou think that nothing could ever be as beautiful as once it was? Turn thine eyes from thy beautiful beginnings-I will do better unto thee than at thy beginnings.

127 LOVE IS FIRE The Father said to the son, Tell Me, My child, thy heart's desire. The son said, My heart's desire is to be like my Lord, who, having loved His own, loved them unto the end. The Father said, But love is fire, consuming fire. Dost thou ask for fire? The son thought of some who had not shrunk back from fire. Their way had become a fiery way. Few would understand; many would blame as they walked in that way. It looked an impossible way. But his Father was surprised that he used so faithless a word: Am I not the God of the Impossible? Dare to believe for the Impossible. Very soon it will be said, They walked in the midst of the stones of fire more than conquerors. They sang as it were a new song.

128 WAIT THY TO-MORROW The son thought of a hope that had utterly perished. It was as withered grass. As he thought of it he seemed to see an old man climbing a mountain. His eyes were not dimmed, but they were wistful. His hope had utterly perished. It was as withered grass. For the Lord had said unto Moses, Behold thou shalt sleep with thy fathers. And Moses went up from the plains unto the mountain. And the Lord shewed him the land where he fain would be; and He said, I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there.

Then the son saw a page turned in the Book of Eternity, and the man was in the land where he had hoped to be. Of the myriads in Paradise he and one other were chosen to meet their Lord in that land. And behold there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elijah; who appeared in glory, and spake of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

"If thou couldest ask him," said a voice in the ear of the son, "whether, had the choice been given, he would have chosen to be there on that earlier day, or with his Lord on this later day, what dost thou think he would say?" And the son knew.

Then the Voice that was dearest of all voices to the son spoke to him in words not to be repeated, for they were for him alone; but he knew that always the Father holdeth in loving remembrance that which the child in grief called withered. And what Love holdeth, Love quickeneth, And what Love withdraweth, Love multiplieth. The child shall meet his perished hope in bud and blossom to-morrow. And his Father said, Wait thy to-morrow, My child.

I29 BY HIS CROSS AND PASSION The son felt sometimes that human words soared too high for his human heart to follow. And sometimes they skimmed with too light an air over depths which were very deep. But he found himself at home in the Psalms, and he walked up and down there as one who was at home. And the Psalms led him to Him who was poured out like water, and Him he followed as He trod the common roads of life, till at last he was with Him under some olive trees on a hillside, and then on a hill outside a city gate.

Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden. To this garden the son went in the moonlight before dawn, and there his Master met him and called him by his name. So by His Cross and Passion the son was brought into the glory of His Resurrection. And with one who had lost sight of Him for a while, he fell at His feet, saying, My Lord and my God.

130 ART THOU WILLING? The Father said, Art thou willing to be crucified? The son answered, By Thy grace I am willing. His Father said, Art thou willing to let thy Lord choose thy Cross and the nails that shall pierce thy hands and thy feet? The son answered, My Lord shall choose what He will. His Father said, Art thou willing that thy house on earth may be a little emptier so that My House may be the fuller? The son was silent for a while, at last he answered, I am willing.

Then the Father loved the son very dearly.

131 "I THANK THEE FOR THY JOY." His thoughts said, I do not understand how such gladness as this that is given can be when nothing that I expected is happening, and much that I hoped would never happen has been allowed to come. For a while his Father was silent in His love, and the son was silent too. At last he thought he heard these words: It is written of thy dear Lord, "Thy God hath anointed Thee with the Oil of Gladness." With a little of that blessed Oil He hath anointed even thee. And then-and this was a word of wonder to the son-his Father said clearly, I thank thee for thy joy.

132 MY SAPPHIRES The son remembered those who out of weakness were made strong and yet had never seen the walls of Jericho fall down. They had suffered the violence of fire; the fire was not quenched for them. They did not escape the edge of the sword; the sword was sharpened for them. They did not receive their dead raised to life. They did not obtain the promises. His Father said, These all died in faith, not having received the promises. But they saw them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them. Theirs was the blessing of the Unoffended. I could trust them with the Unexplained. Dost thou not know any such to-day? If thou dost, watch carefully and thou shalt see them strengthened to abide the proof. They will not change their colour when the light is dim.

Then the son remembered reading of a sapphire whose colour was so pure that, unlike the ordinary kind, it retained its blue, a heavenly blue, even by candlelight. And his Father said, These of whom I have told thee are My Sapphires.

133 BE COMFORTED ABOUT THY FRIEND The son had a companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. To this friend some went who multiplied words without knowledge, and they heaped them upon him till he was crushed under their weight; and his joy was like a tree cut down. When the son took this matter to his Father, his Father said, I have many foolish children who darken counsel. They even try to make My words the frame of their opinions. But he who dwelleth in the Secret Place is not long disquieted. Though at first he be overwhelmed, he shall soon learn to say to his soul, "Wherefore hearest thou men’s words? It is a very small thing that I should be judged of man’s judgment. He that judgeth me is the Lord." And though for a little while his joy be like a tree cut down, it will sprout again, and through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. For he is like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Be comforted about thy friend.

134 HE WAS WITHIN THE INNERMOST RING His thoughts said, Some are poor and weak and ill, and they are not kindly tended. I know of others who are at the end of their patience. His Father said, They are My nurslings. And He brought to his mind many tender words: "The Lord thy God will bear thee as a nursling; His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me; He comforteth them that are losing patience." No circumstances could be too difficult for Him. He was nearer to the ill than even the limitations and distresses of illness. These like iron rings encircled them. He was within the innermost of those iron rings. And the son took refuge in the prayer, Do Thou for them, 0 God the Lord.

135 A FENCE OF FEATHERS The son felt fenced in. His Father took him to the fence and bid him look; he looked and he did not see a hedge of thorn or a barbed wire entanglement; he saw a fence of feathers: "With His feathers shall He make a fence for thee. "

136 I WILL PUT UP WITH THEE The son feared lest those who were fenced in with him might weary, and he said, How can they put up with me? His Father brought to his mind an ancient promise, "I will put up with thee," and He said, I am with them that uphold thy soul; therefore they will not weary. As for Me, My word is pledged: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord. And I will not fail thee nor forsake thee then.

1.04.08. Book 4: Numbers 137-158

137 WEARIED WITH HIS JOURNEY His thoughts said, I could do better work for my Lord if it were not that I am tired. I am tired of being tired. His Father said, Jesus, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. Art thou not willing to be wearied with thy journey? Many are wearied in the service of self, the world, earthly glory-thou art loosed from that bondage. Rejoice in thy liberty to be weary for His sake who loved thee and gave Himself for thee. Abide in His love, and thou shalt learn to give as He gave, even in weariness; to live as He lived, more than conqueror over the flesh.

138 IN A BODY THAT I PREPARED His thoughts said, 0 that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even a quick release. Yea, I would exult in pain that spareth not but breaketh the vessel in pieces as a potter's vessel is broken. I would exult in that which set me free to serve in vigour again. His Father said, My holy Child Jesus spoke differently. His only care was to fulfil My will. He said, "I am content to do it." He did not ask for a quick release. Listen to Him: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Hast thou finished the work that I have given thee to do? But the son said, Surely the corruptible body presseth down the soul; the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind? And his Father answered, When He, thy Master and Lord, carne into the world, He said, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." In that body He did My Will. As He was, so art thou, in a body that I prepared.

139 BESIDE THE THINGS WHICH I OMIT His thoughts said, There is something very noble in St. Paul's list of sufferings, labours, stripes, prisons, persecutions. They are glorious sufferings. Nothing that I have to bear could find a place in such a list. His Father said, Hast thou read the words, Beside the things which I omit, Beside the things that come out of course? What if the things that thou hast to bear be those that come out of course, the omitted things of that list?

140 THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS His thoughts said, The things which have happened unto me do not seem to have fallen out unto the furtherance of the Gospel -they seem to be very hindering. His Father said, If thou hadst understanding in the visions of God, thou wouldest know that all things work together for good not only for him who loveth, but for that on which his heart is set. And to the words, "all things," there are no exceptions.

141 I WILL SPEAK PRIVATELY TO THAT HEART The son said, But if one, whom in other days Thou didst often touch and heal, be ill even after pressing through to Thee with full purpose of heart, what then? His Father said, Then I will speak privately to his heart. The world will not hear what I say, but his heart will hear. The word will be fulfilled to him, By day the Lord will command His mercy, and manifest it by night.

142 NOT I, PAUL, THE PRISONER OF NERO His thoughts said, And yet-frustrations, limitations, 0 to have done with them! His Father said, Remember, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus; not I, Paul, the prisoner of Nero. And the son called to mind a pearl-oyster shell which had surprised and charmed him. Two friends looking at it together saw it differently. One saw a broad black band

running round the rim. The other saw a rainbow. Yet both were looking at the same time at the same shell. And he knew that what he saw depended upon how he looked, and how the light fell upon that on which he looked. He was in Nero's prison, but he was not the prisoner of Nero. He was the prisoner of Christ Jesus, his triumphant, adorable Lord.

143 AS THOU HAST BORNE THOU SHALT ALSO BEAR His thoughts said, Some words baffle me. How can our body of humiliation be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord? His Father said, Canst thou explain the words, "According to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself"? If thou hast no line to sound the depths of that "according to", why be surprised that thou art baffled by any other words? The son answered, I know that Thou canst do everything, but all in me beareth the image of the earthy. Then he listened in silence awhile, and he thought he heard a Voice saying, As thou hast borne the image of the earthy, thou shalt also bear the image of the heavenly.

144 A GARDEN OF DELIGHT His thoughts said, Life used to be to me a Garden of Delight, for I could minister continually as every day's work required; but now it is not so. His Father said, It is written that some were expressed by name to give thanks to the Lord. Sing songs to Him and sing hymns to Him. The hearts that seek His pleasure shall rejoice. Seek the Lord and be strong-thou hast read those happy words. If thou art one of that company, expressed by name, is it not enough to cause any kind of life to be a Garden of Delight?

145 ONLY FOR A SEASON His thoughts said, There is so much to help me, and I have so many comforts that I am ashamed to feel oppressed. And yet at times I am, as it were, bound down by oppressions. His Father said, Take a very simple prayer and say it now: Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me, ease me. This oppression is only for a season. Is there not heart's ease in that? The son answered, Thy consolations have soothed my soul. Thou hast loosed my bonds. And he remembered the story of Joseph, who was laid in iron-until the King sent and loosed him and let him go free. And he knew that there was an end to bonds and rejoiced in the words, The Lord looseth the fettered ones.

146 THE SUM OF THINGS SHOWN ABOUT BONDS

If illness and pain were from God, doctors and nurses would be working against Him, not with Him. Luke the beloved Physician would be Luke the mistaken Physician. And no loyal child of the Father, crushed by accident or illness, could touch the slightest alleviation, not even a hot-water bottle; for to resist would be rebellion. But if an enemy hath done this, the Christian has a good right to resist. We are not told why the enemy is allowed to do as he does in this or any other realm of life. Deuteronomy 28:29 reminds us that God has His secret things. His way is in the sea and His path in the great waters and His footsteps are not known. The oil of James and the figs of Hezekiah's poultice, those ancient Eastern remedies, are with us to-day in the form of countless healing helps. They are God's good gift to us. Sometimes He heals His own by a Touch which thrills the whole being. The recovered one is like Peter's wife's mother then. There is no convalescence. Life's duty is taken up straightway. Sometimes he heals through what we call means. Either way it is He who heals, and it is for Him to choose how He will heal. Our part is to co-operate, to set the forces of the will toward health, and to refuse to be dominated by the feeling of illness, depression, selfishness, weariness. If that be done, the prayer of faith is answered. The sick one is made sound so that he himself is well. (We are not our bodies.)

2. And if, after all, bodily healing does not come, as little as may be of the disappointment should be shown to others. They have their own burdens to bear; why add to them? Strength will be given to accept the answer of 2 Corinthians 12:9 and Luke 7:23, without yielding to weakening reactions. And perhaps, very, very humbly the ill one may follow into the deep places opened in Colossians 1:24 and John 11:4. ("There was some mysterious sense in which the sick man suffered in behalf of God’s glory, and was not merely a passive instrument.") Then looking up to his Father, believing that the day, even this kind of day, continues by His arrangement, as the Septuagint of Psalms 119:91 has it, he learns to trust that the day so arranged will not be lived in vain. This is no easy acquiescence. There is nothing easy about it. But the first answer to the prayer of Php 4:6 is peace. The first answer to the prayer of faith is peace. And to peace is added fortitude; and to fortitude longsuffering with joyfulness.

3. This joyfulness can be sharply assaulted, for to yield to bodily ills at all feels unsoldierly. At such times the will must resolutely turn from that aspect of illness which words, like infirm, invalid, disabled, laid aside, imply. We need be none of these feeble things. We can be firm, valid and able for some things, if not for others; and the Captain of our salvation does not treat His wounded soldiers as a housekeeper does her cracked china: He never "shelves" us. The singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished, is a bugle call for a difficult day. For we are still soldiers; we enlisted for life. And soldiers have a sword. In the twelfth century, so tradition says, a sword was fashioned from a fragment of a meteorite. It is as perfect to-day as it was the day it left the hands of the armourer. Not a stain of rust is found on that blade to which the Arabs have given the name, the Sword of God, the Life-endowed. Our Sword is like that, stainless as Eternity. The accidents of time cannot affect it. It is ours for use in the wars of the Lord. The only thing that matters, then, is to throw all the energies of our being into the faithful use of this precious blade, and to refuse to scatter thoughts or sympathies on the trifles of the flesh which we are tempted to magnify. They cannot weaken the effectual action of the weapon that is ours as truly now as ever it was-The Sword of God, the Life-endowed, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

4. So we come back to this: we may be in Nero’s prison, but we are not Nero’s prisoners. "My soul is among lions" appears to be true at times. "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" is a delightful word for a delightful experience-it was once St. Paul’s. But if we are trusted with disappointment, as he was, and we find ourselves again among lions (re-arrested, and in bonds), the word still holds true, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus. Never does Paul attempt to explain the paradox, any more than he explained why he left Trophimus at Miletus sick-a friend for whom he had surely prayed the prayer of faith. Explanations belong to Another Day.

Till that day dawn, though we may be in Nero’s prison, our prison-cell may be an illuminated place. "And a light shined in the cell"-these are shining words. They are singing words: And a light shined in the cell, And there was not any wall, And there was no dark at all, Only Thou, Emmanuel.

Light of Love shined in the cell, Turned to gold the iron bars, Opened windows to the stars, Peace stood there as sentinel.

Dearest Lord, how can it be That Thou art so kind to me?

Love is shining in my cell, Jesus, my Emmanuel.

147 HOW GREAT IS HIS GOODNESS AND HOW GREAT IS HIS BEAUTY The son remembered that Job was led into the place of peace, not by an explanation of the mystery of suffering, or even of the mysteries of creation, for nothing was explained; but by hearing the Voice of his Creator and Redeemer, and by knowing that He was mindful of him. And he thought of the countless touches of tenderness upon his life, and remembering these, he worshipped saying, How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!

148 ONE DAY THOU SHALT SEE The son was in deep sorrow, and he said, Never, never did I think of not being with him who is my very heart, when he came to the brink of the river. His Father said, Will he miss thy hand whom My hand holdeth? But his soul refused comfort and he said, What if he falter in the lonely places his feet must tread? His Father answered gently, Hast thou forgotten the Powers of Calvary? They overcame by the Blood of the Lamb. Hold fast to the faithfulness of My eternal word. However overcome the poor flesh may appear to be, the spirit even now is overcoming. One day thou shalt see all that is hidden from thee now.

149 WATER OF THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM

But, still uncomforted, the son cried out, O that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate! His Father said, And if at this moment thy heart's desire were given to thee, what wouldest thou do? Wouldest thou not pour it out unto thy Lord? Do so with the longing for that which is as the water of the well of Bethlehem to thee. Pour out the desire of thine heart to Me now. I will gather it up and give it to thee another day.

150 AND THE STRENGTH COMMANDED CAME The love of the Father was life to the son, and yet his thoughts said, It is as if something had given way. The walls of my being are shaken. There is nothing in me but brokenness. His Father said, Thou shalt not break.

Behold I have painted thy walls on My hands, and thou art continually before Me. Thy God hath sent forth strength for thee. Thy God hath commanded thy strength.

Then the son, remembering that, because the words of his Lord were spirit and life, they were able to convey that of which they spoke, did at last gratefully receive those words. And the strength commanded came.

151 THAT RIVER LEAST OF ALL His thoughts said, Is the love of a dearly loved one the same after the river is crossed, or is it so swallowed up in joy that it is a little different? His Father said, It is not swallowed up in joy. It is the same love, different only in that it increaseth for ever with the increase of God. Of that thou canst know nothing yet. It is very far beyond thee. But this is within thy grasp: Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it-Rivers shall not drown it, that river least of all.

152 BEING THE CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION His thoughts said, 0 to see what he is doing! His Father said, He is walking in the Land of the Living. He is singing in the Courts of My House. He is serving in the fulness of joy, and rejoicing in the fulness of strength. He is serving without the distraction of the flesh in the freedom of the beauty of holiness. He has seen Him whom his soul loveth. He is satisfied. Take comfort from this: all the pain is on thy side, all the joy is on his. He will never feel the pang that rendeth thee. And then like great music came these words:

Neither can they die any more: For they are equal unto the angels; And are the Children of God, Being the Children of the Resurrection.

153 THOU SHALT LEARN TO DO WITHOUT The son answered his Father, saying, The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping, I am well pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer. Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Thou Thyself hast led him over death to the Singing Land. And I know that there is a joy of birds in that land, and as for those who dwell there, joy shall take possession of them, and on their head shall be praise and exultation. Therefore I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. And now, said his Father tenderly, thou shalt learn the lesson set to the weaned child. Thou shalt learn to do without.

154 I AM THE GOD OF THE STARS

There was a night when the son was greatly distressed. He saw those he loved, beset, because they were bereft of one on whom he had counted to be a help to them. What if they lost their way? He had turned out the light, and there was no moon; but suddenly, between the branches of a leafy tree that grew outside his window, he saw the stars. At first he saw them distant, cold, and unregarding. They had looked down through countless generations upon broken hearts. They meant nothing to him, till suddenly piercing through the pain of the hour came words, simple as the words one would speak to a sorrowful child:

I am the God of the stars.

They do not lose their way, Not one do I mislay, Their times are in My hand, They move at my command.

I am the God of the stars.

To-day as yesterday The God of thee and thine, Who are less thine than Mine; And shall Mine go astray?

I am the God of the stars.

Lift up thine eyes and see As far as mortal may

Into Eternity; And rest thy heart on Me. The son looked again, and now the stars were not distant, cold, unregarding. And he looked unto the God of the stars from whom cometh our help.

155 UNTO MYSELF The son asked, What is death? His Saviour answered, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. The son repeated those peaceful words, I will receive you unto Myself . . . And he wondered that men had given so harsh a name to anything so gentle as that which those words signified. They seemed melodious to him, each word like the pure note of a bell. And they were, he thought, as full of life as a flower in the sunshine is full of light.

156 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HEAVEN? To one who said, We speak of Heaven, what do we mean by Heaven? the son answered, as turning to Another, Heaven is to behold Thy face in righteousness; To be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness; To adore Thee in purity of spirit; To serve like Thy ministers, who do Thy pleasure; To know that even I shall never more grieve

Thee; To exult in Thy Crowning, 0 my Saviour, my Redeemer; To be with Thee for ever who hast long been my Desire; To be with my beloved ones and never more be parted; To see all the comfortless comforted and all wrongs righted; To have light and leisure to learn, and infinite power to love.

If this be not Heaven, what is Heaven?

157 TO WHICH WORD?

Near the end of the day the son looked back. Among all the Comfortable words which had been spoken to him, to which did he now turn most often? And he knew it was to this: The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin; and this: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

158 THE PRAYER OF THE SON Think through me, Thoughts of God, My father, quiet me, Till in Thy holy presence, hushed, I think Thy thoughts with Thee.

Think through me, Thoughts of God, That always, everywhere, The stream that through my being flows May homeward pass in prayer.

Think through me, Thoughts of God, And let my own thoughts be Lost like the sand-pools on the shore Of the eternal sea.

1.04.09. Book 4: Notes

NOTE

SOME familiar Scriptures are quoted in the less familiar rendering of the Septuagint, so that another facet of the jewel may be shown.

5. 2 Chronicles 20:20.

23.Zephaniah 3:17.

25.Deuteronomy 12:7.

59. Numbers 11:23.

60. Deuteronomy 1:30.

61. 2 Chronicles 20:17; Psalms 40:17.

134 Deuteronomy 1:31.

136. Isaiah 46:4.

141.Psalms 42:8. The "fence of feathers," is from Kay, Psalms 91:4. "He comforteth them that are losing patience," is from Sir 17:24.

1.05.00. Book 5: If (1938)

Chapters

Title

Introduction

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

"IF".

Love through me, Love of God, Make me like Thy clear air Through which unhindered, colours pass As though it were not there.

Powers of the love of God, Depths of the heart Divine, O Love that faileth not, break forth, And flood this world of Thine.

"IF"

Dohnavur Fellowship

LONDON

S. P. C. K

1953

1.05.000. Book 5: Introduction

HOW "IF" CAME TO BE WRITTEN

ONE evening a fellow-worker brought me a trouble about a younger one who was missing the way of Love. This led to a wakeful night, for the word at such times is always, "Lord, is it I? Have I failed her anywhere? What do I know of Calvary Love?" And then sentence by sentence the "Ifs" came, almost as if spoken aloud to the inward ear.

Next morning they were shared with another (for they had been written down in pencil in the night), and then a few others shared. After this some copies were printed on our little hand-press for the D.F. only; and that led to this booklet. At first when it was asked for, we felt, No, it is far too private for that. But if it can help any to understand what the life of love means and to live that life, then it is not ours to refuse.

Some of the "Ifs" appear to be related to pride, selfishness, or cowardice, but digging deeper we come upon an unsuspected lovelessness at the root of them all. The pages in Part 2 are not meant to be read one after the other. Perhaps only one here and there may have the needed word, and leaving the others, the reader may find something in the last pages. And in case any true follower be troubled by the "then I know nothing;" I would say, the thought came in this form, and I fear to weaken it. But here, as everywhere, the letter killeth. St. Paul counted the loss of all things as nothing that he might know Him whom he already knew; and the soul, suddenly illuminated by some fresh outshining of the knowledge of the love of God shown forth on Calvary, does not stop to measure how much or how little it knew of that love before. Penetrated, melted, broken before that vision of love, it feels that indeed all it ever knew was nothing, less than nothing.

It is clear, I think, that such a booklet as this is not meant for every one, but only for those who are called to be under-shepherds. And there are some of them for whom it has no word. They have already entered into that of which I have been impelled to write.

A. C.

1.05.01. Book 5: Part 1

PART I

There are times when something comes into our lives which is charged with love in such a way that it seems to open the Eternal to us for a moment, or at least some of the Eternal Things, and the greatest of these is love.

It may be a small and intimate touch upon us or our affairs, light as the touch of the dawn-wind on the leaves of the tree, something not to be captured and told to another in words. But we know that it is our Lord. And then perhaps the room where we are, with its furniture and books and flowers, seems less "present" than His Presence, and the heart is drawn into that sweetness of which the old hymn sings. The love of Jesus what it is None but His loved ones know. Or it is the dear human love about us that bathes us as in summer seas and rests us through and through. Can we ever cease to wonder at the love of our companions? And then suddenly we recognise our Lord in them. It is His love that they lavish upon us. 0 Love of God made manifest in Thy lovers, we worship Thee. Or (not often, perhaps, for dimness seems to be more wholesome for us here, but sometimes, because our Lord is very merciful) it is given to us to look up through the blue air and see the love of God. And yet, after all, how little we see! "That ye may be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge"-the words are too great for us. What do we comprehend, what do we know? Confounded and abased, we enter into the Rock and hide us in the dust before the glory of the Majesty of love-the love whose symbol is the Cross. And a question pierces then: What do I know of Calvary love?

1.05.02. Book 5: Part 2

PART II

If I have not compassion on my fellow-servant even as my Lord had pity on me, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I belittle those whom I am called to serve, talk of their weak points in contrast perhaps with what I think of as my strong points; if I adopt a superior attitude, forgetting "Who made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received?" then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can easily discuss the shortcomings and the sins of any; if I can speak in a casual way even of a child's misdoings, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I find myself half-carelessly taking lapses for granted, "Oh, that's what they always do," "Oh, of course she talks like that, he acts like that," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can enjoy a joke at the expense of another; if I can in any way slight another in conversation, or even in thought, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can write an unkind letter, speak an unkind word, think an unkind thought without grief and shame, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not feel far more for the grieved Saviour than for my worried self when troublesome things occur, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I know little of His pitifulness (the Lord turned and looked upon Peter), if I know little of His courage of hopefulness for the truly humble and penitent (He saith unto him, Feed My lambs), then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I deal with wrong for any other reason than that implied in the words, "From His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people; It if I can rebuke without a pang, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If, in dealing with one who does not respond, I weary of the strain, and slip from under the burden, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot bear to be like the father who did not soften the rigours of the far country; if, in this sense, I refuse to allow the law of God (the way of transgressors is hard) to take effect, because of the distress it causes me to see that law in operation, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am perturbed by the reproach and misunderstanding that may follow action taken for the good of souls for whom I must give account; if I cannot commit the matter and go on in peace and in silence, remembering Gethsemane and the Cross, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot catch "the sound of noise of rain" * long before the rain falls, and, going to some hilltop of the spirit, as near to my God as I can, have not faith to wait there with my face between my

knees, though six times or sixty times I am told "there is nothing," till at last "there arises a little cloud out of the sea," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

* 1 Kings 18:41 margin.

If my attitude be one of fear, not faith, about one who has disappointed me, if I say, "Just what I expected," if a fall occurs, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not look with eyes of hope on all in whom there is even a faint beginning, as our Lord did, when, just after His disciples had wrangled about which of them should be accounted the greatest, He softened His rebuke with those heart-melting words, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cast up a confessed, repented and forsaken sin against another, and allow my remembrance of that sin to colour my thinking and feed my suspicions, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I have not the patience of my Saviour with souls who grow slowly; if I know little of travail (a sharp and painful thing) till Christ be fully formed in them, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I sympathise weakly with weakness, and say to one who is turning back from the Cross, Pity thyself; if I refuse such a one the sympathy that braces and the brave and heartening word of comradeship, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot keep silence over a disappointing soul (unless for the sake of that soul’s good or for the good of others it be necessary to speak), then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can hurt another by speaking faithfully without much preparation of spirit, and without hurting myself far more than I hurt that other, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am afraid to speak the truth, lest I lose affection, or lest the one concerned should say, "You do not understand," or because I fear to lose my reputation for kindness; if I put my own good name before the other’s highest good, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am content to heal a hurt slightly, saying Peace, peace, where is no peace; if I forget the poignant word "Let love be without dissimulation " and blunt the edge of truth, speaking not right things but smooth things, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I fear to hold another to the highest because it is so much easier to avoid doing so, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I hold on to choices of any kind, just because they are my choice; if I give any room to my private likes and dislikes, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I put my own happiness before the well-being of the work entrusted to me; if, though I have this ministry and have received much mercy, I faint, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am soft to myself and slide comfortably into the vice of self-pity and self-sympathy; if I do not by the grace of God practise fortitude, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I myself dominate myself, if my thoughts revolve round myself, if I am so occupied with myself I rarely have "a heart at leisure from itself," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If, the moment I am conscious of the shadow of self crossing my threshold, I do not shut the door, and in the power of Him who works in us to will and to do, keep that door shut, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot in honest happiness take the second place (or the twentieth); if I cannot take the first without making a fuss about my unworthiness, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If, when I am able to discover something which has baffled others, I forget Him who revealeth the deep and secret things, and knoweth what is in the darkness and showeth it to us; if I forget that it was He who granted that ray of light to His most unworthy servant, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot be at rest under the Unexplained, forgetting the word, And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me; or if I can admit the least shadow of a misunderstanding, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not give a friend "the benefit of the doubt," but put the worst construction instead of the best on what is said or done, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I take offence easily, if I am content to continue in a cool unfriendliness, though friendship be possible, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If a sudden jar can cause me to speak an impatient, unloving word, then I know nothing of Calvary love. * * For a cup brimful of sweet water cannot spill even one drop of bitter water however suddenly jolted.

If I feel injured when another lays to my charge things that I know not, forgetting that my Sinless Saviour trod this path to the end, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel bitterly towards those who condemn me, as it seems to me, unjustly, forgetting that if they knew me as I know myself they would condemn me much more, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I say, "Yes, I forgive, but I cannot forget," as though the God, who twice a day washes all the sands on all the shores of all the world, could not wash such memories from my mind, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If one whose help I greatly need appears to be as content to build in wood, hay, stubble, as in gold, silver, precious stones, and I hesitate to obey my light and do without that help because so few will understand, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the care of a soul (or a community) be entrusted to me, and I consent to subject it to weakening influences, because the voice of the world-my immediate Christian world-fills my ears, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If by doing some work which the undiscerning consider "not spiritual work" I can best help others, and I inwardly rebel, thinking it is the spiritual for which I crave, when in truth it is the interesting and exciting, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If monotony tries me, and I cannot stand drudgery; if stupid people fret me and little ruffles set me on edge; if I make much of the trifles of life, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am inconsiderate about the comfort of others, or their feelings, or even of their little weaknesses; if I am careless about their little hurts and miss opportunities to smooth their way; if I make the sweet running of household wheels more difficult to accomplish, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If interruptions annoy me, and private cares make me impatient; if I shadow the souls about me because I myself am shadowed, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If souls can suffer alongside, and I hardly know it, because the spirit of discernment is not in me, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If there be any reserve in my giving to Him who so loved that He gave His Dearest for me; if there be a secret "but" in my prayer, "anything but that, Lord," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I become entangled in any "inordinate affection;" if things or places or people hold me back from obedience to my Lord, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If something I am asked to do for another feels burdensome; if, yielding to an inward unwillingness, I avoid doing it, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the praise of man elates me and his blame depresses me; if I cannot rest under misunderstanding without defending myself; if I love to be loved more than to love, to be served more than to serve, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I crave hungrily to be used to show the way of liberty to a soul in bondage, instead of caring only that it be delivered; if I nurse my disappointment when I fail, instead of asking that to another the word of release may be given, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I want to be known as the doer of something that has proved the right thing, or as the one who suggested that it should be done, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not forget about such a trifle as personal success, so that it never crosses my mind, or if it does, is never given a moment’s room there; if the cup of spiritual flattery tastes sweet to me, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If it be not a simple and a natural thing to say, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If in the fellowship of service I seek to attach a friend to myself, so that others are caused to feel unwanted; if my friendships do not draw others deeper in, but are ungenerous (to myself, for myself), then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I refuse to allow one who is dear to me to suffer for the sake of Christ, if I do not see such suffering as the greatest honour that can be offered to any follower of the Crucified, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I slip into the place that can be filled by Christ alone, making myself the first necessity to a soul instead of leading it to fasten upon Him, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If my interest in the work of others is cool; if I think in terms of my own special work; if the burdens of others are not my burdens too, and their joys mine, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If, when an answer I did not expect comes to a prayer which I believed I truly meant, I shrink back from it; if the burden my Lord asks me to bear be not the burden of my heart's choice, and I fret inwardly and do not welcome His will, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I avoid being "ploughed under," with all that such ploughing entails of rough handling, isolation, uncongenial situations, strange tests, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I wonder why something trying is allowed, and press for prayer that it may be removed; if I cannot be trusted with any disappointment, and cannot go on in peace under any mystery, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I make much of anything appointed, magnify it secretly to myself or insidiously to others; if I let them think it "hard," if I look back longingly upon what used to be, and linger among the bye-ways of memory, so that my power to help is weakened, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the love that "alone maketh light of every heavy thing, and beareth evenly every uneven thing" is not my heart's desire, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I refuse to be a corn of wheat that falls into the ground and dies ("is separated from all in which it lived before'"), then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I ask to be delivered from trial rather than for deliverance out of it, to the praise of His glory; if I forget that the way of the Cross leads to the Cross and not to a bank of flowers; if I regulate my life on these lines, or even unconsciously my thinking, so that I am surprised when the way is rough and think it strange, though the word is, Think it not strange, Count it all joy, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the ultimate, the hardest, cannot be asked of me; if my fellows hesitate to ask it and turn to someone else, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I covet any place on earth but the dust at the foot of the Cross, then I know nothing of Calvary love. That which I know not, teach Thou me, O Lord, my God.

1.05.03. Book 5: Part 3

PART III

I

I have felt these words scorching to write, but it is borne upon me, that in spite of all our hymns and prayers (so many of them for love), it is possible to be content with the shallows of love, if indeed such shallows should be called love at all.

(Perhaps prayer often needs to be followed by a little pause, that we may have time to open our hearts to that for which we have prayed. We often rush from prayer to prayer without waiting for the word within, which says, "I have heard you, My child.") The more we ponder our Lord's words about love, and the burning words the Spirit gave to His followers to write, the more acutely do we feel our deadly lack. The Search-light of the Spirit discovers us to ourselves, and such a discovery leaves us appalled. How can even He who is the God of all patience have patience with us? Like Job we abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes. But the light is not turned upon us to rob us of our hope. There is a lifting up. If only we desire to be purged from self with its entangling nets, its subtleties, its disguises (false-hoods truly) its facile showing of brass for gold, as the Tamil says; if, hating unlove from the ground of the heart, we cry to be delivered, then our God will be to us a God of deliverances.

2 No vision of the night can show, no word declare with what longings of love Divine Love waits till the heart, all weary and sick of itself, turns to its Lord and says, "Take full possession." There is no need to plead that the love of God shall fill our heart as though He were unwilling to fill us: He is willing as light is willing to flood a room that is opened to its brightness; willing as water is willing to flow into an emptied channel. Love is pressing round us on all sides like air. Cease to resist, and instantly love takes possession. As the 15th century poem Quia amore langues says, Long and love thou never so high, My love is more than thine may be.

More, far more. For as His abundance of pardon passes our power to tell it, so does His abundance of love: it is far as the East is from the West, high as the heaven is above the earth. But words fail: Love soars above them all. To look at ourselves leads to despair. Thank God, the Blood cleanseth.

If thou be foul, I shall make thee clean, If thou be sick, I shall thee heal.

Foundest thou ever love so leal?

Never, Lord, never.

3

Sometimes, when we are distressed by past failure and tormented by fear of failure in the future should we again set our faces toward Jerusalem, nothing helps so much as to give some familiar Scripture time to enter into us and become part of our being. The words "Grace for grace" have

been a help to me since I read in a little old book of Bishop Maule's something that opened their meaning. (Till then I had not understood them.)

He says "for" means simply instead, "The image is of a perpetual succession of supply; a displacement ever going on; ceaseless changes of need and demand.

"The picture before us is as of a river. Stand on its banks, and contemplate the flow of waters. A minute passes, and another. Is it the same stream still? Yes. But is it the same water? No. The liquid mass that passed you a few seconds ago fills now another section of the channel; new water has displaced it, or if you please replaced it; water instead of water. And so hour by hour, and year by year, and century by century, the process holds; one stream, other waters, living not stagnant, because always in the great identity there is perpetual exchange. Grace takes the place of grace;" (Love takes the place of love) "ever new, ever old, ever the same, ever fresh and young, for hour by hour, for year by year, through Christ."

4

There is no force strong enough to hold us together as a company, and animate all our doings, but this one force of Love; and so there is a constant attack upon the love without which we are sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. That explains why every now and then those who want to live the life of love seem to be constrained to seek the searching and the cleansing of the Spirit of God, first (it has often happened so) in the secret of our own hearts, and then together; and we know how graciously God has answered us, so that though our word must always be, "not as though I had already attained," we do, by His enabling, press onward.

There is another reason why the adversary attacks love. It is this:-

Far out on our uttermost rim a thing may occur which is the reflection, so to speak, of something that was nourished in the heart of one who is in the very centre. I have often known it to be so. Perhaps it was never expressed in act or word, the eye did not see it, the ear did not hear it. But spiritual influences move where sight and hearing have no place; and unlove in anyone of us, or even an absence of the quality of love of which we have been thinking, is enough to cause the slow stain to spread till it reaches some soul in a moment of its weakness. And irreparable harm may result.

O Lord, forgive: Thy property is always to have mercy. Give me the comfort of Thy help again. Let it be Thy pleasure to deliver me, 0 Lord my God.

* * *

5 The way of love is never an easy way. If our hearts be set on walking in that way we must be prepared to suffer. "It was the way the Master went; should not the servant tread it still?" It is possible that we may be enclosed in circumstances which drain natural love, till we feel dry as grass on an Indian hillside under a burning sun.

We have toiled for some one dear to us, but never knew it toil. We have poured out stores of health never to be recovered, but did not know it, nor would we have cared if we had known it, so dearly did we love. And all our hope was that the one so cherished would become a minister to others. But it was not so. And then unwillingly we become aware of a strange unresponsiveness in

the one for whom nothing had seemed too much to do, a coldness that chilled, a hardness that pushed away as with hard hands the heart that had almost broken to save that life from destruction.

Then (but only those who have gone through such a bereft hour will understand) a fear worse than any pain has us in its grip: is the love of the years slipping from us? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"-is that fading from our memory? Love never faileth, is love failing now? Shall we find ourselves meeting lovelessness with lovelessness? In such an hour, a prayer now many years old, that felt a desperate prayer, burned into words:

Deep unto deep, 0 Lord,

Crieth in me, Gathering strength I come, Lord, unto Thee.

Jesus of Calvary,

Smitten for me, Ask what Thou wilt, but give

Love to me.

Yes, ask what Thou wilt, any hopes, any joys of human affection, any rewards of love, but let not love depart. Nothing ordinary is equal to this new call; nothing in me suffices for this. 0 Lord of Love and Lord of Pain, abound in me in love: Love through me, Love of God.

6 Our dear Lord listens to the prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips, and it is written for our comfort that He causes those who love Him to inherit substance, the wonderful "substance" that is grace instead of grace, the perpetual gift of His Fulness. This grace is no mere "impersonal " substance but God working in us; the Lord in action in our very springs of thought and will, God is Love, so, for us, Love is this blessed "Substance" that the children of the Father are caused to inherit.

It is the river’s word again. The empty river-bed "inherits" the water that pours through it from the heights, it does not create that water, it only receives it, and its treasuries are filled, its pools overflow for the blessing and refreshment of the land. It is so with us; our treasuries of time, our years with all their months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, are filled with the flowing treasure of love that we may help others. Who could have thought of such joy for us but He whose name is Love? Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory.

7

Let us end on a very simple note: Let us listen to simple words; our Lord speaks simply: "Trust Me, My child," He says. "Trust Me with a humbler heart and a fuller abandon to My will than ever thou didst before. Trust Me to pour My love through thee; as minute succeeds minute. And if thou shouldst be conscious of anything hindering the flow, do not hurt My love by going away from Me in discouragement, nothing can hurt love so much as that. Draw all the closer to Me, come, flee unto Me to hide thee, even from thyself. Tell Me about the trouble. Trust Me to turn My hand upon thee and throughly to remove the boulder that has choked thy river-bed, and take away all the sand that has silted up the channel. I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken

to thee of. I will perfect that which concerneth thee. Fear thou not, 0 child of My love; fear not,"

* * * And now to gather all in one page:- Beloved, let us love.

Lord, what is love?

Love is that which inspired My life, and led Me to My Cross, and held Me on My Cross. Love is that which will make it thy joy to lay down thy life for thy brethren.

Lord, evermore give me this love. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after love, for they shall be filled.

1.06.00. Book 6: Ponnammal, Her Story (1918)

Ponnammal, Her Story by Carmichael, Amy

Chapters

Title

Forward Preface - By H. C. G. Moule Chapter 1 - The Girl Ponnammal Chapter 2 - Enlightened Chapter 3 - Loosed Chapter 4 - To Whatever Utmost Distance Chapter 5 - Underland Chapter 6 - The Time Appointed Chapter 7 - Why Mens Honours Woman?

Chapter 8 - Carry On Chapter 9 - Nous Chapter 10 - An Ordinary Day, and Digressions Chapter 11 - Ahead of Her Generation Chapter 12 - Sacred Secularities Chapter 13 - Our Arm Every Morning Chapter 14 - Her Pain Chapter 15 - Her Music Chapter 16 - In the Midst of the Furnace Chapter 17 - Our Triumphal Procession The Dohnavur Fellowship

PONNAMMAL HER STORY BY

AMY CARMICHAEL Dohnavur Fellowship WITH FORWARD BY THE RT. REV. HANDLEY MOULE Bishop of Durham (1901-1920) A DOHNAVUR BOOK

LONDON S . P . C . K

1950

1.06.000. Book 6: Forward

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION By DR. MOULE, BISHOP OF DURHAM, 1901-1920

I HAVE just completed the perusal of the proof-sheets of 'PONNAMMAL.' What shall I say to commend the book to others? Simply this: Read it, and give God thanks for it; and read it again, and often. It will be a friend and helper to your faith, a kindling fire to your missionary thoughts, prayers, and efforts, a window through which you will see 'the real India' as it is not often seen, and a picture, wonderful and beautiful, of the life of the Lord lived in His missionary servants, and in the Indian sisters whom they have brought into His all-loving power and keeping. The interests of the book are manifold. To those who know the writer's Lotus Buds it will be very moving to see, as it were from within, something of the most pathetic and noble rescue-work in the world. A hundred details of missionary life will assume a new reality and vividness. And, above all, the MASTER of the field, of the labourers, of the harvest, will be 'glorified in His saint,' this dear saint with the

'steadfast eyes and the brow of peace,' in whom so wonderfully, in life and in that suffering death, He showed Himself alive for evermore.

HANDLEY MAULE.

December 7, 1917.

Chapter 59

1.06.0000. Book 6: Preface - By H. C. G. Moule

NOTE TO THIRD EDITION*

I T is always a surprise to me when a book has to be reprinted, and I am very grateful, for it must mean that new friends have been given to us. And we need them. We have seen over a thousand children pass out of the shadow cast by the temple walls since first Ponnammal and I went up and down the villages and towns trying to find a way to save even one. The Lord and Lover of children Himself found a way, and now, as all who have read our later stories know, we are far more than nurseries (though the nursery is still the core of the work), and so we need new friends. To all who will read this story of a dear Indian sister we send our loving thanks for giving time, perhaps out of a crowded day, to care for these little ones who are so precious to their Lord.

A.C.

*In reading please remember the date of writing; we have now a Place of Healing, doctors, trained nurses. Such chapters as ch. 10 are happily of the past.

1.06.01. Book 6: 1. The Girl Ponnammal

CHAPTER I THE GIRL PONNAMMAL A GIRL stood alone in the dark, listening. No one moved about her; the old mother-in-law who slept near by breathed steadily, she would not waken yet awhile. The girl drew back the heavy iron bolts of the door and slipped out into the night.

Out there, in the soft, warm air, with the white stars looking down on her with only pity in their eyes, she stopped; she knew the thing she purposed doing was unreasonable and hopelessly wrong; but she was too desperate with loneliness to care. Life since her husband had died had been too hard to live. A widow's life in India-God only knows how hard it can be made-she could bear it no longer; she had crept out now to end it, as so many girls have ended it. The well was near; it seemed to draw her to itself. And yet she waited; and the quiet stars soothed her, and the soft night airs did their healing work.

Then as she stood came the memory of something she had read about an Indian widow in Western India who was working a great work for her country. A widow, and yet of use to India: the thing had been; could be, perhaps, again. Was there something left for her to do? She would not end all hope of it to-night. So she stole back again and lay down on her mat, and clasped closer the little child, her only child, whom she had all but left for ever in her mad misery, and lying with unsleeping eyes, thought many thoughts till dawn. This was Ponnammal: and thus was the awakening of a spirit that was to travel far in the fields of joyful adventure.

She was born in August, 1875, that great year for India when Edward, Prince of Wales, came and stayed in simple fashion with the Collector of the district in which her home lay, and stood to be gazed at by crowds of gratified people at the railway-station. And because she was born in so great a year, the village folk told her father she would be great among women. He, good man, believed them, and received her with much joy, and called her Ponnammal, which means gold.

She grew to be an attractive little maid, of a soft clear colour quite unlike the 'black' of English imagination. And quiet eyes she had, that looked steadfastly out on the world; and hair that waved and curled; and delicate little hands that no work ever spoiled. The mother, a saint of typical Indian type, brought her up carefully; and when she went to school, and returned praised by all and very wise, the father felt she had indeed begun her life in an auspicious year. At nineteen they married her, as the custom was, and too often is, with little knowledge of the one to whom they committed so dear a treasure; he was a professor in a mission college, had good pay, was of the right degree of relationship, and of course of the exact shade of suitable caste. And clothed in silken garments, and decked with pretty chains and bangles, as sweet and true as she was good to look upon, she left her father's house, a girl of high spirit, but gentle as a fawn. Of her one year of married life Ponnammal never cared to speak: it was disillusionment. Perhaps this was inevitable, for she was by nature spiritual, and he was of the earth earthy, and his pursuits apart from his college duties were not of an elevated character. She had no sort of kinship with him till her baby came, when, the Tamil being an affectionate parent, they met for the first time on common ground; and with the Indian woman's gracious gift of making the most out of little, she contented herself and was happy.

Then suddenly her husband died, and she was that most desolate of God's creatures in India, a widow. At first the gloom was lightened by the kindness of her father (her mother had died previously). He took her home and in his simple way tried to comfort her. But even he could not quite rise above the sense of heavy disgrace and misfortune. Life seemed suddenly one long, tired perplexity.

Then, pulling herself together, she faced it; knew that to conquer in it she must be strong; felt that the sorrowful, considerate affection of her own people was weakening something within her. 'I wanted to learn to endure,' she told me years afterwards, 'and so I went to my father-in-law's house'; where, as all knew, she was wanted, because of the child whom the parents-in-law counted theirs, and because of some property now Ponnammal's, which they wished to appropriate. Of sympathy they knew nothing at all. Now, in real earnest, began the discipline of widowhood.

Ponnammal's mother and her mother before her had been women of that sweet and saintly type so essentially Indian, that those who know and love this land will recognize it without more descriptive words. The family had become Christian in the great-grandmother's time; and the women seem to have been notable all the way down the line, which in India, with its early marriages, covers fewer years than one might expect. The parents-in-law were also Christians of standing, but the tenderer elements had somehow been missed when they were made. Fine folk they were of their sort-people of force, some wealth, and abundant worldly wisdom. To them the girl widow was a blot on the prosperous landscape of life, to be tolerated only for the sake of the child-their son's child. With the shrewdness of a woman of this type, the mother-in-law recognized in Ponnammal something foreign in spirit, and therefore obnoxious. Her harsh voice drove the girl about the house from morning till evening; and Ponnammal, who was eager to help, was treated as an unwilling drudge, to be scolded for her good. And for her good did that strange girl accept it all. The stuff which makes meek nuns scourge themselves in secret was in her. She accepted it, and at first, in peace. But little by little she sank under it. She was not allowed to keep herself nice, and that wounded the self-respect in her. Her beautiful long waves of hair might not be combed except with her fingers, and never might be dressed. Except on Sunday, when she was taken to church, she was not allowed a clean garment: soiled things become a widow. She was never allowed out anywhere except to church. In curious contradiction to this, they wished Ponnammal to wear some of her jewels still, a quite unjewelled woman being too hideous a thing to have to contemplate daily. But of this Ponnammal thought little. What broke her spirit was the restricted life, the sense of being always wrong, always under the shadow of disapproval as a widow. She felt smothered. Her child, a precious little person called Paripuranam (Perfection), shortened to a purry sort of word best spelt Purripu, was hers, of course, but far more its grandmother's: so there was the constant fret of a divided responsibility and disputed claims. Sometimes she would try to lift herself above everything and triumph through sheer will-power. But will-power fails under certain forms of trial long continued. She would not give in, acknowledge herself defeated, and return to her father's house; but she slipped down. It was then the cool waters of the well in the courtyard called her. Did an angel lay his hand on her arm at that moment and draw her back? The thought that worked within her I have already told.

1.06.02. Book 6: 2. Enlightened

CHAPTER II

ENLIGHTENED

THINGS were so with Ponnammal when we, Mr. and Mrs. Walker and I with them, came to live in the old mission-house of Pannaivilai, less than a mile from her home. The Walkers immediately began to visit the Christian houses about us; and one day, when visiting those particular parents-in-law, they saw, standing behind a door set ajar, a girl with hair like a dark cloud falling round her face, looking out at them as they sat in a front room of the house. India is a land of mystery. We get accustomed to mysteries, and hardly think of them as mysterious. But they wondered who the wild-faced girl could be, and asked, and were told ‘the widow of our son.’ And now began those wonderful days when vital religion was preached Sunday by Sunday in the village church, and the place was alive with a sense of stir and a new brightness. Among the first to be enlightened was the girl Ponnammal. She listened, one of a group of women on the right-hand side of the preacher, whose eyes, even as he poured out rapid sentences in complicated Tamil, saw everyone took in everything. Then the Spirit who works without noise of words wrought in her, and her heart was refreshed in the multitude of peace. From this time forward all things became different for Ponnammal. There was the same starved existence, with its cramping walls and irritating, depressing influences; and yet all things were made new. She went about her duties in a kind of triumphant serenity which not even the jarring clatter of the house could disturb. Her mother-in-law was disgusted with her; she who had devoured the life of her husband, what right had she to be happy? But there was one blessed respite, for gradually Mrs. Walker’s gentleness prevailed with the old father-in-law, and he allowed Ponnammal to stay for an hour after the Sunday service and teach a class, in Sunday-school. It was there I saw her first.

I can see her now, a slight figure in a dark blue sari, with a group of grown-up women round her; for the school included people of all ages, down to old grannies as ignorant as infants. Ponnammal had women who could read, so they were more or less intelligent; but what struck me was her power over them. There was something about her which was quite unusual. From that moment Ponnammal for me was a woman set apart. But she was still held in stern bondage by the old parents-in-law, who rigidly limited the hours of her liberty. Once, in an evil moment, she went to a neighbour’s house to comfort a poor despairing widow who had sent a message to her imploring her to come; they were very angry with her, and she was confined-coffined, I had almost written-more rigorously than ever. But it was discipline that could not hurt her now; the sense of fret was gone. She learned fortitude, patience, and the secret of possessing that joy which is not in circumstances, and so does not depend upon them. In those days I was immersed in the study of Tamil. But as often as I could, I went out with an Indian woman, chiefly to listen and learn. Before long I had made friends with the old couple who stood like two ancient, obdurate dragons between Ponnammal and the fullness of life. I had seen the old father-in-law crush a butterfly against the

church wall during a service; the action seemed symbolical of the trend of his purpose towards this, the only fragment of vivid human personality he had it in his power to crush; and oppressed by the thought of it, I tried hard to find a tender spot in the old man, and one day I found it. Before he was quite aware of it, he was solemnly assuring me that if I came on a certain afternoon which he named, Ponnammal should go out with me. Not till sixteen years later, when Ponnammal, in the leisure of illness, was living her life over again, did I know that she counted that the day of her spiritual Jubilee, the opening of her prison door. Nor did I know of the things which kindly worked together toward pulling back the bars. For the Indian mind rarely recognizes that which ours seizes upon as the crucial thing. The real substance of a letter is scattered loose all over it, or dropped into a casual postscript, or never told at all. That which grips you in a story is there by the merest chance. And so it came to pass that not till she lay ill, and I, sitting beside her with a big volume of 'Lotus Buds' on my lap, was colouring the pictures for her, by way of drawing her into reminiscences connected therewith, did I hear the inner story of that afternoon.

'After you left the house, my father-in-law repented his promise, and my mother-in-law upbraided him for making it. They decided that when you came they would say it did not happen to be convenient to allow me to go. On the afternoon appointed, they talked about the matter to some of their friends who chanced to be spending the day in the house. They said, "that Musal Missie" (they called you that because like a hare were your swift ways) "came and beguiled us into folly." And they told the foolishness into which you had caused them unawares to fall. But their friends saw the matter otherwise, and one whom they greatly respected for his age and wisdom said, "Where is the indignity? The Musal Missie will come in a bullock-bandy and take the girl with due respect to the place whither she wishes to go; and she will with care return her at the proper time. What indignity to your family can there be in that?" The other men all agreed, and they softened towards the proposal; and all this time I was waiting behind the door, shaking with fear lest at the last moment they would harden again.' But when a few minutes later I arrived, all I saw was a smiling old man and a smiling old woman, and a composed, though evidently eager, girl. The eagerness, however, was well under control; there was no hint of it in the quiet manner, only it looked out of her eyes; and I saw it, and met it, and loved her.

1.06.03. Book 6: 3. Loosed

CHAPTER III

LOOSED

EARLY in June, 1897, Ponnammal, her relatives by miracle agreeing, cast in her lot with mine; and for eight years we itinerated together, with a band of women and girls who gathered round us. The people called us by a name meaning a constellation like Orion or the Pleiades, and we often got letters addressed to us under this shining name. Those years lie in memory like a handful of jewels that sparkle as I turn them over. Why do past years sparkle so? They were full of ordinary things while they were being lived; they were often dusty and dull; but they are jewels now, many-coloured, various, lighted with lights that time cannot dim nor tears drown.

Outwardly our life was, I suppose, quite normal. We were an itinerating band, furnished with a flag made of folds of black; red, white, and yellow sateen, a most useful text for an impromptu sermon; and we found Eastern musical instruments useful too. Being the first women's band of its kind in the district, we walked circumspectly. I used to feel like a cat on the top of a wall-the sort of wall that is plentifully set with bits of broken bottles; for there seemed to be no end to the occasions on which 'it was necessary to be careful.' But we had excellent times notwithstanding, and our own little private springs of mirth never ran dry. Ponnammal soon recovered from the cowing effect of her parents-in-law, and proved herself a delightful companion; it was good to see the timid look passing from her, as she began to realize her liberty. And our manner of life was ideal: we had one thing to do, and one only: there could be no perplexities as to which was the duty of the hour-there was only one possible duty.

Much of our time we spent in scouring the country round our different camping-places. Off we would go in the early morning, walking, or by bullock-cart, as many of us as could get in, packed under its curved mat roof. Stuffiness, weariness, that appalling sensation of almost sea-sickness which never forgets to afflict those naturally inclined thereto, all these disagreeables have faded, and one only remembers the loveliness of the early lights on palm, and water, and emerald sheet of rice-field; the songs by which we refreshed ourselves as we tumbled along in the heat; the pause outside the village we were to enter; the swift prayer for an open door; the entrance, all of us watching eagerly for signs of a welcome any-where-for this was pioneer work, not work in prepared ground, and in scores of the places to which we went no white woman had ever been seen before.

Sometimes we would get out at the entrance of the village and walk on till we saw a friendly face-and we almost always found one. We usually separated then, and went two and two, and won our way past the men who would be sauntering in the front courtyard, and so penetrated to the women's rooms; or if that proved impossible, we held an open-air meeting somewhere; or sat down wherever we could, and waited till someone came to talk, for we found-at festivals, for example-that if we waited in some quiet by-street, sitting apparently unconcerned, Indian

guru-fashion, on a deserted verandah, or under a tree, that one by one people discovered us, and came and squatted down beside us and asked questions. We grew more and more to use this way of approach; it seemed to suit the temper of the people.

Before the heat grew too intolerable we went home; and after breakfast, through the hottest hours, we had what would now be described as a Study Circle. Not that we had ever heard the word, a convenient later invention; but the thing itself was our habit; and with something of the spirit with which Lady Burne-Jones tells us her husband and his friend William Morris sat down to search into the lightest word of their poet, by way of preparation for the making of the beautiful Kelmscott Press Chaucer, we, together with the other members of the women's band, turned to the well-known pages of our Classic, and searched them through and through for that without which our work would have been vain. Often Ponnammal took notes; and those notes were copied by Tamil Bible Students elsewhere, and used to reappear, to our interest and sometimes amusement, in unexpected places. In the last year of her life her comfort was for me to sit with her and read now, without note or comment, from that beloved Book. In this way we read the Psalms, and Gospels, and those parts of the Epistles which lead into quiet meadows, lingering over and returning again and again to the dear and long-familiar words, in which she found strong consolation. The afternoons and evenings of those years were spent much as the mornings, except that we often joined the other side of the house in its avocations, and when missions to Christians were the order of the day, took our share in them. Sometimes we all went street-preaching together, with a baby organ by way of attraction; and Ponnammal soon developed a gift of fine and forceful speech, and could hold a turbulent open-air meeting in a big, busy market as easily as the decorous assembly settled in tidy rows in prayer-room or village church. So she was an immense help. Coming home, especially if the afternoon had been spent in some unresponsive village and we were feeling low, we used to sing the happiest things we knew.

Once, for a period which seemed ages long, we were shut out of the homes of the people, because some of them had believed our report. When we went to the villages where this had happened, we were pelted with ashes and rotten garlands from the necks of the idols. One day a great crowd drew round us, and shouted its sentiments and made a most unholy racket. We stood under a burning sun till we were too tired to stand any longer; then, as there was nothing else to be done, we knelt down in the middle of the rabble and prayed for it, after which it let us go. Once we were tom-tomed out of a village, accompanied by all the ragamuffins of the place-a new experience for Ponnammal; but she walked out of that village, I remember, with the utmost dignity, in nowise disturbed thereby. To those to whom such episodes sound rather extraordinary, and to whom the militant attitude is all wrong, I can only say that with the best intentions, as I think ours were, to live a peaceable life, we were never able to discover a way by which the captives of the devil could be delivered without offending that person. When doors lie open year after year, it only means that nothing vital has been done behind them. But open doors are such nice things that we were at first much troubled when they shut; it was then we comforted ourselves with song. And as opposition in one place usually led to blessing in another, we learned not to be moved from our purpose by talk about the unwisdom of shutting doors. But while we were thus shut out, it was a real trouble to feel ourselves anathema; for we knew the people inside so well, and so thoroughly understood the bitterness of things to them, that we could not help sympathizing with them. 'If India were like China and Japan, how different it would be!' I used to say ruefully, after a battering

in some angry village. There they are not compelled by any idiotic social code to turn believing members out of their community, and fall upon those who only want to help them. And one day I looked at a great spider's web several feet in diameter, and saw the mighty Caste system of India. At the outer edges floated almost freely long light threads that caught the morning sun and waved responsively to the morning airs. But nearer to the centre of the web the lines were drawn close-no wandering here; and right in the heart of it crouched the creature who ruled it all. A spider in India can be quite terrific; so can that be which holds the threads of a web woven in the far beginning.

1.06.04. Book 6: 4. To Whatever Utmost Distance

CHAPTER IV TO WHATEVER UTMOST DISTANCE THE story this chapter tells has been told in brief elsewhere; but it is essentially Ponnammal's, and cannot be left out of this record of her life.

We had all been camping out in an interesting village, where some of the most riotous of the opposing Hindus had been converted; and we were full of happiness as we started for home. With us in our bullock-cart was a young wife whose husband wanted us to take her into our Starry Band for awhile, in order that she might return home able to help others. She was a silly little thing, not his equal in any way, and untouched by his ideal; but in those good days we were rich in hope, and we took her. As we rumbled along the road, the husband, who had been talking to the Walkers, who were in the bandy ahead of us, now dropped back to ours, and asked his wife to give him her jewels (the word covers all the gold and silver ornaments worn by women in South India), which he did not think became anyone who wanted to live the kind of life he desired for her. She obeyed; there was nothing in her act but just obedience, for her heart desired otherwise; but I saw an expression of intense interest in Ponnammal's face, and she told me that the evening before, while she was speaking in the open air, she had overheard a child say to her mother that when she grew up she would join that band and wear jewels 'like that sister' (herself). The words had smitten Ponnammal. She felt this was the last impression she wished to leave upon anyone's mind; she had gone to her Lord about it, and the answer that seemed to come to her was this: 'Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.' She did not argue as to the meaning of these words. She saw in the flash of a moment herself, unjewelled, a marked woman among her own people; an eyesore, an offence. But-and the thought overwhelmed her with the joy in it-not so to the Lord her God. When we went home she took off her jewels. How minute, how inoffensive the words appear now, set down in one short sentence; but every syllable in them burned for us then. Are your hearts set upon righteousness, 0 ye congregation? and do ye judge the thing that is right, 0 ye sons of men? The answer to that question will be given Otherwhere. In South India a woman's life down to its merest detail is governed by the law universal, called custom. Her husband, however, has power to override custom. The action therefore of the wife provoked no comment, beyond a passing wonder; besides which it was recognized by a sure instinct that the thing would not proceed far in that direction: when the time came to marry the daughters they would be suitably jewelled. Ponnammal's case was different. If she had taken off her jewels at the time of her husband's death, that would have been all right, because according to custom; but she had done this thing out of sheer love to her Lord. It broke the conventions of life: it would lead who knew how far? It was therefore unnatural, disgraceful; worse, it was pharisaical. 'Be not righteous overmuch,' was the word flung at Ponnammal.

Then what was to be, happened. A few-how few! but still to the startled and indignant eyes that watched, it was most ominous-'inebriated with Divine love,' eager to forsake and defy the spirit of the world, stripped themselves of every weight that they might the less laden run the race that lay before them; and they either returned their jewels to their families, or, if free to do so, gave them to

be sold for China. One who had a long struggle with herself told me that she had never gone to sleep at night without her hand on the gold chain she wore round her neck. 'If I had loved my Saviour more, I should have loved my jewels less,' she said. The last to do this difficult thing had a hard time afterwards: she was taken from the band by her people, and suffered many things. None of us touched on the subject except when privately asked what we felt about it; but it was impossible to speak without seeming to allude to it.

Very vividly, as I write, comes back to me an afternoon meeting in a church in the country. The place was full, for we were in the middle of a mission; and to the Indian Christian, meetings are a sweet delight. Before me sat rows of women, and the village being rich, their ears, cut into large loops, were laden with ornaments. But to me it had been given that day to look upon Christ Crucified. I could only speak of Calvary. Far, far from me then was any thought of the women's golden toys: all eternity was round me, and that common little building was the vestibule thereof. Then, as I spoke, I saw a woman rise. She told me afterwards that she could not bear it. Time, and the scorn of time, and its poor estimates, how trivial all appeared! 'I saw Him,' she said, 'naked of this world's glory, stripped to the uttermost; and I went and made an ash-heap of my pride.'

Then the word flew round that we three-the Walkers and I, especially that I-preached heresy; and one whom we all respected, a most devout and dear Tamil fellow-worker, had an alarming dream in which he perceived me wrecking the Tamil church; and he implored Mr. Walker to allow him to deal with me. So on the floor at the entrance to the tent we-Mr. Walker, he, and I-sat for two serious hours, and he talked. We ended where we began, but we ended in affection, which was a great relief to me. Still, he was disappointed; for we could not un-see what we had seen, nor deny the change that obedience had wrought in the lives of those who had obeyed, counting it joy to have something more to offer. We left it, saying only to any who pressed us, 'If ye be otherwise minded, God, if you truly desire it, will reveal even this unto you.'

Mr. Walker's contribution to the weighty subject under dispute was characteristic. It was not in its outward form a thing that very closely touched an Englishman; but in essence it did, and he pierced through to the heart of it: 'Let's have liberty,' he said; 'people are always so anxious to circumcise Titus'-and he would not have Titus circumcised. Later, as the feeling grew more and more determined that at all costs Titus must be circumcised, he took the matter up more definitely; and as usual, careless of his own reputation for narrow-mindedness or what not, spoke out his thoughts.

Liberty, like duty, was one of his golden words; and another-and it was this he championed now-was obedience.

One day, soon after the last of the band had taken off her jewels, Ponnammal's parents-in-law sent for her and said, 'Do you know what you have done? You have closed the heart of the Hindus. Till now those who according to ordinary custom would have looked coldly upon you, have received you in a remarkable manner, for to their eyes you appeared a person of consequence: This was a new view of matters to Ponnammal, who, till she had joined the band, knew little of Hindus of the exclusive castes; however, she had an answer ready. 'I told them,' she said, 'that I thought the Holy Spirit of God was strong enough to make a way for me, even without the help of my jewels.' And to her surprise she found the difficulty did not exist. To the Hindu, what he calls piety is an attractive thing; piety includes, and indeed chiefly consists in, a renunciation of the good

things of this life. Anything therefore which leans to this commends itself to him. Also, of course, an unjewelled widow was quite natural to him. So Ponnammal's undecorated person was no offence to the Hindus. 'There are no boundaries set to her devotion,' they remarked, and thought no more about it, but respected her the more. The furor passed; the violence of it, so absurdly out of proportion to its importance-at least according to Western thought-diminished at length; but it left its mark. The women who had braved the storm had made a new discovery: they were no more thereafter mere biscuits in a biscuit-box, cut to correct pattern, fitted in rows, each the duplicate of the other; they had found a new thing, even their individuality; and in finding it they had gained in courage and in character. Things impossible before were now undertaken without a thought; they were free from a thousand trammels that before had entangled their feet with invisible threads. And going deeper, those who for love of the Crucified had counted all things loss and vanity, loved Him now with a new love, rejoiced with a new joy. Is there any limit to what God is prepared to do for the one who loves His Son well enough to meet His lightest wish? 'After these things' renunciation of temporal gain-the word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, 'Fear not, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.' After these things-not dissimilar-the word was the same.

Among Ponnammal's notebooks is one dealing with these years of camp-life; and sitting on the window-sill of the nursery yesterday, her daughter and dear little legacy to us read to me page after page of prayers, in Ponnammal's beautiful, eager Tamil: prayers written down, as probably all true recorded prayer has ever been, for the relief of a heart too full to contain that which boiled up within it. The prayer of the time we are dealing with now touched me most: 'Thou knowest my desire: my life does not yet appear to me as thoroughly controlled by Thee. My Father, look upon the holy face of Thy Beloved, and in those of us who have thus dedicated ourselves to Thee, work so thoroughly that to whatever utmost distance Thou canst lead us, to that utmost distance for the glory of Thy name, we shall be led by Thee.'

Looking back after fifteen years' experience of what continued to the end to be a veritable reproach, she said: 'It was to me a new emancipation. A new sense of spiritual liberty is bound up in my mind with that experience; it affected everything in such an unexpected way; it set my spirit free. I could not have done this new work (the work for the Temple children), if it had not been for the new courage that came with that break with custom, and from bondage to the fear of man.' Truly at that time Ponnammal learned to say, 'A fig for the day's smile of a worm!' or for the day's frown either; and we all went on in quietness, and let the little flies of criticism buzz as they pleased about us. 'Walk before Me and be thou perfect.' What a mercy it is that it does not say, Walk before Sarah.

It. worked, too, into most convenient though lesser forms of freedom; for now the band could travel anywhere, unafraid. Night journeys along unfrequented roads had been unsafe before, and it was not always possible to travel by day. And when in after years the work for children was established, and a large company of girls, bereft of the protection the mere presence of a white man near by affords, was left with us alone in what was then an open compound in jungle-land, the two old men of the robber caste who, according to the custom of the South, are subsidized to insure us from the attentions of that caste, came to us and said: 'We agree to continue to be your guard; but if your girls were as others are, jewelled, we would not do it-no, not for lacs of rupees.'

1.06.05. Book 6: 5. Underland

CHAPTER V

UNDERLAND

WE were in the midst of our usual life when the little Elf walked into it, interrupted it, and finally changed its current.

We had been for a year or so at Dohnavur, which was then Camp to us, our belongings being at Pannaivilai. It was a trial to leave Dohnavur, for there were some in the Hindu villages who were inquiring; and one in particular, who afterwards came out and was hypnotized and carried back in triumph, was much in our thoughts. But we never stayed for long anywhere in those days, being dedicated to the wanderer's calling; and Dohnavur was only one of our various headquarters while itinerating, and we had to return to Pannaivilai for another year's work on that side of the district.

Now there was in the Hindu village near by, as I have told before, a certain child who had set her heart on escaping from the life to which her mother, hardly understanding its purport, had allowed herself to be persuaded to devote her. Her father, a man of noble character, was dead; she had escaped once and had fled to her mother, who, to the Temple woman who followed after, gave her up again. To whom, then, could she flee? She did not know; she only knew that one March evening, in the twilight, something within her made her run across the narrow stream that divided her village from ours, and through the wood of rustling palmyra palms, and so to the village where a great church stood, and under it she paused to wait upon events. There she was found shortly afterwards, and next morning she was brought to us. We had only arrived the day before. Had we not arrived, what would have happened? Who can tell? We need not try to imagine. We had arrived; the woman who found the child, instead of taking her back to her people, as she told us she would have done had no one been at hand to take the responsibility of her, brought her to us; and we kept her.

Thereafter for awhile all went on as before; only, as evening by evening we returned from work, there was a child's loving welcome, little loving arms were round one's neck. I remember wakening up to the knowledge that there had been a very empty comer somewhere in me that the work had never filled; and, I remember, too, thanking God that it was not wrong to be comforted by the love of a child. But this is Ponnammal's story, and the Elf did not become part of that till later; so that some years must be imagined of steady work as before-on Ponnammal's part without any inkling of that to which we were being drawn; on mine, very little. And yet underlying all our work thenceforth was a search, begun almost unconsciously, for the covered facts connected with a traffic of which now for the first time I had become thoroughly aware. The child told me many things. These things burned in me. I told them to Ponnammal. She sympathized, but did not see what we could do. Neither indeed did I. All efforts that year to save children failed. Nothing I could devise, nothing Ponnammal could do, could effect the deliverance of a single little girl.

Then the thought came to me definitely to try to find out the conditions which govern this traffic in child-life. Our constant itineration was a help in this; it brought us into contact with many people, and perpetually led to new experiences. But some of the things we did together we never talked about; for I was feeling my way in those days, and felt that talk even to those nearest me would be premature. Sometimes we drifted quietly into the midst of some big festival at night, and lost ourselves in that place about which so many who live on its edge know nothing at all. Often I used to wonder at the way it received us; and one evening the talk about me was so different from the kind everywhere reserved for people of our race, that I began to feel I had slipped unawares into something quite new. It was Alice in Wonderland over again, only it was a different wonderland. Alice in Underland would have to be its name; and was I Alice, or who? Ponnammal was herself, however, which was reassuring; and we sat and talked to the people and had some food. Presently some newcomers arrived; the place was a caravanserai, and the time was late evening. It was moonlight, and we were on the shadowy side of the wide mud verandah. As the new travellers came in and passed us, they made to me the ordinary sign of salutation to a Brahman woman, and Ponnammal beside me laughed softly; and I understood, and knew that for the first time I was inside India, the real India.

After that experience, I found it well to go there as often as possible. It was thus, while far inside this underland, deep in the recesses of some great temple court with its towering walls all round, or sitting among the friendly garland-makers as they strung jessamine and oleander into wreaths and flower-balls for the gods, I heard much unknown to me before, and gradually to me it was given to see into the heart of the matter, and to know how the laws were being evaded and the children polluted. Words fall from such discoveries: they ask for deeds, not words. But as I stood in spirit before this new knowledge, which like some great shape limb by limb took visible substance before us, I ate ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. Ponnammal ate of those ashes too; but that which even then was calling to me with such urgent voice that I thought those very near must hear, seemed as a vain dream to her. She would have gone with me to the mouth of hell, and did, when I had to go there; but that we should ever be able to snatch children from that open mouth was something, too good to be true. We had yet to learn that nothing is too good to be true.

1.06.06. Book 6: 6. The Time Appointed

CHAPTER VI THE TIME APPOINTED

IT was early January, 1904, and we had now settled in Dohnavur. The Walkers were in England, and we were more occupied than ever, as their absence weighted every anxiety; for by that time many converts had come out, and whoso would know anxiety let him take charge of converts. Among the most serious of the time was the care of a lad of eighteen, who could not be sent elsewhere, and who sickened with pneumonia soon after his arrival. If he had died before his people could be summoned, there was reason to anticipate trouble; a Court case, probably, for the circumstances: leaned that way. Nursing him meant sitting up at night, as there was nobody who could be depended upon to change the poultices. I left him on the morning after the crisis had been safely passed, and lay down for an hour, leaving him, as I trusted, in safe hands. Before the hour was up, a messenger came post-haste: ‘He is going to die! So says the village barber. All his three pulses are talking together! He will shortly have convulsions and die.’ Down I fled to the converts’ quarters, found the boy had struggled out, called for the village barber, and was now fairly committed to fulfil that gentleman’s predictions. He lived, remarking in English when he emerged from another crisis, ’I am too much very tired’; so that anxiety passed; only to open into another, beside which the first was as nothing.

Ponnammal meanwhile kept all going peacefully on the girls’ side, and when we could we went out as before.

While things were so, unknown even to Ponnammal, who had now dropped any idea of saving the Temple children, feeling the utter hopelessness of attempts in that direction, thoughts about them were rising round me like a sea of waters that rose above my head. I could not push those thoughts away; I saw the perishing children, I heard them call. How to do anything vital I knew not; I only knew I had to try again.

Within a week I had the first Temple baby we were ever able to get. Ponnammal welcomed it; but her eyes were holden, as indeed mine were. We did not know we were on the edge of new things, and must soon stop our usual work, and, turning from the familiar ways, carve a path through the jungle, where all the way along sharp thorns would be ready to stab us as we passed-a path ending in what? New responsibilities, graver, heavier, than any we had ever undertaken. No, not ending there-ending in joy, blessed eternal overflowings, inexhaustible wells of delight.

Shortly afterwards we heard of another child. Here again it was possible to get her; she was in a Temple house, for her father had dedicated her in order to acquire merit, but the conditions were such that we were able to redeem her. This meant refunding the expenses incurred in connection with her dedication. We paid them, and she came.

Then Ponnammal was troubled. The whole thing was so new, so strange in its accompanying circumstances, that she could not feel in sympathy with it. Nor, I was sure, would the friends at home, with whom I was accustomed to talk over all new thoughts before committing them to

action. And so it proved when the first letters came; for I read the doubt through all the kindness. This new adventure was assuredly to go unspeeded, and I could not wonder. For that curious and uncomfortable faculty which not only invites but compels one to see an action from every possible point of view, and to appreciate and to sympathize in a quite uncanny fashion with what its detractors are going to say, was quick in me; I could have sat down and written the letters that were written to me by almost everyone who wrote at all. Letters which looked at things otherwise shine in my grateful memory. So I spent some days, difficult to the spirit which saw its course open before it and knew it had to travel therein, speeded or unspeeded. But Ponnammal-I had never before for one moment been out of touch with her. I prayed for a sign from heaven to show her what had been shown to me, and it was given. Gideon’s fleece we called it ever after. From that day Ponnammal never looked back. Valiant to the last, my comfort, my inspiration in darkest hours, she said as she left in what, despite the dear presence of comrades about me, felt for the moment a desolation, ’I see into the future ’-and her eyes lit up with a wonderful glorious fire-’I see God with you. This work is of Him, whatever man may say. He has never failed it: He will not fail it.’

1.06.07. Book 6: 7. Why Mens Honours Woman?

CHAPTER VII 'WHY MENS HONOURS WOMAN?' THE following bears upon my tale, though for the moment the critical reader may doubt it. It is a cutting from the Madras Mail, the South Indian newspaper which we take at Dohnavur.

Mr. R. N. D. writes to the Times of India as follows: "My purpos for writin on you this, is to inform your many English Brothers not to give honor and devotion to your ladys because they will in the end becum proud and then they will want vote. 2 or 3 thing happen at Victory Garden to-morrow and then I all of sudden made up my brain to write you immediate. There was many Englis womans and when mans are sitting on the bench, and womans come, man stand, and give their sit to woman. This happen 2 or 3 time to-morrow and I question you why? I again tell you why? Mans and womans are similar in this world and then why mens honours woman? If they honours old old woman, one thing, but they honours young young lady. My purpose to write this to inform the Englis Sahebloks that when they do this they spoil their feminine lady and then this lady get proud and walk like pcock and then ask vote and then spoil Ken Garden and throw bomb on Loid Gorg, put bursting powder in envelope, and post, and create other mischief. Therefore I say to my Englis, please don't spoil Englis womans in India, because by honouring them you people put in their brain the sids [seeds] of sufragetism and then they get wild like Misses Pancurs. Please please print this leter near the Ruter's Telegram with big big words." '

What the writer of this eloquent appeal to the chivalry of the Englishman would have said could he have seen Ponnammal, an Indian woman, established in charge of the Nursery at Neyyoor in South Travancore, honoured exceedingly by all who came in contact with her-among others, two English doctors-imagination fails to imagine. The Princess, Mr. Walker used to call her, for she had a stately way about her with all her gentleness; and the respect he had always felt for her was not lessened when he saw her rise to this new call to the arduous. He would have 'given his sit' to such a woman ten times over, and felt honoured to do it; and yet she was just Ponnammal; and she never knew she was wonderful, and that the doctor wrote that to see her at her work was a blessing to him; and her faith, especially through dark times, was an abiding inspiration; or that when her work was finished, we should read a book and find these words descriptive of her and her common, glorious toil: 'The love of duty is the strength of heroes, and there is no way of life in which we may not set ourselves to learn that love.' By the time the new work was well established, Mr. Walker with my mother was in Dohnavur. I do not know exactly what caused that friend of friends, Walker of Tinnevelly, to become our champion. Perhaps, as was his wont, he waited till he knew all round about a matter before committing himself; and when he knew, threw fear to the winds, and was strong. I remember the first time I was sure of his sympathy. A three-sheet official letter of criticism had come from home. I could not wonder at it. It was kind, but disapproving. To follow its counsels would have been to consign how many children? to perdition. I read it, and it chilled me, though it never occurred to me to be influenced by it. Then I went to the study where he sat writing, and gave it to him.

He read it slowly through, turning over the crackly pages with the greatest deliberation. ‘There speaks the voice of ignorance,’ was all he said; and I knew I could count on him thereafter. And count on him I did. For he was one of those rare valorous souls upon whom the opinion of the hour made no impression whatever. The opinion of that particular hour was summed up by a certain newspaper in India, to which, unfortunately-for it was quite out of sympathy-one of the Dohnavur books had been sent for review: we would live to repent our endeavour, was all it had to say. A year later Mrs. Walker returned. One of the babies immediately took possession of her; loved her; said so, as only a baby can say such things. That which nothing on earth could have bought was hers the moment she entered the nursery. So she, too, was in sympathy before many days had passed. As for my mother, she would have gathered all India into her heart; for India’s imperilled children she had only one word, Welcome.

She and Ponnammal foregathered at once. My mother considered her a truly remarkable woman, and was never weary of discovering new gifts and virtues in her. Nor was I, for this new work, with its new demands upon courage and wisdom and, above all, unselfishness, found her prepared at every point. When the nursery at Neyyoor had to be opened, so that some at least of the children might be within reach of medical help, it was of course Ponnammal I had asked to take charge of it. She was at that time in poor health; but Neyyoor did good things for her, and she loved her nursery. The place was so beautifully kept that the doctors used to take visitors to see it; and many were the inquiries as to where she had been trained, so clever were all her devices for nursing babies, sick and well, and for managing generally. Of her own hard work few knew; it was always Ponnammal who had the illest baby by her at night; always Ponnammal who did the work which no one else had grace enough to do.

I went to Neyyoor as often as I could, but it became more and more difficult to leave Dohnavur, as the family grew bigger and bigger; so that through almost all the more strenuous times Ponnammal was alone with her charge, and twice she worked through bad epidemics all but single-handed, so far as reliable help went; handicapped by all sorts of misadventures too, but brave and resourceful as ever. One of these epidemics is indelibly marked in Arulai’s memory, as she was the innocent cause of it. She had been visiting in a house in the Dohnavur village where there was small-pox, and she had not been told about it. Next week she went to Neyyoor, and developed small-pox in that houseful of babies. The doctors put up a mat shelter for her some little distance from the village; and there poor Arulai and the babies, who of course followed in rapid succession, abode in what Arulai recalls as a baking oven, till they recovered, as they mercifully all did. Far otherwise was the next, when a more serious foe than small-pox, bacillary dysentery, attacked the little children. They died then one after the other, sometimes two in a day.

Every day through those years Ponnammal wrote to me, and every week she sent the babies’ weights and notes of their progress. One of these bulletins lies before me; seventeen babies’ weights are given and mother-news about each. Of the joy of the little flying visits I paid I can hardly bring myself to speak. They are too full of Ponnammal to be easy to contemplate steadily. For just that little space, a time whose minutes ran with breathless peace through the hours, she threw aside the burden of her sole responsibility, and rested her heart in me, as I rested mine in her.

Once, after a visit to the Neyyoor Nursery, I asked that occasional postcards of cheer might be sent to her, knowing how she would appreciate them, especially if no address were given, as then she would not feel they must be answered, and for answers I knew she had no time. And I mentioned also babies' knitted vests, safety-pins, and soap, as things the Nursery lacked. The response to this immediately was over a hundred postcards from all parts of the world, numbers of letters, safety-pins galore, and soap tucked into parcels of vests to make up weight. Ponnammal, who had no idea she was known outside the family, was amazed at this shower of pleasant things, and she stored her postcards and letters in bags to show me when I went to Neyyoor. Some of them are by me now, love-words that did their work. There was one friend who always seemed to divine when trouble was within about three weeks of us, and with the trouble almost invariably would arrive a postcard with the Hampstead postmark. 'I began to look out for it when things went wrong,' Ponnammal once told me, 'and was quite surprised if it did not come.' In a land where belief in signs and omens is cultivated as a science, it was not wonderful that the first great disaster to our work, that fatal epidemic, shook the faith of all who were not committed to us in deepest ways. Shortly after the first baptism of a group of young girls (a group unique, I suppose, in the story of missions in India) the storm fell. 'The blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall' is a word which reads to us straight from life.

It is an old story now, and I would not touch on it, but for the dauntless courage it discovered in Ponnammal. Child after child died; the doctors were away, and the help at hand was hardly sufficient to deal adequately with the trouble. The two nurses-the only older ones we had-lost heart: 'If another baby dies, we shall know the blessing of God is not on this work,' was their conclusion. Another died, and another, and they prepared to depart and leave Ponnammal with the young inexperienced girls, and eight or nine babies still ill, all the sick-nursing to do, all the foods to make, and her own strength failing. Then some evil men who lived next door awoke to the opportunity; their wickedness was a nightmare to Ponnammal, with the convert girls on her hands; and I was recovering from a threatened breakdown, and till the worst was over was not allowed to go to her. From the very heart of it all she wrote (and of the evil things that befell us that year, these I have mentioned were the least), 'The storm will not last always. The waves dash into our little boat, but when the Lord says, "Peace, be still," they will lie down. Let all your prayer for us be this, that we may rest in the Will of God while the storm lasts.' Was it wonderful that I loved her, counted her precious? 'I do not want people who come to me under certain reservations. In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing.' So said Pere Didon; so say I. Can any words fitly express the preciousness of such a one?

We had the sympathy of some in our distresses; but many seemed to agree with the nurses that these untoward happenings should be understood to imply the disapproval of Providence. Just then, when it was most needed, came a mighty cheer. It was a letter from one who understood: 'I know what you will be going through now,' she wrote, 'and how people will be telling you the attempt will end in failure, and that you are wrong to try to do the impossible; but do not heed them.' And she went on to say that she believed all work that had in it the seed of eternity was bound to pass through a baptism of suffering and be misunderstood, decried, and judged by its apparent failure or success. Let none of these things move you, was the burden of her letter; and Ponnammal rejoiced in it. 'That is the truth,' she said, 'and we shall live to prove it.' At last the Neyyoor plan grew too difficult. We had so many children that we could not manage in Dohnavur

without Ponnammal. So we built another Nursery here, and on a happy day, crossed as it was by fears of all that being quite doctorless was sure to mean, but helped exceedingly by the arrival of a trained nurse, Mabel Wade, henceforth a beloved co-worker, Ponnammal and her babies returned.

1.06.08. Book 6: 8. Carry On

CHAPTER VIII

CARRY ON

DATES fly from me, and I do not incline to pursue them. They do not seem to me essential to the spirit of a picture, and a picture of Ponnammal is what I want to make. But for the sake of those who esteem them and cannot be happy unless facts are fixed by these neat nails, I give forthwith those few which stand out clearest.

Between 1897 and 1905 we itinerated together. In September, 1905, Ponnammal went to take charge of the Nursery opened in Neyyoor. In March, 1908, she returned to Dohnavur. On March 28, 1913, she went to hospital, struck down by cancer. From then on till August 26, 1915, she suffered. The years that followed our gradual abandoning of the work which before had been meat and drink to us, and our equally gradual embarking upon what eventually proved to be too absorbing to leave room for anything else, do not melt, as the years before them do, in a golden haze; nor do they appear in the least as jewels pleasant to the sight. Rather are they as curtains of tapestry, with figures of glad and of sorrowful countenance worked on a background of dull drab. The canvas is rough to the touch, and I am too near the curtains to get the proper effect. I see the texture and detail, not the result. But such talk is folly. Who ever does in this life see the true result of his doing? His glooms and his glories he knows as he lives through them; sometimes the one, sometimes the other makes his day. The pattern they are weaving is hidden in confusion. And oftentime he is conscious of neither, being too tired out for any feeling but one of thankfulness for having got through. Those were the years when we seldom knew what it was to have an unbroken night's sleep, for little injured children came who needed constant care. And in the tropics it is very hard to go on without enough sleep.

What made it so difficult was that there was a constraint laid upon us to keep the work pure. In India the care of young children is not considered honourable work, and the kind of women willing to do it are not of a desirable character.

Once we were all but at the end of our strength. Shall we stop praying that children may be saved? the question almost shaped itself in that day of physical exhaustion. Prayer for helpers of the right sort had been answered by the Pastors, to whom we had sent a circular letter beseeching them to find us women of the kind we needed. 'No such women exist in the Tamil Church,' had been their calm, and as we were to prove, perfectly true reply. What were we to do? Cease to use means for the salvation of the children? Push them across the narrow space that lay between, into the arms of the Temple women, who never say, Enough? Or lower our standard and take anyone as worker who could be drawn by pay to do such work?

I can see Ponnammal now, as she stood one day wearily leaning against the nursery door, a slim, tired figure, with hands that for the moment hung limply down by her side. Then she looked up; our eyes met; each saw what the other saw, even the faces of little perishing children swept down by a

black flood of waters. No, we could not slacken. But as to help?-a lower type of help would suffice for at least part of the work? We could neither of us deny that we were getting too near breaking down. We turned from the temptation, for such it was-we knew it even then to be that; and we knew it by a clearer knowledge afterwards. 'Let us work till we fall,' said Ponnammal; 'but do not let us have women in as nurses who will spoil the whole work.' The band had scattered now, but we had a few of our own girls, converts, who had been trained to honour work, and think no form of it common or unclean; and a few of the right mettle, fruit of fellow-missionaries' labours, had come in from outside. But there are close-set limits to the strength of a girl, and even when our welcome English nurse came out to our great help, the difficulty was not over, for an English woman in India cannot do all she would. Nor is it over yet; even as I write we are up against the question which yet can only admit of one answer. What shall we do? Each willing worker in the nurseries has as much as she can do. How can we go on growing? But we do go on.

One day-it feels like yesterday, but it is more than a year ago-I was much cheered by a visit from a mission school-master, who, after seeing all round the place, exclaimed: 'And I hear you are short of workers. I will dedicate my eldest daughter to this work!'

I asked him if his daughter was keen to do such work, and he looked a little shy, and also I thought a little young; still, looks are deceptive, and it is never wise to press matters in the East, or to be in any sort of hurry; so I left it and felt grateful. Ponnammal was ill then, and we all saved up our cheers for her; as soon as I could I took this one to her. She was much delighted, for we welcome warmly any indication of sympathy from our Tamil friends.

'Perhaps the time will come when many will feel like that,' she remarked hopefully, and we ate our little crumb of comfort greedily. A few weeks later we heard, and it really was rather a blow, that our sympathetic friend was not yet married.'

We had, while the halo of the New was still upon us, some interesting offers of service both English and Indian.

'My friend is at present connected with another missionary society, but would be pleased to join you. She is forty-five, very evangelical, and she cycles and sings: 'It is more and more borne upon me that I am to come to you and help you in your noble work of rescuing those precious children' (or darling children, perhaps it was). 'In moments of depression I will whisper in your ear, Courage, brave heart!'-these are two of the most fondly cherished. And often even now in hours of pressure we recall the kindly offer from the very evangelical lady who cycled and sung. Would she do both at the same time and all the time, or alternately? we wonder. And we remember too the whisper to whose tender ministry I had not inclined my ear. One day I tried its effect on Ponnammal, who was hot, and busy, and exceedingly worried over some bungling of her subordinates: 'Courage, brave heart!' She stared, too astonished for words. I am afraid that Dohnavur is not at all sentimental.

India's contributions to our necessities were oftener considered; for truly we sorely needed help, and a good, capable, middle-aged pair of hands with a kind, sensible heart to direct them would have been acceptable many a time. But invariably after a few days, or, at longest, months, the owner of the hands we had so hopefully welcomed, and the heart we had imagined, discovered that it would be well 'to go and do God's work,' by which was meant become a religious instructor-the mouth in India being the member whose use brings most honour, and least of the

arduous. Thus our halo faded, and we became quite commonplace, and only noted for the vice of being given to hard work, and an inconsiderate standard of truthfulness; altogether, impossible people, and undesirable. ' The toils of those years included for Ponnammal long journeys in the interests of children in peril. She was never robust, and the heat and racket and crush of the crowded trains, especially through night journeys, tried her very much. She would comeback looking shaken to pieces, and disheartened perhaps by reason of failure; but always, when the next call came, she was ready for it. And such calls came frequently, for she was by far the most suitable for the peculiarly difficult work of child-rescue-a work which demands, and especially demanded in its early precarious days, before that invaluable thing, a precedent, was established, high courage, and wisdom. A false move then, and we should all have been plunged in tribulation; worse by far, the newly launched little boat of the new endeavour would have been wrecked on the rocks that were never very distant. A single moment's hesitation, and under certain frequent circumstances another child would have floated downstream. As it was, with all our care, we had to stand helplessly by and see many such pass us for ever.

There was one over whom she mourned with me, a little Brahman child-widow who got speech with one of us: 'Save me! I have heard of your religion, the Christian religion. They are taking me to a Temple house; I do not want to go. Save me! Make a way of escape for me that I may reach a Christian house.' She was spirited away; from town to town we traced her, then lost her in a Temple house in a South Indian city where, as one of its own Temple women told us, children are constantly adopted 'for Temple purposes.'

There was another, a charming child of seven or eight, who looked trustfully up at us and told us she was learning to dance, so that the gods might be pleased. Ponnammal dared much to save her; this work is full of the call to dare. But the child passed out of reach downstream. And babies' faces we saw, and I see now. In the flesh I saw them first, in their white cotton hammocks, swinging in the dim, low rooms of the Temple houses known to us. In the spirit I see them always on the black waters that flow without ceasing day and night through the midst of this sun-filled land. But few see them, for most eyes are full of other sights. Be it so. We may not insist upon everyone's seeing such things; but we have seen, and the effect of such seeing is to cause those who have seen to feel that no passing weariness of the flesh or spirit can ever for one moment count as against the eternal importance of getting children out of the grasp of the gods. That for us was the only thing that mattered. So we laid hold together on the word that declares that He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies; and we took it that if, for the right doing of the work set before us, a certain quickening was required in these our present mortal bodies, that quickening would be wrought in us by Him Who is not bound by time's to-day or to-morrow, being King of eternity. And I think it was wrought in us, or we could not have continued. But our God was very kind to us: He sent us splendid help. I remember how Ponnammal searched the faces of the 'Sitties,' who one after another came to us through the years that followed. She was looking for that which we required-endurance, courage, a capacity for happiness, love. When she found it she was satisfied. 'God has chosen them each one: she said to me as she lay dying; 'they will stand fast by you. I am not afraid to leave you to them; the anointing of their God is upon them.' For this work which gives so much more than anyone not in it will ever know-asks much, even all.

1.06.09. Book 6: 9. Nous

CHAPTER IX

NOUS

ONCE more Walker of Tinnevelly must come into this book, for the chapter word suggests him. It was one of his favourite words. So and so ‘has no nous’ he would say, in rather disgusted tones, of some hopeless muddler. Or, in tones of keen approval, ’You know where you are with him; he has plenty of nous.’ Of Ponnammal he used to say with the particular smile that was his on such occasions, ’She’s all right: she’s got such nous, you know.’ I did know it, and blessed her Creator. For nous appeared then to me, and has ever since appeared to be, one of the rarest of gifts, by no means to be taken for granted; and after a somewhat extended experience of a variety of types of human beings, I for one incline to put them all into one of two divisions: those who, when thrown out of a top window, fall on their feet, and those who alight otherwise. Ponnammal could be trusted to fall on her feet. Her nous showed in a hundred directions. She had a clear head for packing a day full of good honest work, and for directing the energies of others. She knew how to turn odds and ends both of time and of material to good account; and she was down to every trick of shiftiness in those about her. Slackness she abhorred; she was most un-Oriental in her attitude towards it; and she had little patience with silliness. ’You didn’t know! why didn’t you know?’ she would demand if excessively tried; and she found nous-less people, however virtuous, wearisome.

It was one of Ponnammal’s ways-due, I suppose, to the nous in her-that caused her to work at a given plan until she had got it as near perfection as possible. Take the housekeeping plan, for example. It is not easy for a reader accustomed to the convenience of civilization to conceive what it means to feed a large company of children, and workers, and frequently Indian guests, in a jungle place, far from shops and markets; or of what it is to get building work done, even if it be only mud-building work, in a place where there is no poverty compelling enough to persuade people to work at anything for two days running. We had struggled along as best we could while Ponnammal was in Neyyoor; but as we had not proper rooms where we could store food-stuffs, we had to buy in small quantities; and there were endless difficulties about getting enough variety for the vegetable diet upon which the health of the children depended. Gradually, as more help came from England, we were able to build nurseries, and so set the old mud rooms free for stores; and Ponnammal, who returned at this point, came into her own.

She added up all the expenses, so multifarious that a Westerner is baffled by them, connected with grain bought straight from the field-buying, carting, husking, cleaning, boiling, drying, storing-and compared these with the cost of rice bought in the bazaar; then she added the cost of the alteration in the storerooms that would be required if the grain were to be stored by us, and how long it would take to reimburse this expenditure out of our profits; and as she came to the conclusion that, allowing for the numerous items invariably ’forgotten’ in an Eastern estimate, we should gain by the change, I handed the whole over to her; and twice a year at the two harvests of the year she saw to the right conduct of all this complicated business, superintended the

measuring, and kept the involved accounts. Then there were the smaller and extremely various requirements for curries and condiments, and all the sundries needed for orderly existence. A household as large as ours has to be sufficient to itself, for nothing in any quantity can be bought within a day's journey. All that this fact covers was most capably undertaken by Ponnammal; and I felt sure now that every rupee would do the work of two, or as nearly two as possible.

One morning after her illness had taken fast hold of her, but before she was too ill to be able to think clearly, she went through these items with me, explaining the laws which govern the various markets, and the customs observed in paying the different people employed. The rice measurer, for example, of one field will not measure in another, and each has to be paid in cash and in cloth according to the rules of that particular field. Sugar bought by the sack is to be had at one season; salt, also bought by the sack, at another; rope and cocoanuts and certain oils are cheapest in a town twenty-five miles to the west; curry, commodities in another twenty-five miles to the south; and so on-details which, but for her clear-headedness, would have been most bewildering in their minutiae, were slowly dictated to me as I took notes of them all. She had an amazing head for figures, and once when she was miserably ill, and I sitting beside her was doing accounts, half aloud, she followed, added up the column of figures, and gave me the correct total. She had helped me to balance my accounts for years, and as long as she could walk came over to my room to do this her last cherished bit of work.

Ponnammal's intimate sharing of all these matters, which to us from the first were sacred secularities, resulted in something of her spirit passing through the whole work. There were some, like Arulai of early days, and others who in these later years have gathered round us, who were naturally noble-minded, and to them we owe much. But I doubt if we should have that careful thought for economy, which we can truly say exists among us, if it had not been for Ponnammal's example in this matter. No one in Dohnavur looks upon 'the mission' as a limitless fund from which to draw as much as may be of the good things of this life; rather we have difficulty with our girls to get them to take enough strengthening food when they are under par. More than once after quite a tussle with one who much required it but would not take it, we extracted the protest, 'because the babies need all we ought to buy.' And yet this girl, like every other here, is pouring out all she possesses on the sacrifice and service without a thought of any reward but the joy of doing it. And as the people around us, to whom our lives are open, watched Ponnammal going about her duty with industry and eagerness, finding in this arduous work all she desired of earthly delight, incorruptible in her integrity, and ever with a lynx eye for waste anywhere, they marvelled at her: 'Such do not exist among us,' they once remarked, summing her up; 'nor did we know there were such among Christians.' They knew that for many unbroken years nothing could draw her away even for a holiday. Some of them knew that she never even told me when any of her relatives were married, because she knew it would trouble me to think of the reproach that would fall upon her if she did not go to the family tamasha; and yet nothing would have persuaded her to go, for there was no one to take her place. It was hidden from us then that, soon she would have to go away altogether, and that no one would ever take her place. We never thought of ourselves without her. It did not seem possible: she was part of Dohnavur.

1.06.10. Book 6: 10. An Ordinary Day, and Digressions

CHAPTER X AN ORDINARY DAY, AND DIGRESSIONS

PONNAMMAL'S ordinary day began before dawn; for, up till the time of her illness, she saw to the night-food of any babies who required it. At that time most of the infants were in one large nursery, under her care; she had, of course, young girls to help her, but it was she who was responsible: and always she had the sick babies herself. She was a splendid sick-nurse, and knew exactly how to manipulate the food for varyingly constituted babies. 'She knows far more than I do about it,' one of the Neyyoor doctors said to me; and as he spoke I recalled a day when she told me how in her extremity she was inwardly directed: 'For the baby (it was Evu who had been at death's door and was still lingering thereabouts) could not take her food, do what I would. She was on Benger, and it had always suited her, but now it failed. I tried weakening it till it contained as little nourishment as I dared to give her; and I tried "digesting" it for a shorter and longer time, but nothing was of any use, and I did not know what to do. And then one day as I stirred in the flour, I lifted my heart once more, and said, "Lord, the inside of this little child is well known to Thee. Guide me, tell me what to do, or she will die!"' And then she told me how, as it seemed to her, the exact number of minutes the food should be 'digested' was suggested to her mind. The directions on the tin were otherwise, but she tried the new way, and immediately Evu began to mend, and recovered perfectly, to become one of our healthiest children.

So, after being up almost invariably several times in the night, Ponnammal's day proper began; and whenever possible it began with short informal prayers with the nurses, at half-past five; sometimes in the nursery while the babies slept in the hammocks all round, or in the milk-kitchen, so that the fire-glow fell on the little group kneeling on the floor. As early as she could get them to come, she was ready for the milk-sellers, and she tested and measured their milk. No one who has not done this sort of thing in the East can imagine all it entails of vigilance. There is not much in India about which there is not a chance to turn a dishonest anna, or, at lowest hope, a pie -a pie being a twelfth of an anna, which is a penny, which is the sixteenth of a rupee. But of all substances, solid or fluid, milk is perhaps the most accommodating, and Ponnammal needed all her nous in dealing with the milk-sellers. 'The mind of the people of this land,' she remarked one day, 'revolves round pies, annas, rupees; rupees, annas, pies.' We knew then that one otherwise minded is rare. We know it with tenfold more emphasis since Ponnammal was taken from us; for we have found it impossible to find anyone able to take her place, even in merely 'secular' ways.

'Have you not one relative or friend you could trust to help you in this work?' we asked the much-overburdened Sellamuttu, known elsewhere as Pearl, after a grievous breakdown in good faith on the part of one from outside whom we hoped could have helped. 'Amma,' she answered simply, 'do not expect to find another Ponnammal or even another such as I, by the grace of God, in the matter of truth now am; for such you will not find.'

After the milk-buying came the food-making. For years Ponnammal did this entirely herself. And till we had our own English nurse she was always the one to help me in making up the medicines if

any were needed. Her clear head was of wonderful assistance in working out the doses in correct proportions. But here again, as in the housekeeping matter, I feel hardly one in a thousand will realize what it meant to have her help.

Take a concrete case, one of scores: Preena, the Elf, was ill with enteric. The Walkers had just gone home, and the night they left, the only sound in the house was the moaning of the delirious child. I remember how empty the house felt, and how silent, and yet it was not empty or silent. Those who had to leave us were not forgetting us as their bullock-carts trundled off; and we were not alone. But the nursing of typhoid night and day, even with a doctor to pilot one through, must always be arduous work; without a doctor, it is, to put it briefly, killing. Toward the end of the time, the child, who had been doing well, suddenly developed a new trouble. Her throat seemed to shut up, and for three days she swallowed nothing. I searched desperately through Moore's Manual of Family Medicine and Birch's Management of Children in India, our two standbys here, but found nothing relevant to her condition; and with eyes that could hardly see the print pored over the four columns of A Dictionary of Domestic Medicine and Surgery, by Dr. Thompson and Dr. Steele, which ponderous volume sometimes showed us the way we should go. All in vain; Preena had walked out of the pages devoted to her malady in all three books. It is a dreadful way children in India have, this branching off into vagaries in illness. 'What does the book say about it?' 'It says nothing at all!' How often we go through that experience of despair. Months later, in an old edition of Moore, I found a small-print note to the effect that swelling of the glands of the neck is a possible, though unusual, complication in enteric. But that day I found nothing.

Think of what it was at such a time to have one like Ponnammal alongside, able to look after all I had to leave undone, and ready, too, to make up the medicines for the village people; for we had what was almost a village dispensary in those days. It was rest to the tired-out mind to feel she could not, if she tried, make a mistake in a calculation, so accurately did her clear brain work; all would be correct to the fraction of a minim. This gift of precision was one for which my soul sang many a Benedicite. Who that has had to diagnose an infant, hunt through medical books for corresponding symptoms, make up the very minute doses, and give them, and all in what sometimes was tearing anxiety, but will appreciate the comfort of such help? In the earlier days of the work, as I have said, some very miscellaneous children were sent to us-weakly, diseased, hurt little mortals. We could not refuse them, though they were not the kind of child we existed to save; we had to do our best for them all. Some died, but others throve; and on the whole, doctorless as we still are, we are a very healthy family.

Ponnammal was rather wonderful, too, in the way she learned to appreciate methods which to her were entirely new and crudely Western. The Indian mind is made of folds, firmly folded in unexpected places. You despair of ever winning to the far end of it, there are so many plies in it, as Samuel Rutherford said in a different connection, and Ponnammal's mind was Indian. The first time I remember our differing about anything vital was when I wanted the babies to sleep in the open air. Ponnammal had been brought up in the usual Indian fashion; a stuffy little room with every window carefully shut at night was her idea of things as they should be. As soon as possible we built airy rooms, with verandahs on which the children could sleep; and life was lived as much out of doors as possible. Ponnammal, in her loving solicitude for the babies, feared this very much, and the creases within were evident. But I knew she would speedily iron them all out, and waited in peace. Presently I saw her do it; and she soon became as keen about fresh air for the children

as we were. When her own little daughter came from school, ill with tubercular trouble, she threw herself heartily into the fresh-air treatment, and Purripu grew into a healthy girl. 'Look at Purripu,' her mother would say to anyone who, dismayed by our new-fangled ways, cheerfully prophesied chronic colds ending in premature death all round. 'She was thin and stooping six months ago, and always tired. Now look at her!' But this is a digression, though belonging in spirit to the ordinary day. As long as she could, Ponnammal had a Bible-class with her young nurses in the forenoons; but as the work grew, this became impossible. And it hardly mattered; for her whole life was a lesson. No girl, however naturally self-centred or indolent, could be with her without catching something of her brave unselfish spirit; a spirit that toiled unto weariness every day it lived, and cared for nothing but the children's good. In the afternoon, if all were well, she went to her own little room behind the nursery, and rested for an hour. But if a baby were ill, or any other anxiety pressed, it was hard to get her to rest; if her heart were anxious, her body could not rest. Then came the evening milk to be tested and measured, and the night foods to be made, and so the ordinary day ended. But all this seems to tell nothing. There were so many other things tucked into its corners-little acts of helpfulness, careful thoughts that worked out into some new economy or some new endeavour-that a book might be written about them alone. For example, while she was measuring the milk, a servant would pass, and she would call him aside for a moment and say a word or two. And the next thing we who had to see to the larger matters of life were aware of, was some pieces of work about which we had consulted together, accomplished, or set on foot. She had that faculty, as rare as nous, the power to get things done. And in a land where a workman comes, bargains about the work, says he will do it to-morrow (takes the inevitable advance without which a carpenter cannot mend a stool, or a potter make a pot, or a mason build a house), and then goes away, finds a distant relative has just deceased, goes to the funeral, and forgets to come back till you have spent what ought to have been his wages on coolies to go and search for him-in such a land this faculty is invaluable.

Then there were those other days, when everything seemed to go wrong on purpose: 'Piria Sittie is learning how upsetting things can be in India,' Ponnammal said once about Mabel Wade, who was experiencing what the land can do in the way of heaping up difficulties. Or if, later, the newly launched little school were plunging about in troubled waters, she would sympathize, and lend a helping hand by trying to replan the nursery work so as to make the dove-tailing of the two halves of the family a little easier to compass. Or we would be suddenly involved in some tangle of circumstances, where her sagacity was required to find the way out; or perhaps it was a battle for a child-a battle in the heavenlies, to be fought out on our knees; or something needing for its handling the very wisdom of God. Whichever it was, Ponnammal, as I have said before, was ready. Many a wise and silent raid upon the kingdom of darkness was thought out by her, and often she led it herself. Once she came back in triumph with a baby in her arms, about whom the town-a famous Temple town-was so stirred that it all but rose in streets, but did not; for the quieting hand of our God was upon it. But that last was a strange experience. The child's mother, knowing the peril to which her pretty baby was exposed, put it herself in Ponnammal's arms with the hurried whisper, 'Hasten out before you are waylaid: Ponnammal knew well that if she were, the angry hunters after such prey would coerce the mother into denying what she had done. She knew the upshot would be a false case, with all the paraphernalia of witnesses ranged ready to forswear themselves for four annas a head. And she knew how such things end; what she had done would be a crime-she knew right well its penalty. But not even the word prison, word that

strikes the Tamil heart cold, held terrors for her. In a work like this, open at all times to attack which no ingenuity of man or woman could avoid or repel, was it not something to have for fellow-worker one to whom the word 'fear' was a word unknown?

Only once I saw her shrink. It was when the shadow that is never far from us seemed about to close round me. She did not seem able to bear it. A thousand times Yes to it, if she were the one to be engulfed-for the one she loved it was different. But she came to be willing for even that, if thereby a child could be saved; and beyond that I know of no more loyal, perfect love.

1.06.11. Book 6: 11. Ahead of Her Generation

CHAPTER XI AHEAD OF HER GENERATION THE years of search, and of service, and of shouldering what to her had been large responsibilities, developed all that was fine in Ponnammal. She had always been remarkable for earnestness, but now there was a new air of sure-footedness about her. She had learnt to walk in slippery places without slipping. Her judgment had ripened, too; I found myself turning more and more confidently to her for counsel in difficult hours. So also, apparently, did the people about us; for they brought all manner of matters to her, from the maladies of their babies to the marriages of their daughters. I used to wonder sometimes how they regarded her views on the latter subject; Ponnammal could be caustic when she chose.

It was she who explained to me the mysteries of the marriage market. In India we do not buy our brides as do the barbarous: we buy our bridegrooms; and in our part of the country the price, called by courtesy daughter's dowry, is arranged on a sliding scale according to the examinations passed by the suitor, so much per examination or 'failed pass.' Thus a B.A. is so much, a 'failed B.A.' so much, next come a 'First Arts' and a 'failed F.A.', then 'Matriculate' and' failed Matric.' The plan is simple, but it spells ruin for a parent who wants to marry his girls to educated men, and Ponnammal considered it wrong every way. But she was far ahead of her generation on the whole subject; she disapproved, for example, of girls being committed to the irrevocable fact of marriage before they knew their own minds, and she thought the marriage question should be lifted up into a higher atmosphere, and approached in a finer spirit than that common now. She had other thoughts too, even rarer; for she held that India needed the service of the unmarried woman as well as of the married; and that the time must come when this would be acknowledged by the Church in India. She never compared the relative holiness or devotion required for the two kinds of service; she simply held that India needed both, and that there was work to do which only one who was free to be 'absorbed in her duties towards her Lord' (I quote from Mr. Arthur Way's translation of 1 Corinthians 7:34) could do; and indeed the proof of this lay all about us.

'When it is taught that the Cross is the attraction,' she said, quoting a favourite word of ours (whose truth she did not think was much taught now), 'things will be altogether different.' She knew that for many sacrifice would be found in the bringing up of a family for the highest ends; but for some she believed it would surely lead to a turning from the greatest human joy for the sake of those who must otherwise be left to perish. All this, even this last, which as yet in our community is not recognized as true or possible or even desirable, Ponnammal said when occasion arose, in her usual incisive fashion; and courage and her principles were tested. While Purripu was still young, hardly more than a schoolgirl, a suitor was suggested by some members of her family. The dowry difficulty could be overcome, as there was money obtainable if only Ponnammal would compromise a little, in the matter of putting jewels on her daughter, and in other small concessions to the spirit of the world. But that was not Ponnammal's way.

Later, when her illness made the matter of Purripu's future' one of serious concern, she was assailed on all sides; relatives, friends, neighbours, even the most unlikely came to see her about

it, and they wearied her spirit exceedingly. For by this time the mother knew her daughter's mind, and to Purripu the desire had come to follow in her mother's steps and take up what she could of the work that must soon be laid down. Should she be forced to abandon it? Ponnammal faced it out. She only wanted to obey; she knew that 'obedience leads to unexpected places and knows no precedents'; there was no precedent for her guidance now, and the mother-love in her could not rest without some clear sign from her Lord. Alone in hospital she was given such a sign. It was of the kind that could not be controverted. And to the credit of her relatives be it told, that when once they knew of it they left her in peace, and all her prayer for Purripu from that day forward was that she might go on in strength. 'Let not her crown be tarnished, Lord,' was the sum of all she asked. But it was not her mind on these subjects which interested our neighbours, who liked her better when she met them on their own ground, which after all is the most we can usually do for the rank and file of our own generation. You cannot pull people uphill who do not want to go: you can only point up. So she listened patiently to their long, involved and explicit descriptions of symptoms, cause, never mere result, of discrepancies within; and to the much-tried mothers of many infants she was an angel from heaven.

It was in the morning and evening chiefly, when the milk-sellers came, that Ponnammal held her clinics. Up would come an agitated mother, with a brass vessel of milk in one hand and a baby in the other. The milk tested, measured, and poured out, the baby would be introduced. Then, if business allowed it, Ponnammal would go into its matters and, amid yards of talk from the mother, interrupted by many remarks from the baby, extract as many facts as she could. Or, it would be a stolid four-year-old-clothed in a bead and a bangle, who, too disgusted for speech, would be solemnly spread on its parent's knee, and poked in divers places till a squeal announced the discovery of some vulnerable point.

Among Ponnammal's books is one of dilapidated appearance, a translation into Tamil of a simple medical book written in 1860 by one Edward Waring, Physician to the Maharajah of Travancore. In it, clearly set forth, are many maladies with their appropriate treatment, so far as a lay person can attempt to treat them. Where that is undesirable the fact is noted; but where bazaar remedies can help, such are suggested, and the stumbler in these obscure regions is guided in the way he should go. This book, with, as commentary thereupon, Ponnammal's experience at Neyyoor, furnished her, ingenious and common-sensed person that she was, with the means to help many, and her fame as a medico was great.

One day she received the following English letter, written in one long paragraph:

'DEAR SISTER,

'Though we had no personal talk yet I think you could recollect me. I hear you are doing the service of God: very good. I am doing medical practice privately too. I treat cases. I have got very efficacious medicines for diabetes, leprosy, asthma, etc., and diseases considered to be hopeless. Some medicines were taught and given by a Yogi [Hindu ascetic]. He is a graduate, and was drawing four hundred rupees a month from Government and had children also. He made arrangements for their maintenance and left everything; he is in Benares practising religious life. Nothing happens in the world without the will of God. I am a daily communicant and was inspired to write you these few lines. In addition to your work do you like to do (qualified) medical practice? It will be very useful. If you like I can get you a diploma from Colombo for the medical practice. You

can learn it yourself if I send you the books. The cost of the books is five rupees. The medicines are made into globules and given electricity power. For every disease there are numbers; I, 2, 3. etc., and according to the number you must prescribe the medicine for each disease. You can learn it in no time. To diagnose disease you must go through our materia medica. This business will not tire you much, and you can get many friends if you begin to practise. I am the commission agent for this district. I have got medicine chests containing all the medicines for all the diseases for ten rupees. If you require an order I can send to you. If you require any other informations I am ready to give you.' The letter concluded with moral reflections:

'Where there is a will there is a way,' 'Our life is like a cloud rapidly vanishing,' and so on. The humours of life in the East are unfailing.

1.06.12. Book 6: 12. Sacred Secularities

CHAPTER XII SACRED SECULARITIES FROM the first day of our work together, I had shared everything concerning the children with Ponnammal; she was fellow-worker, not underworker, a difference which causes things to be which otherwise could never be. Memories of experiences thus mutual crowd upon me, and that practical thing, money, is mixed up in some of the first and in some of the last. When Ponnammal joined us, she had property the produce of which was sufficient to make her independent. This was quietly appropriated by her guardian, and to get it she would have had to go to law. But to go to law before the unbelievers, with as defendant a relative in mission employ, seemed to her impossible; so she suffered herself to be defrauded. This, which was distinctly for Christ's sake, wrought in her that quality which results in a pure spirit towards money: it had no power over her; and when the Temple children's work began, this in her was most precious to me.

Before this special work began we had no financial responsibilities. If the money for itinerating work had stopped, it would only have meant that some of the villages we had hoped to visit would have been dropped. But children cannot be dropped in that calm fashion; and quite early we learned the wholesome lesson not to look to man or woman, but to God, the living God, for the continuation as well as for the beginning of everything; and we never thought of any gift as something which might be repeated. Still, though we never had, and never have had, any 'supported children,' whatever is sent being used for the next need, some refused to understand this, and kindly insisted in considering themselves responsible for individual children. One day, from such a one came a letter saying that she was sorry she 'found it impossible to send anything for her child this year; there were so many claims.' Ponnammal's smile over that letter was untroubled: 'But does she think the baby will stop living for a year?' she asked rather mischievously. Or, again, spasmodic charities enlivened our accounts:

'I will send her a hundred a year as long as I live!' exclaimed one ardent friend with regard to us; and for one foolish minute we broke our rule, and counted on it; I can feel even now the cheerful feeling of that minute. The paroxysm of sympathy passed. Something was sent, a large and welcome gift; and then pet dogs proved more absorbing an interest than babies in peril. But from the first we had seen our way clear before us with regard to this matter. No one on earth had authorized the work; no one, then, could in fairness be counted responsible. But if, as we believed, our Father in Heaven had laid His commands upon us, to Him we had a right to look for all that was needed for the carrying out of those commands; so that our only care was to be attentive to His wishes. This looks an easy condition, and in one way it was easy, but in another difficult. Who that has known the discipline of perplexity will speak of such discipline as easy? But next to the quickening experiences of great joy and great grief I know of nothing which leads more directly to the heart of our Father than just this sense of perplexity. 'I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.' And the speech pleased the Lord, and He made it His pleasure to help His servant. We at least found it so. And constantly as we went on we had proof of that which I can only call an intimate loving-kindness, a care to which nothing is minute. The very passing of the

thought of one's heart was noted. 'Before the birth of the word in my tongue,' as our Tamil idiom has it, 'Thou hast known it all.' Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is like nothing so much as the knowledge which comes from the study under the microscope of what in Dohnavur we call a 'rich' drop of water. It is high in its lowliness, we cannot attain unto it. And truly when one considers that there is provision whereby a water creature from whom the water is receding (and all he wants is the fraction of a drop to make him happy) can roll himself into a ball, and preserve his vitality, though in a state of utter dustiness for years, it becomes nothing short of blasphemous to be faithless about the affairs of little immortals, with histories too, like those of these children for whom the Lord their Redeemer has already fought such battles. It is easier, looked at fairly, to have faith than to fear. So at least it seemed to us one day towards the end of Ponnammal's illness, when a letter of good cheer came which comforted us both; and as she lay with that letter in her hands, its very paper a pleasant thing to touch and caress, she told me then that the night before, when she was awake with pain, and everything looked as black as night, she had thought about the difficulties ahead when the children would grow up. In other parts of India there could not be the same difficulties (with, concealed inside them, pitfalls): she had travelled and she knew. We seemed to have been set in, humanly speaking, the most impossible place for an endeavour of this sort. And she felt that the need for faith about temporal things was as nothing to the need of it where these spiritual things are concerned; 'For it was as if I saw you called to bear heavier anxieties than we have ever borne together' (unknown to her a bitterer cup than we had ever before tasted was even then being prepared for us). 'But as I thought of this, distressed, I saw you as the tamarind tree out there, blown about by many storms and with nothing on earth to lean upon, but only rooting the deeper; and I was comforted for you, for I saw the Lord with you in the future, and I knew each little child would be precious in His sight.'

Some months after that talk, and after Ponnammal had been long enough in Paradise to have learned by a thousand blessed proofs that nothing she could expect of her Lord could be too kind for Him to do, a letter came to the house, upon another matter, but concluding with words so brave, so comforting in their calm assurance, that I found myself unawares reading them aloud to Ponnammal, The letter was from a C.M.S. secretary, till then a friend unknown: 'Your ministry has in it such possibilities of blessing for the souls and bodies of those little ones for whom Christ died, that we dare not have a moment's anxiety or doubt as to its fruitfulness and far-reaching influence.' 'That we dare not': Praise God for faith like this.

I do not know if it was given to our dear Ponnammal to hear the words I read; if they could make her happier, I am sure they were made known to her; but I have written them in this her story because they seem to me to belong to it.

1.06.13. Book 6: 13. Our Arm Every Morning

CHAPTER XIII OUR ARM EVERY MORNING WE have come now to the year 1912. There are some dates that do not fly. The time down to the minute lives with me.

It was Saturday, August 2I, at half-past eight in the morning. A civilian, keen on music, had been staying with us, and instead of departing at seven as he had intended, he had gone to the big schoolroom with us, and we with the children had been singing English hymns. The bright little picture stands out clear-Mabel Wade at the organ; the children, to whom every white man is a mixture of hero, saint, and playfellow, pressing round; flowers looking in at the window and down from the roof, for a climbing allamanda, with its large soft yellow flowers, grew in between the top of the wall and the roof, and hung its bells overhead. We finished with 'The King of Love,' and then came joyfully up to the house, the children as usual all excitement to see the motor-cycle start. On the dining-room table lay the letters-and a telegram: 'Walker dangerously ill.'

Mr. Walker had gone to the Telugu country to take meetings. Mrs. Walker was in England. This telegram which had been delayed for two days was the first intimation we had had of any trouble. Five hours later, the second telegram came: 'And they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads.' Can words tell what Ponnammal was to us all through that time? For some days the compound was besieged by crowds of people, who appeared at intervals and roamed about noisily, raising clouds of dust, and filling the place with unquietness. Ponnammal helped us to soothe and disperse them. Then, when at last we were left to our grief, grief for the one in England, the children, ourselves-for in this order it advanced upon us-to me, stripped as I verily felt I was at that moment of my strongest earthly stay, she said: 'It must be that you are meant to lean on God alone.' At first it seemed as if we might hold on, but could not dare to develop further; it felt impossible to face the anxiety of growing bigger. This will not be understood by the brave and self-reliant souls of whom fortunately the world contains so many; nor will it be clearly intelligible to any except those few who know the conditions under which we work. This attack on the hidden heart of a system dominant in India for centuries carries in itself possibilities unknown to the nearest friend outside it. It is quite different from any other work known to me in twenty-four years of life abroad; quite different too, of course, from any sort of philanthropic work, in much of which Hindus themselves are genuinely interested. On the surface what we are doing looks usual enough; and to visitors who see nothing of the shapes behind the children, it is all quite obvious and pretty. But those shapes are always visible to us, and to Ponnammal they were visible always. It was with relation to this, the undefinable, the inexplicable, that Mr. Walker's presence had been such a strength and help to us.

He knew India as few know it; he was wise as few are wise; and he had that rarest gift of never failing one at a crisis. And then, too, his sympathies were bound up in the work; the children were not just 'the children' to him-they might have been his own; he thought of them so tenderly, and so individually, that one could always go to him and talk over matters connected with their varying characters, sure of his interest, the interest of one to whom the matter in hand really belongs. 'I

have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state': how often the word has come to me since that good friend departed.

Ponnammal realized this from the first. It was in her mind when she said. 'It must be that you are meant to lean on God alone.' And then gradually I understood that what had been rather a trouble to me at times was now to be a comfort. For often, when, in times of uncertainty, I went to the little study for advice, I had to come away without it. 'I don't know anything about it,' he would say; for he was not one of those who never say, 'I don't know.' It was as if often he could only help by turning to his Lord, and asking Him to help us; and was not that one way left open to him still? More and more as I pondered it the curious fact emerged that, though I had hardly realized it, so perfect had his sympathy been, yet he had never once taken the initiative or the responsibility in any matter concerning the work; he had not ever advised where its more intricate problems were concerned, for they touched upon things in that Underland life which he knew was beyond his ken. He had championed us; and to that championship we owed much of our freedom from molestation. He had sympathized with us in a way which halved every grief and doubled every joy. But that which was essential to the continuance of the work did not depend on him, but on the One who dieth no more. A friend sent me just then a Mildmay text, 'Thou remainest'; and a Dohnavur comrade painted in blue letters on brown teak, 'Be Thou their arm every morning'; these words were comfort and strength to me. And to my dear Ponnammal too. For in all this she shared, as indeed did everyone of our united household. Of them all, Ponnammal was the only one whose knowledge of the conditions of this land fitted her to be counsellor. But she had been left, and our treasure, Arulai, was with us too; and I was ashamed of the feeling of bereftness that had at first laid hold on me in spite of the multitude of comforts that had refreshed my soul. So we went on. And to our astonishment-so foolish are we and ignorant-that which we had thought we could not do, we did, God being our Arm every morning.

1.06.14. Book 6: 14. Her Pain

CHAPTER XIV HER PAIN

IT was Friday, March 28, of the following year, another of those dates that can never be forgotten. Ponnammal had been ailing for some weeks, but no premonition of serious trouble disturbed us; our chief anxiety was a sick baby. In the intervals of life I was trying to get Walker of Tinnevelly written, and one day, that day, into the middle of it plunged an excited messenger: 'Ponnammal has a bad pain, it has seized her suddenly! Can you come?' Before the end of the description of that pain was in sight, I was with Ponnammal.

There is so much suffering and sorrow in the world just now that I think hearts must be too sore to bear needless medical detail, so two years and five months shall go into a paragraph.

It was cancer; an operation stayed matters for a while. There were, however, complications which detained us in hospital for three months. We returned home thankful and hopeful. But Ponnammal soon began to suffer more. Treatment, operative and other, failed to do more than give temporary ease. So matters continued till October 5, 1914, when we were told cancer had returned and that nothing could be done. In one way it was a relief to know that the misery of more operations was to be spared her. But she suffered, with only occasional respite, till August 26, 1915, when she was released from the body of this death. And now memories crowd upon me: which shall I take and show? A room with a bed in it, and beside the bed a table with a shaded lantern on it. Ponnammal lies on the bed breathing so quietly that in the dim light I can hardly see if the sheet moves with her breath. It is the first night after her operation, and she is half unconscious yet. Suddenly into the stillness of the night, startling one with the weirdness of it, pours forth a torrent of prayer-prayer for the doctors who had tried to help her; for me-and the utter love in the words brings the tears stinging into my eyes; for the children, her little beloveds; name after name pours out, as child after child comes up in her faithful memory. At last she stops, exhausted; her pulse seems to me in my sore anxiety to fail. Should I call the doctor, who had told me to call him if there were any change? But he is tired after a long day's work, and I think longingly of our one trained nurse at home on furlough who would give all she possessed to be here now; and so the hours pass till the welcome morning dawns, and with it hope.

Weeks have passed since that night. Ponnammal is facing another operation, calm and quiet; but within is a very disappointed heart. The post has brought a letter from Dohnavur, and we are reading it together. It is from Arulai, fragile in body, and even then on the edge of illness, but triumphant in spirit. She is in charge at Dohnavur, helped by all who are there, but still the one upon whom the heaviest burden falls. She has been counting, not in days, but in hours and in minutes, to the time of our return. This new trouble has moved it, who can tell how far off? This is what she writes: 'Are you tasting the sweetness of this time? I am.' And light comes back to Ponnammal. She too 'tastes the sweetness of the time.' And now bright, golden memory; a bullock-cart, moving slowly round the mountains' foot; and in the cart Ponnammal, looking out with rejoicing eyes. 'I never expected to see them again,' she says, as she watches the hills soften and

darken against a yellow sky; and she tells me how on that last day at Dohnavur she had balanced her accounts so as to leave all straight for me. And as she talks, my heart shakes with mighty throbs of thankfulness that I have her warm and living beside me.

I see a compound now in the early joyful morning, freshened by the first June rains, its greens and terra-cottas mingling happily, its calm encircling hills half asleep in sleepy mists. Then there is a shout and a rush; everywhere little blue figures are dancing about us, and the air is full of laughter; and Ponnammal is lifted out of the cart and carried in; and there are palms up everywhere, and flowers. And again, a great waste field; but even as I look at it, it grows into an ordered garden with rows of plantains-banana is the word that gives the sense of the undulating green which is its glory. And up and down among the plants Ponnammal is walking, still unsteadily, but rejoicing to be walking at all. A tent is pitched near the well where a pair of bullocks draw water for the field; the splash of the falling water fills the picture with a sense of coolness. Soon Ponnammal, wearied but happy, walks slowly to the tent and rests.

It was a constant joy to us so to see her in this garden of her own creation, blessed help through the days when her heart would not let her be without doing something for the general good, but her head could not bear the noise and movement of the nursery. Ponnammal’s garden, it will always be called; it is in fruit now, and we wonder if she sees, and is pleased. And for last-late Christmas Eve: the nursery with its whitewashed walls and red-tiled floor; a lamp is burning low; a sick child gazing far away with that aloof look in her eyes that says, ’I belong to another country.’ And watching her, with arms that ache to take her and nurse her back to life, Ponnammal. For she has crawled up to the nursery, constrained thither by the love in her; and now exhausted by the effort, but serene in the victory of her spirit over the oppressive and reluctant flesh, she sits stifling the groan that breaks from her-type, though she little dreams it, of that which lights the ages as star-shine a black night: the imperishable quality of love.

1.06.15. Book 6: 15. Her Music

CHAPTER XV HER MUSIC

IT was in that same Christmas week that Ponnammal heard for the first time what she always described as her music. She was at that time taking aspirin, a drug which up till a little later was sufficient to keep the worst pain under, She took it every six hours, and when the time drew near for taking it could hardly wait for it, though she disciplined herself to wait with a will that never faltered. But when her music began, she entirely forgot it. She described the music variously: sometimes, she seemed to recognize voices singing familiar words; then at other times it was only music, but such melodious sound that she wanted to lie awake all night and listen to it. This she could never do. Within ten minutes of its beginning she was asleep, and she would sleep the whole night through, and wake refreshed, not having touched medicine. There was never any need for her to tell us when she had heard this music: her face told us; the old beaming smile would return, and we would hear again the merry laugh. It was as if she had bathed in the night in the waters of immortality, and been renewed. The good thing wrought in her was so apparent that a guest of the time doubted the correctness of the sentence of death that had been passed upon her. There was no outward sign of illness; was it credible that anyone in the grip of such a disease could be like this? A few minutes' 'music,' a single night's reprieve from pain, could hardly account for such exaltation of spirit, and above all such a sense of health; and it seemed as if Ponnammal began to think so too.

One morning, after a night of restful sleep, she felt so well that we walked round the compound together, and she noticed, as usual, things that should be put right. A heavy branch in the great tamarind tree was not safe, and she suggested a way by which it might be propped up. While we were considering it, the churchbell began to toll, and she remarked calmly, 'The village people will think it is for me.' The word caught at something in me, and she knew it. 'Don't be troubled,' she said, and stopped to pour loving, reassuring words upon me; 'perhaps we shall go together; not now, but when the work for the children is finished.' But severe suffering followed upon this; and that hope faded.

Once, after a long silent interval, she heard her music in the afternoon, which was unusual. She fell asleep as she listened to it, and woke after two hours, feeling, as she said, quite well. And she got up at once and dressed eagerly, hardly daring to believe in her reprieve. Then, as it still continued, she walked to the upper part of the compound, where some new nurseries were being built. There, charmed afresh by the beauty of it, she stood gazing across to the mountains and then round about her at the flowers. For our compound enclosed in its walls is like a great garden; all manner of lovely things grow happily in it, its trees are always green. People coming into it from the dried-up land beyond have wondered at its greenness; and so, indeed, did we, till, a few days ago, some workmen sinking an artesian well struck a river flowing fifty feet below the surface. Back in the far ages that river had been caused to flow from the western mountains, through the heart of the wide field, that was set apart for us; and now its streams make glad our little city of

God.

‘It is like a new world to me: said Ponnammal, as she walked slowly round the big circle reserved for a playground, and looked at the nurseries grouped about it; and behind them to the mountains, lighted now in sunset colours. She had spent many days in her room, and though it was kept like a little bower, this was different; she did not know how to enjoy it enough. And the thought that must have passed through a thousand minds shaped afresh in ours: If earth can be so beautiful, what must the heavenly places be? The next night she heard her music again. She told the girls who were with her at the time, and who heard nothing, to be quiet that she might listen; and as usual she left her medicine untouched. She woke next morning saying, ’Why do the cocks crow so soon?’ a remark which amused her immensely when she was awake enough to understand what she had said; for the most welcome of all sounds to her through those months was the crowing of the cocks that told the long night was nearly over.

I have thought sometimes that, if we had only our recollection to depend upon, we might doubt now, lest our imagination were painting the grey facts of that painful time-and to colour facts is criminal. But this note, one of several, is sufficiently definite; it is dated January 21, 1915. ‘Ponnammal had a wonderful night. Music and singing, then sleep, from 9 p.m., till 5 a.m. She woke so happy that involuntarily she clapped her hands for joy. She thinks that Lulla (a five-year-old child who left us for Paradise, clapping her hands with unmistakable delight) must have had some such experience of happiness when she clapped her hands.’

Another entry of about the same date records how she had herself wondered if it could be imagination; but after it had been frequently repeated, and each time so effectually banished her pain that she had no need of medicine, she came to believe it was something real, and after listening to the words of a hymn (’How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds’), sung, as she thought, by ten or fifteen voices, she gave up all question, and took it to be the kindness of her Lord that allowed her to overhear a little of the music of the Land of Song, to whose borders she had come. For ourselves, we accepted it as among the many things of life which we may only know in part until for us too the curtain of sense wears thin; and we had long since learned to set no limits to the dealings of the Lord with His beloved. But we began to wonder if things as yet hidden from us were contained in this illness; and when one came to the house who was earnest about following the primitive Church custom of anointing the sick, Ponnammal being desirous, she was anointed. We could not be sure that the answer to our prayers would be health restored. We should have felt it unchildlike, unbecoming, to be peremptory with our most loving Father, or even perpetually insistent. Not ’Thy will be changed,’ but ‘Thy will be done,’ was the prayer given to us to pray. And we laid a palm branch across her bed as she lay waiting, in token that either way it would be victory.

1.06.16. Book 6: 16. In the Midst of the Furnace

CHAPTER XVI IN THE MIDST OF THE FURNACE AND it was victory, though that victory was not always apparent at the time. And because to-day there are many called to stand on the outer side of just such fires, I will try to set down that which every now and then was shown to us for our comfort, till we learned that for those who suffer in righteousness there is appointed an angel of the Lord who smites the flame of the fire out of the furnace, and makes in the midst of the furnace as it had been a moist whistling wind, so that the fire cannot touch them at all, neither hurt nor trouble them-though indeed for the moment, to us who observe them, things may seem far otherwise.

We had not, at the time I am thinking of now, used morphia; aspirin still sufficed to keep things tolerable. But that drug ran short, and a substitute was supplied which was useless. I wired to those of our family who were on the hills-for it was our hot season and they had to be away-and they sent a supply of the right medicine to us as soon as possible; but the five days which passed before it came were such that at last we had to give a hypodermic, only to find that the morphia recently supplied had lost its power. Those who have lived through such a time will know how every minute sensation bites into the soul, etched into it as with a red-hot needle. But now for the comfort: Ponnammal told me afterwards that when the pain was at its height it was as if the Lord Himself stood by her, quoting to her familiar words; and she said, 'The waters did not overflow me, nor did the flame kindle on me; no, never once.' There had been no indication that things were so. All we had seen was a poor, tormented, or at best stupefied body, a house with its blinds drawn down, whose words, when there was speech at all, were only about its pain.

Later, when we were together again, she longed for her music; and one evening one of her Sitties played softly at some little distance from her room, hoping by suggestion, if it might be so, to woo those sweet strains back to her. Did the angels smile tenderly on our poor attempts, I wonder? Ponnammal did. 'I heard the baby organ last night,' she remarked next morning. 'Did it ease you? Did it make you sleep?' and she turned her great, dark, loving eyes upon us and smiled. And then, fearing she had been ungrateful, she said, 'It was Premie Sittie, * was it not? Indeed, I enjoyed listening.' But she never spoke of it as resembling that other music, which never came now.

* Frances Beath.

Sometimes she was a little troubled because she had none of the ecstatic feelings she had read that others had when death was near; and one day, when we were talking about walking by faith, and of the mark of His confidence it was when our God trusted us to do it and to be content to do it, she said: 'Yes, I know that is what I am to do; for the life to come is as a sealed book to me. I do not fear, I have peace, but I have no feeling of great joy: all is silent and sealed.' This continued to be so till one night a comforting dream was granted. Early in the morning long before dawn she sent for me; she could not wait till morning to tell it. She was sinking, she said, in a deep stream, and the weeds grew thick and entangled her, and she called, and instantly the Lord Himself was with her, and the next moment-but 'a moment' does not express the instantaneousness of it-she

was with Him. Then she began to praise, saying, 'Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.' And then thinking I was there, she turned to me. '0 my mother, where are the children?' she asked; and awoke on earth again. But the seals of the book had been broken by the gladness of that bright dream. As often as we could through those months she had what Samuel Rutherford calls the comfort of 'Christ's fair moonlight in His word and Sacraments.' Hallowed hours those were, set in stillness, and filled with a peace that neither pain nor grief nor any fear could touch. When, in the days that came after, the waters compassed her about, even unto the soul, and the depths closed her round about, and the weeds were wrapped about her head, she would recall her light, and in the strength of her Risen Lord forbid the darkness to engulf her. Thus, receiving abundance of grace, she reigned in life by One Christ Jesus.

She was still as clear in brain as ever. The storms of pain that swept over her, the large doses of depressing drugs she had to take, appeared to have no ill-effect on her wonderfully powerful mind. She followed the War-news closely, and to her the story of the angels at Mons which reached us long before the newspapers had begun to argue over it, was natural, not wonderful. But when the gallant young brother of one of the Sitties was left wounded on the field, and 'Missing' was the only word that came to us about him, thoughts of the War became too personal and poignant, and we had to keep its heavy shadow from her: she had not strength to bear it. Almost to the end she heard all the family news; advised with her old wisdom; was still in all ways her loving, ardent, eager self. So full of vitality she was that it seemed as if she could not die.

Once while I was reading to her from the Song of Songs, a book which was as honey in the comb to her, she laughed with joy. We had just read the verse, 'Who is she that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved?' when she exclaimed, 'Oh, that is a happy word!' and she told me that a few nights before, when the medicine failed to give her sleep, she lay tossing about and turning from side to side, finding ease nowhere, till at last she cried aloud and said, '0 my compassionate Lord, I want to rejoice, but I cannot. The air is hot, and my bed is hot, and the pain is weariness to me.' And it was as if He came quickly very near her and soothed her, telling her He understood; and reminding her of this very word, He told her she was coming up out of the wilderness, not long to stay in it. 'Because the way is short, I thank Thee, Lord'-and yet she was not hurried in spirit to go; she was far more eager to stay, if only she could help us by staying. But the human part of her stood on tip-toe to be off, and once she said longingly, speaking of Christiana and how she received her token, an arrow with a point sharpened with love let easily into her heart, 'It is a long ten days since I received my token, and I am not away yet. When will the good day come?'

One morning Purripu, who was one of her devoted nurses, brought her a great vase of unopened violet passion-flowers, trained in light sprays over branches of henna, our Indian mignonette. 'Watch; they will open at nine o'clock,' she said, as she put the vase on the table beside her mother. And Ponnammal watched; and just before nine o'clock the interlaced filaments began to stir as if conscious of the time, and by the hour appointed all the flowers were open. Ponnammal had long known the ways of Passion-flowers, but the morning hours are busy in the nursery, and she had never had leisure to watch the little moving miracle. 'Just at the hour we keep holy as the hour He was crucified, His flower of Sorrow opens, and shows all mysteries,' she said; and her thoughts travelled back to Calvary, and she sucked sweet comfort from the word that tells us we

have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Her room was full of the scent of the flowers when a little later I was with her, and in her face was peace.

'Words I have known all my life have a new force within them now,' she said suddenly one day; and she told how a great dread had been upon her, lest when, near the end, the pain grew more violent, and her will weaker to endure, she would not be able to bear it. And once when this fear oppressed her, almost like a voice speaking aloud, the words of the promise reassured her: 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. That negative verb, which in Tamil idiom has it that God will not give room for such a thing to happen, was an immense comfort to Ponnammal, and she took delight in Ridley's words to Latimer: 'Be of good cheer, brother; for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or strengthen us to abide it.'

Often during those last weeks if one of us went in the twilight to her room we would find a little silent figure sitting close beside the bed. It was Tara, or Evu, or Lullitha, three of the merriest, most healthily restless little mortals ever created. But they would sit by Ponnammal in perfect silence for an hour at a time. Others of her nurslings would come too, steal in for a kiss, and slip out again, awed by the unwonted aspect of life in that little room; but those three children minded nothing if only they might be with her. If she could bear to listen, they would tell her stories of the others, and of their gardens, and pet birds, and games; and all the old hunger of love would be in her eyes and in the tones of her voice as she listened and asked questions, drawing out their little tales.

Another constant visitor was her old father, who stayed with us for months so that he might be near her. One day he asked if he might bring the barber, from time immemorial India's only physician; and finding that celebrity proposed to do no more than feel pulses, we consented, and he came.

It was a curious scene; the barber, a good friend of ours, and in his way an intelligent man, felt first the right pulse, then the left, and steadfastly regarded Ponnammal. 'How long has she to live?' demanded the old father; but this was too much for Ponnammal's sense of the ludicrous; she broke into a peal of weak laughter and the doctor amazed turned to the father. 'There is a vitality in her,' he replied in his best medical manner, 'which it will take some weeks to reduce.' 'That is so,' murmured the old man, 'much strong food has she; milk in infinite quantities, and the essence of foods.' 'And owing to this she is as yet full of the spirit of life,' continued the doctor affably; but he stood looking at her with a puzzled expression, for she was being fed on what he regarded as nothing short of poison-rice-water for diet, with, when the pulse fails, a decoction of pig's tusk, stag's, or rhinoceros' horn, tiger's claw, and a little silver and gold, added to the ordinary medicine, being the correct treatment. Ponnammal knew this, and understanding his mind, began to tell him in Whom lay her strength and confidence and happiness; but he hardly listened. He had seen; and to that Hindu man accustomed to something very different in a sick-room, the sermon that told was written in her face.

After he left she talked of the young barber, and of her many Hindu friends in the villages about us. It appeared more than ever pitiful to her now that they should go on without the one Light which Lightens life's darkest places, slaves to the temporal, the unimportant. And a story Mr. Walker had told just before he left us seemed exactly to fit her feeling, and she longed to get all who came to see her to understand how much there was in it. It was about the carved device and inscription

over three of the doors in the Milan cathedral. Over one door, roses, 'All that pleases is but for a moment'; over another a Cross, 'All that grieves us is but for a moment'; and over the central door only the words, 'Nothing is important but that which is eternal.'

Early in July we had our last sustained conversation. 'Last night,' she said, 'I had less pain than usual, and my mind was clear. When the confusion passes, and power to think returns, then my heart rises as if released from a weight; I can pray and praise. But first I examined myself to be sure all was well with me. For many days I had felt nothing, not even comfort, all was dimness and a blank and silence; then as I told my God about it He showed me that all through the days the joy of His salvation was within me, unchanged by any misery of pain. It was there, but I could not taste it. The darkness and the sadness of that time was caused by the medicine; it was not that I had lost anything. This comforted me, and I praised Him greatly and was content.' For many days her mouth had had that drawn look which those who have nursed anyone through sore suffering will know too well. But as she talked the old sweet, satisfied look returned, and all the old happy curves were there again. 'Oh, is it not wonderful!' she exclaimed with a sort of vigorous joyousness. 'For days and nights the waves beat hard on me, and then suddenly there is a great calm, and I lie back and rest.'

Then she asked for the last few verses of 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, repeating after me the words, 'Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory.' And then I read Psalms 46:1-11 to her, and she fell asleep.

After this her words were few. Only once, as she lay in what seemed to us who were outside it unimaginable misery of body, she from the innermost core of it told me how she had hoped to be allowed to stay; she thought she could help us a little 'if the pain did not pass this limit.' It seemed to me the most unselfish word I had ever heard from human lips. And as she spoke, her eyes, the most living part of her now, seemed to devour me with the passion of love in them, and her hands held mine as if they could never let them go. Verily love is eternal: many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would be utterly contemned. And by this token, sure and glorious, we know the best is always in front, never behind. What can death do to that which is eternal? That which pain could not kill can death destroy? What is death but a door? They stooped as they passed through, for the door is low. Then suddenly they were unclothed and clothed upon, and clad in new garments they walked on, who shall say in what new powers of life, who shall say to what new experiences of joy? But does the dress we wear change the spirit within us? Do new powers weaken that in us which was mighty before? Do new joys blot out old loves? By all the love that ever was since love first woke in the world, it cannot be. They loved us a moment ago; with the whole strength of their being they loved us. They love us now; they will love us for ever. The old story rings true to-day: Those our beloved, ever beholding that Face that doth minister life to beholders, will be glad when they hear the sound of our feet stepping over our Father's threshold; for they do not forget: they love, and love cannot forget. And so, these things being true, it must be that the best we have known is only the foretaste of some very far better to come. Can less be contained in the word that tells us we shall be satisfied with the goodness of the house? Would less than life's best content us in the land of the immortals? We shall have our best again, purified, perfected, assured from change for ever.

Thank God, there is a limit set to pain, though to love there are no limits. Ponnammal touched hers, as I have told, on August 26. It was night; but the night was full of voices, saying, ‘Her warfare is accomplished’: and for her it was Day.

1.06.17. Book 6: 17. Our Triumphal Procession

CHAPTER XVII OUR TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION

FUNERAL: the word where the holy dead are concerned should be a singing word. It should shine, like a light that has suddenly broken through a rack of dark clouds. It should call with the call of bugle. We set our hearts upon causing it to be something of this for our children and the village people.

Early in the morning we filled the room with flowers. She lay as she had fallen asleep, on her little cane bed, covered with sprays of jessamine; and our friends the men servants, directed by Aruldasan, whom she had loved from his childhood, carried her out, while behind her streamed the children, over a hundred of them all in white and yellow, our Dohnavur festival colours, and the little ones in blue for love. Then, valiantly led by the older girls, the children sang songs of triumph, and the one note struck, or that we tried to strike, was joy that our dear one was happy and well, with Christ; and joy, too, that we should meet her again in a little while.

There was grief, but no gloom in our hearts as we left her-not her, but the tired body that had finished its work-sown as a seed to await its resurrection. Only we wanted to follow, in her steps, and run the race, and fight the fight faithful to the end. And sweet old words ran in my mind as I sought for grace to have done with selfishness: 'What a singing life is there! There is not a dumb bird in all that large field; but all sing and breathe out heaven, joy, glory, dominion to the high Prince of that new-found land: And so, looking over 'beyond the line, and beyond death, to the laughing side of life, the world,' we did that day by the help of our God triumph and ride upon the high places of Jacob. In the afternoon we met again in the schoolroom, decorated now with every joyful thing we could put in it, palms over the pictures, masses of yellow allamanda, white tuberosa growing in fragrant spikes. The room even empty looked radiant; filled as it soon was with the children in their colours, it was to me at least, like a little space of the heavenly garden let down for our comfort and gladness. And yet it was not an easy gathering to lead into triumphant ways, for we are very human, and we wanted Ponnammal; it was difficult, most difficult, 'to learn to do without.'

We had met now to read some letters she had left for us. I well remembered those letters being written. We were in hospital, and it was thought likely that her disease had returned, but nothing could be definitely decided without an examination under chloroform. If it proved to be cancer back again, the doctors would operate at once. The issue in that case of course must be uncertain, so that we had to go through what might be our good-bye before the operation. It was then she wrote her letters. I can see her now, sitting up in bed, eagerly and with pain-for it hurt to sit up-writing quickly. The letters finished, she asked us to sing to her; and under difficulties we sang up to the moment the stretcher-bearers came for her.

These letters were read now: there was one for the girls, and the children, the Sitties, and for me. They are, I think, too intimate for even this very intimate book. Love filled them, overflowed them;

mine ended with these words: ‘the kisses of eternal love.’ They miss much who do not know that love is eternal. My story has been told. It goes out into a world spent with suffering, wounded unto death. But death is not the end, it is only another beginning, and that which makes life lovable and glorious cannot die, for Love is eternal.

Chapter 77

1.06.18. Book 6:18. The Dohnavur Fellowship

THE DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP THE work known by this name began in 1901. There exists in connection with the temples of India a system like that which obtained in such places as the great temple of Corinth with its Thousand Servants. Young children trained for temple service have no chance to grow up good. They are the most defenceless of God’s innocent creatures. We gave ourselves to save them, and as we lived in a village called Dohnavur the work became known by that name. The story of the Fellowship is told in Gold Cord. It has now been made illegal to dedicate a young child to a god. But as all who know the East know, there are ways by which a law can be evaded. Apart from that, there are very many children in danger of being brought up for wrong purposes. So the need for the work continues whatever the law may be. In 1918 we began to take boys too, for they also are used in the temples, and still more often in the evil dramatic societies and cinemas of Southern India. The work is difficult and asks for all that we have to give. There are griefs, but there are far more joys. The greater number of the first generation of children are spending their lives in the service of their Saviour, and for the blessing of their country. From the first we thought of the children as our own. We did not make a Home for them, when they came to us they were at home. And so from the beginning we were a family, never an institution; and we all, Indian and European, men and women, live and work together on the lines of an Indian family, each contributing what each has to offer for the help of all. We have no salaried workers, Indian or foreign; make no appeal for funds; and authorize none to be made for us. We have never lacked; as the needs grew supplies came; and as we advance we find that our Unseen Leader is moving on before us. There are over eight hundred in the family. We have village work and medical work.

We have no workers who are only preachers. "We have heard the preaching, can you show us the life of your Lord Jesus?" said a Hindu to one of us. Our Master who not only preached and taught, but went about doing good, and His servant, St. Paul, who not only taught publicly and from house to house, but laboured, working with his own hands, gave us the pattern that we as a Fellowship were intended to follow. So the evangelist shares in the practical work of life-doctoring, nursing, teaching, building, engineering, farming, and so on.

We come from various parts of the household of God; but we never find this to be any hindrance to harmony, for we meet at the centre, above and below difference. And to be one in love to our Lord and in faith in the Book, the sum of whose words is truth, makes for vital unity.

1.07.00. Ragland, Spiritual Pioneer (1922)

Ragland, Spiritual Pioneer by Carmichael, Amy

Chapters

Title

Preface Chapter 1 - Thomas Gajetan Ragland Chapter 2 - Cambridge: Cabul Chapter 3 - Shaken Out Chapter 4 - No Purple Fields Chapter 5 - Signboards Chapter 6 - On the Surface and Under Chapter 7 - Secretary Chapter 8 - I want a Settledness Chapter 9 - From the House Roof Chapter 10 - The Stairways of Desire Chapter 11 - Never More Again Chapter 12 - Impossible?

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RAGLAND, SPIRITUAL PIONEER By

AMY CARMICHAEL DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP

LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W. C. 2

1.07.000. Book 7: Preface

NOTE

Sources of information.-Dr. Stock’s History of the C.M.S., Memoir of Henry Venn by Knight, Perowne’s Memoir of Ragland and the memories of those who knew him. So far as we can discover after searching all available records, Ragland was the first Englishman to camp among the people of India as a missionary of Christ. Eighteen months after his departure the Breath blew across his field, and many were refreshed and renewed. But perhaps the deed of his life was the dropping of a new thought into the missionary mind, and wherever a white tent is pitched, all over this Empire of India, and from it goes forth the Evangel of Peace, there you have Ragland’s seed in fruit. His years in camp were few; but eternal values are not counted in terms of earth’s coin, and in what splendid fields may he not be pioneering now? When this book was in the Press, the C.M.S. Mass Movement Quarterly for May 1922 was sent to us, and it throws another ray back upon the story.

"Although these first missionaries of Travancore made some efforts to ’meliorate the condition’ of the Outcastes, it was through a famous Tinnevelly missionary, the Rev. T. G. Ragland, that the movement began. He was in Travancore in 1850, and was filled with compassion for the slaves, especially after seeing one of them unequally yoked with an ox pulling a plough. He infected with a like compassion an Indian clergyman, who induced Outcastes to come and learn of the love of God in Christ." So the journey that led out into that first camp set loose other forces that operate mightily among us to this day. Verily, it is no vain and fruitless thing to be God’s corn of wheat.

Many crowd the Saviour’s Kingdom, Few receive His Cross, Many seek His consolation, Few will suffer loss For the dear sake of the Master, Counting all but dross.

Many sit at Jesus’ table, Few will fast with Him When the sorrow-cup of anguish Trembles to the brim- Few watch with Him in the garden Who have sung the hymn.

Many will confess His wisdom, Few embrace His shame, Many, should He smile upon them, Will His praise proclaim;

Then, if for a while He leaves them They desert His Name. But the souls who love Him truly Whether for woe or bliss, These will count their truest heart’s blood Not their own, but His:

Saviour, Thou who thus hast loved me, Give me love like this.

1.07.01 Book 7: 1. Thomas Gajetan Ragland

1. THOMAS GAJETAN RAGLAND "She took me like a child of suckling time, And cradled me in roses." NOT so was Ragland cradled. The first glimpse of him is of a tiny, serious boy, delicate in feature and in colouring, bereft of both parents, dressed in deep mourning, kneeling, like the little Samuel of nursery pictures, on the floor of the Roman Catholic church in Gibraltar, his piteous little hands, it was remembered afterwards, always most anxiously folded. The next is brighter. He was swept off to Lancashire, and there, ready created for him, the lonely child found one whom he calls his "very dearest best earthly friend, both a mother and a sister." She was a cousin, ordinarily speaking, but she was what he said, and she never failed him all the days of his life. His parentage was interesting. It explained him, and he must have considerably astonished himself at times; for he was essentially English, calm, steadfast, shy; whence, then, those strange upshootings of swift flame within him? It was as if a young volcano had suddenly sprouted right in the orderly middle of a velvety English lawn. And the lawn, alarmed and shocked, did exactly as one might expect: hastened to cover the upstart thing with a tidy layer of turf.

Gajetan stood for Gajetani, his Italian grandmother’s name. It was she who mixed lava in his cool English blood. He had a noble grandfather on the English side, a man who chose exile rather than stain his conscience; and his father was a soldier. There was nothing dull about the boy fashioned thus.

We may fly through the next years: school, where he worked hard at classics, and for pastime poked into obscure corners of history, and worried through genealogies with amazing pertinacity till he knew the ins and outs of the royal families of all the kingdoms of Europe with most unboylike precision; office, where his uncle meant him to reign in his stead; but as he had no heart for it, college, where he won the silver cup every year for four years, finally coming out Fourth Wrangler in the mathematical tripos, at that time the only tripos at Cambridge. The day the letter of all letters was expected he shut himself up in his room, feeling like a fiddle tuned to snapping point. The post came. His family clamoured round his door and apparently called the good news through the key-hole. "With some natural excitement," admits his grave biographer, Ragland emerged, asked for the letter, read it and then shut his door again. But that could not last long. His people had to be appeased, and for a very glad minute they jubilated together, and thanked the Giver of this good gift.

Some time between childhood and boyhood he had chosen whom he would serve. Frank as he was, with a frankness that sometimes astonishes (the Italian in him, perhaps), this one matter of his faith’s beginning he kept hidden in a reticence no pleadings even from his mother-friend could penetrate. "No, this cannot be," he wrote when she asked him to tell her of those thoughts and feelings. And another matter he held as a secret between him and his Lord. Of the love that might have been he never wrote or spoke, though it was known that his missionary call cut straight across that hope. For his generous soul, so joyfully opened to all who cared enough to enter, had its profound reserves.

1.07.02. Book 7: 2. Cambridge: Cabul

2. CAMBRIDGE: CABUL

WHY are men in books and in most other places so exceedingly interesting, while the same ranged in rows in pews are just merely formidable? Ragland had known all along, of course, that ordination implied weekly sermons, but he does not seem to have realized what he was in for, and the shadow of this duty distressed his weeks. Shortly after being elected Fellow he was ordained, and became curate of Barnwell, Cambridge, later of St. Paul's, New Town. So, in spite of what he called "general emptiness," sermons had to be prepared, and Saturday evening would see him pacing up and down the grass plot in the college quadrangle in most visible trouble. Sometimes he worked on till three or four o'clock on Sunday morning, and when indignant nature got him at last to bed, he would be up by seven and at it again. For all his life he was possessed by a conscience with an uncomfortably high standard of duty. Such men, when they get out into a large room, are like John Gough, V.C., of whom it is written that duty, discipline, and the joy of life were the rules he walked by, "and if you found yourself in his company you had perforce to walk with him, keeping up with his stride as best you could." But coop them up within narrow bounds, and they become pin-cushions, and more pin than cushion.

These Saturday ruffles over the Sunday's sermon do not sound like the joy of life, but, for all that, it was joyful. He had any number of friends among the undergraduates. A Cambridge tradition tells how he challenged one of them to race him, and then, just as the other was winning, he scooted across the grass plot (sacred to Fellows) and won amid shouts of derisive laughter from the vanquished. The men loved him for the fun that was in him and the genuine generous character, and he loved them and delighted in their company. One of his best-remembered ways was the ingenious use he made of the means that were now at his command to do all manner of little kindnesses, extremely privately, sometimes quaintly, but always with the most unusual joy:

"Oh, the gratification it is! If the covetous knew this, how it would save them the trouble of hoarding." Nothing could persuade him to hoard, and his gifts were generally given for the need of the day. "Money is like muck, no good unless it be spread," was distinctly his opinion, and he held to it with some tenacity. Years afterwards we find him, when (anonymously) he passed on to C.M.S. a legacy of £500, explaining clearly his one condition: it must be used for present need. He was in India then, and the present need was all about him; but during those Cambridge years he never even dreamed outside England. Life to him was a book-lined room full and running over with the blessings of tranquillity.

"The whole world before Thee is as a little grain in the balance, yea, as a drop of the morning dew that falleth down upon the earth." Look with God on the other side of this grain of dust, this globe of dew, and see the mightiest contrast imagination can conceive to that peaceful book-lined room.

See a defile, dark even at midday, five miles long, between tremendous mountains. Through its depths a river rushes. Frost holds the waters on higher levels. These flow too fiercely to be stayed,

but the rocks are slippery with sheets of ice, and snow lies everywhere.

Down in the gloom of that dismal gorge a host is toiling painfully, sixteen thousand men, women and children, English and Indian, in peril together. A shot; another; shots from all sides; every crag a foe. Long guns, long Afghan knives, confused noise, garments rolled in blood. But why describe? There was no battle, only a slaughter. One man alone on a jaded horse reached the walls of Jellalabad. One, out of sixteen thousand. A few were in captivity, the rest were dead. And in the secret cells of underground prisons, utterly lost to the knowledge of men, Englishmen were being slowly done to death, some avowedly for Christ’s sake, others "just for the pride of the old countree."

Why revive forgotten grief? And how will it sound at home?

Massacre, torture, and black despair, Reading it all in my easy-chair. Will it be only that?

Writing on Asian soil, within sight of a temple tower that would shelter such deeds to-night if he who now letteth were taken away, it does not feel remote. But the tale is told because it belongs to the story. The month of Ragland’s ordination saw these things happen. Christmas Eve, 1841, in Cambridge-holly, and mistletoe, and carols, universal kindness for the sake of the Babe of Bethlehem: that same Christmas Eve in Cabul -but the words have not been coined that can show it, and it opened on that dark defile among the mighty mountains.

1.07.03. Book 7: 3. Shaken Out

3. SHAKEN OUT

SLOWLY across Ragland's first spring as a minister of Christ crept the long shadow, as the news slowly travelling home became known all over England. The may in the green hedges must have withered for him as that shadow spread and deepened. But it never came as an influence that bore a compelling word-and he continued to walk up and down the college grass plot, laboriously concocting his poor little sermons as if battles and blood and tears and the immeasurable sins and woes of nations wrestling in the darkness were dreadful dreams-no more than that.

Small wonder, therefore, that those who looked with God upon the world, and heard voices in events that were dumb to others, could not be silent, but spoke, and so spoke that the pleasant men in their pleasant rooms dared not stay in them any longer, but rose and went forth with the Word of Life to the peoples of the East.

One such was Henry Venn, Hon. Secretary of the C.M.S. A page from Knight's memoirs is like a snapshot photograph. One day a stranger called to see him, and as it happened, on the African mail-day, when every moment was precious. The Secretary was busy with his despatches when the visitor was announced. He came to complain of the ministrations provided for passing tourists in a favourite health-resort, and to propose that a church should be built. "How was this to be accomplished?" "Nothing is simpler. Put the church into the hands of some well-known persons as trustees and the money will be easily raised." But the visitor was not satisfied; he did not wish it to be a party matter. "I have given you my advice," was the reply. The other stammered and hesitated with all the marks of a weak man who had a weak cause. "They wanted a man that didn't belong to a party-not a party man. Besides," he feebly added, "the clergyman [a German missionary] says, 'Let us bray.'" It was too trivial, and the slur on a good man too unkind. Henry Venn grasped the arms of his chair, drew it close to the table, shifted his letters to and fro, and, looking his interviewer straight in the face, said, "I know, Sir, of but two parties in the world, Timists and Eternists. I am an Eternist." The gentleman picked up his hat and left Mr. Venn to complete his despatches. To Cambridge now came Henry Venn, the Eternist, and Ragland received him in his rooms and gathered a few men to listen to him, little knowing what would come of it. For what came was a shaking of the soul such as he had never conceived could be. A power had him in its grasp, and mightily it dealt with him. It shook him free from the silken threads of his very respectable life, it shook him out of Cambridge and, what was even more amazing to himself, it shook him out of all his small pet habits and desires, his very flesh had to rise and get out into a most uncomfortable world. He hated foreign travel. He was elected to travel with very few sitting--down periods right on to the end. Verily, Venn was a wakener of men.

Once before, like a wild bird flying unbidden through his quiet rooms, the thought-the disturbing thought-of the Christless peoples of the earth had come to him; but he had refused it, and the light within him departed.

Eight months had passed so. He was almost as many a man since then has been, called, but deaf to the call which, once trifled with, rarely comes again. "I was not willing then; I missed my chance; and now, when I would go, it is too late." Who that knows anything of God’s dealings with men but has had to meet and mourn with and try to comfort such, stricken with the sorrow of a great chance lost?

Ragland went forward at God’s sign. He wrote to Henry Venn on June 2, 1845, definitely offering for work abroad. Seven months later he landed in India.

Madras received him with her usual welcome, a glory of white surf along a shore which seems endless. Through streets where his eager, observant eyes saw many a forehead with Vishnu’s sign or smeared with Siva’s ashes, he passed to a house in the heart of the city from whose flat roof one might look down into the courtyard of a Hindu temple. And with a great quietness and earnestness almost awful, the new life began.

It was then early in 1846, three years after the close of the Afghan war, and he was thirty years old.

1.07.04. Book 7: 4. No Purple Fields

4. NO PURPLE FIELDS "You'll find no purple fields of Arcady out there." THE SHOCK: This is the short, sharp name given by some of us to the first year abroad. There are places where it is not so. All skies have their starry patches. But many have felt it exactly that.

Ragland had not fed before coming out on the type of missionary literature which paints the picture with the devil out of it, or, if in it, elderly, tamed-almost a respectable devil. Such books had not been written then. But, being the man he was, he had gathered a series of impressions, and looked to find blessed ardours, a general beaming of heavenly rays more evident than at home and, as a matter of course (and why not?), Pentecostal things happening constantly.

He found, as many another has since, a certain chasm between platform and floor. Set on the common sand of life, the missionary glow is not always as luminous as one might expect. The only glow apparent after the first rosy days of rosy glasses is that proceeding from a very hot sun, and it leads straight, grace being in abeyance, to what is politely called nervous irritability, a sin without a halo; and then, if there was a particle of self-deception in the call, or mere skin-deep emotion in the circumstances attending it, with ruthless fingers the strong facts of life tear to shreds that poor little forlorn scrap, till Truth stands naked and shivers.

Ragland was a man of most tender and sensitive spirit. To such a one there is sure to be a time of inward trembling. What of oneself? It is so easy to settle down to less than the arduous, so easy to condone impatience and trifling lapses in love; easy, too, to slip into a soft tolerance, which does not see sin as such in those for whom one is responsible, but slides along comfortably for the sake of peace and avoids tackling it in right earnest. Above all, it is terribly easy to get accustomed to the thought and the sight of people living without Christ: "My principal grief was, and so it has continued to be, that I grieved so little," he said before he had been long in India.

It is not difficult to trace the track of the shock through Ragland's truthful letters. His chief temptation leaned towards sarcasm and fretfulness, he says, but though nothing of either appears, there are little revealing words which show the inmost to one who knows it by experience: "Has your heart been wounded, my brother; I mean since your arrival in India? Well, we must suffer; but He suffered and will comfort."

How well one who knows the place where that letter was written can picture him as he wrote. The house familiar afterwards as one of the battle-houses of South India stands alone in its large compound, a roomy but strangely lonely-feeling house, with a bitterly hostile Hindu village on one side and an indifferent Christian community on the other. Near the gate is a sheet of water over which the sun sets in a double glory, but on the bank, buried among palms, is a wicked little demon-shrine whose night-noises keep the weary awake. To a happy heart all looks, or at any rate can be looked upon, happily; but to a wounded spirit there is a sigh in the wind in the palms, and sitting in that house one can be very sorrowful. But the hope then, as now, was the coming of our Lord. "Unbelief says, 'He delays, and will still delay; He must, things are not ripe enough.' But He

is the faithful and true witness. Oh, when He does come, do you not think we shall all cry, ‘How quickly, how quickly’? Meanwhile, then, let our loins be girded and our lamps burning, let us run and fight each day as if our last." And he signs himself, "Your companion in tribulation (real, though unseen and sweetened) and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, to whom let every knee bow."

Other letters touch on more outward matters, but always with the same sincerity. For Ragland, by force of his character and training, could not help being sincere; he clearly saw and clearly said what he saw. Wonderfully soon he pierces the appearance and gets at what is:

"The spiritual trial to be expected most is, I think, that arising from disappointed hopes of the success of our ministry." So he writes to R. L. Allnutt of Cambridge, who was thinking of coming out. "Access to the heathen, too, is much more difficult than a person unacquainted with the country would suppose; and preaching to those who have just renounced heathenism is not so naturally or even spiritually interesting as romantic people before trial picture it to themselves." Then he hopes he is not discouraging him, but only driving him to his God for sure guidance. And he tells him something of the need, that need which can never be exaggerated. No fear there of an over-coloured canvas. And again, "Were all Christ’s dear servants only made willing to be as corn of wheat to fall into the ground and die, I should be content and thankful." And he writes of the temptation to be satisfied without getting into real touch with vital things: " Without watchfulness on the missionary’s part he will seldom come to close quarters with the great enemy in the souls of his people,"-a word that cuts to the quick, so keen is it in its truth-telling. He speaks, too, of preparation, deprecating long absorption in the study of Indian philosophy, for instance; for he longs to see the new missionary right among the people "while his feelings are fresh, before he has lost his first missionary aspirations, and begun to prefer European society and work, and to look wistfully towards home." And again in his sixth year he writes, and the words are written in golden letters in the hearts of some of us who follow after:

"Of all qualifications for mission work, and every other, charity is the most excellent.

"Of all methods of attaining to a position of usefulness and honour, the only safe and sure one is to fit ourselves for it by purging our hearts from vain-glory, worldliness and selfishness.

"Of all plans for ensuring success, the most certain is Christ’s own-becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground and dying.

"May the Lord’s presence go with you, wherever you go; and when you have done His work, may He give you rest."

1.07.05. Book 7: 5. Signboards

5. SIGNBOARDS "WHAT is the first thing you read when you open a book?"

"Oh, the conversations, of course."

I listened to the question and answer with some regret, for Perowne does not lend himself to conversations. He deals chiefly in letters. The first six months were spent in language study and in getting to know the people, an interesting and lovable people whose language commands the respect of students for its clever grammar system and vigorous colloquial, strewn with wise sayings, shrewd proverbs and aphorisms, and morsels of thoughtful poetry packed into fewest words. Can anyone know a people without a knowledge of their intimate talk? Tamil poetry, as a study, lies far ahead of the first few years; but the beautiful endless play of allusion contained in the lightest idiom is something that breaks upon one from the first, if indeed one lives on Tamil, not English ground, and listens and loves enough to want to understand.

Ragland much wanted to understand, and soon he found that almost everything he saw, as well as all that he heard, was a door that opened into rooms that belonged to the soul of the land. One such room he early strove to enter, for its signboard hung conspicuous wherever he turned to look. The marks on the forehead of his pundit, what did they mean? The marks he saw were various.

Here is a man with a curved white line like a U painted between his eyes, and in the middle of the U a red dot, this U to represent the foot of Vishnu, and the red dot his wife Lakshmi. He tells you that he is a Vadagalai, a Northman, his title is Iyengar, and he must never be confounded with a Tengalai, a Southman, whose title is Iyer, though both are Hindus. He accepts the Sanskrit Vedas, and views the human spirit’s dependence on the divine as a voluntary act on its part. It clings of its own will, as a young monkey clings to its mother.

Here is the Southman whose Vedas are in Tamil, and who paints on his forehead a device signifying both of Vishnu’s feet, and draws the line down his nose, to show the throne in which the feet are set, while a red or yellow line enclosed shows Lakshmi. He declares that the human spirit is laid hold of by the divine, apart from its own volition, and his illustration is the cat seizing her kitten. Countless lawsuits have been fought over the disputes which have arisen between these two sects of Hindus and, as it occurs to neither that possibly both are right-for truth does sometimes lie in both extremes-the controversy is likely to continue. The Northmen shave their Brahman widows and the Southmen sensibly refuse, so in walking down a Brahman street you can tell at a glance to which theological party the inhabitants belong. "Mere duffers, most ignoramus," was a Southman’s remark the other day about his neighbours, for he was a lately appointed Government official who found himself unhappily planted in a streetful of Northmen; and so it goes on.

Then-and he is also a Hindu-there is the man who uses neither of these signs, for he is a worshipper of Siva and smears ashes on his forehead, breast and arms, because Siva in a moment of fury burnt up the gods by a flash of wrath from his eye and rubbed their ashes over

himself. His religious tenets cannot be described in a line (nor indeed fairly can any other). All three may be good friends in spite of lawsuits provoked by theological discussions, for, even in religious India, not theology but custom reigns supreme, and if a man keeps his caste rules he is acceptable to his brethren, unless some question rises that touches his dignity, such as who shall take precedence at a big temple tamasha-then the sparks fly, a suit is filed that proceeds from court to court and supplies sweet food for the talk of the countryside for months and maybe years. Of such curious clay are we made. But long before Ragland had fathomed all this, before he had done more than catch a glimpse of the inward ways of the language and its people, he had to travel south to become acquainted with the missionaries there and see their work; for the committee wanted to make him Secretary at Madras, and for that work such a knowledge was required. It was a loss to him, for it handicapped him, as we shall see, in later years; but it was a gain to the mission at large, and wherever he went he was loved; his charm is remembered to this day. "I love the men," was his word concerning those whom afterwards he had to oppose. Only for a little, though; he won them all in the end.

1.07.06. Book 7: 6. On the Surface and Under

6. ON THE SURFACE, AND UNDER THAT first journey-and who ever forgets his first?-was by bullock-cart over the plains. Through country towns, with their huge temples walled like Jerichos, by famous cities, to this day strongholds of idolatry, and through hundreds of villages, strewn as it were anywhere on the wide, flat spaces, he passed, and looked, and wondered. The life of the people lay round him here as it had lain for ages, simple to the innocent eye, to which all is as it shows itself, but a complex tangle to one who knows a little more.

He saw many a pretty picture: women at the well, children playing with pebbles on squares marked out in the dust, field labourers carrying their light ploughs over their shoulders, their oxen stalking on in front, setting the leisurely pace. And on countless verandahs opening to the streets he saw grave old men reading from narrow slips of palm-leaf yellow with age, or meditating with that wonderful independence of circumstances seen to perfection in India.

He saw, too, something of the other side, sorrowful, sinful; but not much, he was too new; and as his ear was not open to the talk of the land, he heard little of the word that filled the bazaars, a word spoken under-breath and passed from village to village with care, for it is unlucky even to speak of such things-talk of the great rounding up of the members of that most powerful of Indian secret societies, just accomplished, or almost accomplished. India must have breathed a great sigh of relief when the last Thug was caught. Of this amazing society Ragland could not have been ignorant; for it had spread its invisible net from the Himalayas to the Cape, and, like every other Englishman, he must have marvelled as the facts emerged and showed it to be religious, root and branch. In the name of the goddess Kali the sacred handkerchief was flung, and from his initiation as a novice, to the day when he strangled his last man, everything a Thug did was done with prayer, and offerings, and regard to the omens. Hindu and Moslem, for once firmly united, participated in one festival, regarded their calling as a divine command, with, as its end, the prevention of the over-peopling of the earth, and for its reward the spoil of the victims. Religiously organized murder and robbery committed by means of peculiar treachery-for in that lay the glory of the game-strikes the Western mind as anomalous, to say the least of it. But, for good or ill, such is the mentality of this land of contrasts and anomalies.

Ragland, however, had other thoughts in mind, and the beautiful wide roads with their ancient trees, and the wastes where nothing grew but scrubby thorn on which flocks of goats fed noisily, said less to him than to most other travellers; to him they were just ways by which he could reach the orderly, English-looking settlements, with church and school and bungalow, whither he was bound. The next months were filled with learning about the Christians, the problems presented by the mass movement then in full flood, and the thousand other matters of his day. The men and women who welcomed him were brave and strong, thought nothing of difficulties, and lived for their people. Those were the days of very valiant deeds in the name of the Lord, and if life was in some ways less painful and perplexing than now, it had its pains, its sacrifices. Hidden among the mountains we came unawares upon one of them, a grave where a young mother and her babies

were put to rest together. With a six months' voyage between India and England, men and women came out practically for life-and death. And now a joy awaited him. Allnutt and he had stood at the door of his rooms at Cambridge holding the plate after the meeting at which Henry Venn spoke so straightly to their hearts. A boat race was on that evening, and Venn had looked longingly at the men crowding the enclosure of King's College, wondering when the day would come that such would offer for a harder race. He did not know then that two picked men, the two who stood on either side of the door as the little company streamed out, had heard and would respond. Both did as the child did in the story of the plate in church: they offered themselves.

"These are the 'Honours' of Cambridge," wrote Henry Venn years later, about nine who had offered. "Let us but get a glimpse of things unseen and eternal, and see the King of Glory establishing His reign through the whole earth, and calling many officers to join His royal camp and court, and we shall feel in what true honour consists."

Now Allnutt was out, and in the Dohnavur bungalow Ragland wrote a long letter home in which is imbedded one of his peculiarly neat little sentences: "I have been one of the happiest men on the face of the earth for the last eight days, enjoying Allnutt. We parted last night, and so unmixedly happy had our intercourse every day been, and so much was I afraid that human frailty would bring about some change before we separated, that the separation was almost a relief." Who has not known that feeling?

"Dohnavur, a beautiful spot in the southwest corner of Tinnevelly, close (that is on mountain scenery scale) to the last high rock of the Ghaut range"; thus Ragland describes the place. The bungalow is a plain little house, built about a hundred years ago of sun-dried bricks; it has been patched up, added to, and generally dealt with, till there is little of the original fabric but the solid mud walls, and the whole compound would be new to that kindly writer if he could come back. But just outside the compound everything is as it was, the same square-towered church which deliberately faces west, with its huddled-up, partly Christian village on the one side, and on the other stark Hinduism then as now. Being an Englishman, he could not be here without climbing the tower, from which are seen in joyful glorious half-circle the ever-varying, ever-constant mountains that are our guard and our delight.

It was early November then, just after the first burst of the monsoon. Down the nearer side of the rock, 4,578 feet of seamed and scarred precipice face, he saw the waterfall known as the "Laughter," not because its beauty makes the beholder laugh for joy, but simply because to the practical Tamil it suggests a tooth, such as laughter reveals. Through the telescope when the sun is upon it you can see the leaping spray. Trees cling round it and bend low to look into its pool. You can almost see their leaves shake as the wind blows through them. Perhaps the wraith falls, seen only after heavy rains, were out. Those lovely, elusive waters stream in three white sashes into a valley blue as the blue of bluebells. Seen from the inside of that blue valley, one can watch them plunge headlong into forest that hangs like moss on the steeps.

It was in the Dohnavur bungalow that the story "Cry a Little for Me " was written.

There was a certain devil-dancer's son who became a Christian, but without entirely breaking free from his old life. He was from home when his son was born, and an astrologer told the mother that the baby would be an unlucky child-in other words, cursed by the Evil Eye, a fearful fate here. So

the poor mother’s spiritual advisers naturally were about to "cause it to depart," and the father upon his return would have been told it had died of fever. But just then he returned, and hearing what was proposed, sought out another astrologer, had the baby’s horoscope taken again, learned that he would have a serious sickness when about four years old, and that if he recovered he would live long and prosper. When the child was about three years old he began to fade. His father one day took him on his knee, and bending fondly over him heard him say, "Father, cry a little for me." The father’s tears were not far to seek and he wept. "Stop," said the child. "That is enough. I am going to my Father’s house." And in a few minutes he was gone.

"Cry a little for me." Many a young child, and with deeper reasons, might have said it. But for this comforting more is needed than tears. From Dohnavur Ragland journeyed by quiet country roads bordered by banyan trees bright with masses of crimson figs, through frontier town and mountain-pass to Travancore, and when at last he reached the palm-fringed backwaters of that beautiful little State, he found himself in fairyland.

There we may leave him to do the work of the time and, that work finished, to return as he had come by bullock-cart to Madras. He passed among the missionaries as a good man and true; but they knew him as little as he knew himself. Sitting in a compact curl-up in his cart, he looked like any other man. There was nothing vague, nothing fantastic about him. And yet he was inwardly seething with the distress of an unanswered question. The word that had moved him so profoundly when Henry Venn pressed it upon his heart on that never-to-be-forgotten day in his rooms in Cambridge, had moved him for another purpose than this that occupied him now. And stirring like wind among the trees of the forest was a whisper in the secret places within him-Yea, and if I be poured out-Did that mean this?

1.07.07. Book 7: 7. Secretary

7. SECRETARY IN those days Secretaryship included the care of a congregation in a quarter of the city then called Black Town. The people to whom he ministered he loved with such affection that, as we shall see later, he proposed giving himself entirely to them. The sermon-making-and he had three to make a week-he did not love. Nor did he love those stiff little semi-social functions held "with a view to promote Christian unity and intercourse among the religious portions of the residents of Madras," which week by week, with ruthless punctuality, looked to him as their natural prey. It was then June 1847, a period politically not unlike the present. Have we ever caught ourselves, as we looked at some old print, wondering if people so quaint felt exactly as we do? The wood-cut in Perowne's Memoir, with its respectable Mission house, and top-hatted gentlemen, exceedingly prim ladies, and stiff clerics walking soberly in the background, feels millenniums remote from us and our ways. Did these decorously buttoned-up hearts beat hot as ours do? Were those so immaculate people really and truly up against life, with the tumble and toss of it, the laughter of it and the tears, its thousand secret shynesses, the tyrannies of temperament, and ignorings of the same? But as history repeats itself, so does the fashion of the soul of man, never twice identical, yet always one. We leave the pictures with their disguising exteriors and, looking in, we understand each other.

See Ragland then and, to take him at his lowest ebb, see him in the soaking heat with a sermon in view. Now he bends over his paper, pen in hand, writes nothing; now sits back in his chair in a kind of despair, mopping his forehead, which drips, being, as the nice would put it, bedewed, and his hand, also plentifully "bedewed," drips too and sticks to the paper. At last he begins again, but writes, in his deep desire, prayer instead:

"Oh, help me to complete the preparation of my sermon: let it be suitable, wisely arranged; let it forcibly set before my people the important truths connected with my subject. Oh, let it not be as it were an essay, the performance of a task, the filling up of the half-hour." Then, for we have anticipated a little, "Let me not regard improvement in Tamil, or other matters of this inferior kind. The souls of my hearers, their real sound profiting, that they may be instructed, excited, comforted, led to Thee indeed through Christ-let me regard this." And afterwards, "Shame covers my face almost every time I leave the pulpit, for my hesitations and poor, meagre, incorrect statements; and such a hubbub does wounded pride stir up in my heart, that I feel I never prize so highly as then the precious blood of sprinkling." Yet again: "Yesterday was the day of the ordination. I preached on the occasion at the cathedral. It was a very, very heavy trial, preparing. I could not divest my mind of the unusual auditors I should have, although convinced of the folly and wickedness of caring for anyone but Him who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks." But he tells of one good day when, just before he had to speak, the hymn "There is a fountain" acted upon him like David's music upon Saul, and words came forward joyfully, and he ended refreshed. And he tells too, with a kind of grateful wonder, of an experience of help when, owing to the heavy pressure of his official duties, he had not time to prepare his sermon at all, and yet had to face his expectant congregation early on Sunday morning. On his knees he waited, the book of Joshua

open before him: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage." He had met the word before as a comfortable word, a cushion not a trumpet-call; now he met it as a command. "And I said to the Lord, with this thought on my mind, 'I will obey Thee, and be strong and of a good courage,' and from that moment I could almost fancy that I felt I had got strength." With his Bible open at Joshua 1, he began to speak to his people. "Whenever faintness of heart returned I put down my head and drank in those words 'Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage.' And they proved each time a powerful cordial. I felt no fear. And now, blessed be the Lord my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and who hath once graciously opened my mouth, and so given me the hope that He will continue to do so." Preaching, however, was the lesser part of his work.

1.07.08. Book 7: 8. I want a Settledness

8. I WANT A SETTLEDNESS HIS chief work concerned the conduct of the various undertakings in the hands of the C.M.S. missionaries of South India, the supervising of accounts-"spiritual arithmetic" his chief, Henry Venn, called it,-writing of business letters, and that oiling of possibly creaky wheels for which such an office affords opportunity. He was keen to keep the human touch alive, and tried to add a personal word to each official letter; and he kept a prayer-roll of his fellow-missionaries' names, and wrote to them on the day set apart for prayer for them. So the routine of business was saturated in the loving and spiritual, and the work never became merely mechanical. But he stabbed himself at times, and, as was the custom in those days, in secret with his pen.

" 'I was dumb and opened not my mouth.' Teach me to restrain my tongue, when ready to break out. At a committee meeting, sometimes I break through all rules of gentlemanly behaviour, interrupting. Often silent and dull; and when speaking, speaking folly." And again with the same sharp truth-telling, "How often I mention the faults of my fellow-helpers, making it appear that I am so far superior to them. How slow am I to praise; and this, not from envy, but from a slowness to perceive excellence. In myself, how quick am I to perceive anything seemingly good, and to hug myself. Dear Noble and his house, how different from me!" In India to be long alone is rarely possible, the desire for privacy is not understood, and from the kindly little child who slips her hand into yours sure of her welcome, just when you were revelling in your good luck, "for I saw you all by your lonely," up through the countless grades to whichever considers itself top, there seems to be a compassionate conspiracy to save you from the blessings of solitude. To shut one's door is not easy-sometimes, as a matter of fact, there is no door to shut.

Ragland found that one way of getting alone in spirit, if not in body-and after all it is the spiritual seclusion that counts-was to sit writing by a table. So when he could not be longer on his knees without attracting observation, he would sit and write on slips of paper the prayer that still lay in his heart.

I have hesitated to copy from these slips. They were private. But so were the cries from David's heart when first they burned out into words. And these words of Ragland discover us to ourselves. By that sure sign we know them ours. These slips of paper are human documents: they belong to the human family. We are not eavesdropping, then, we are only listening with the angels who tarried about him and are never far from anyone of us. And he would not mind. For just as the book born in the deeps of the soul, shyest of all shy things, becomes as it were impersonal when another hand touches it, so it is with these records which, as he was translated straight from the day's work to Paradise, he had no time to destroy. Rather he would wonder and be glad if any single little word could do anything for us. So we draw near, unashamed.

"0 Lord, do I not often render myself worthy of the folly of those that answer a matter before they hear it? Am I not sadly eager to speak? This is very unbecoming, however good that may be which I have to say. Does it not arise from self-conceit, and also from an affectation of appearing more

penetrating than others? Why should I care to speak? I want to have the credit of making the suitable observation. It is not enough for me that the best means be adopted, but I, if possible, must suggest them. Lord, forgive this vanity, this unbecomingness. It is still worse in me than in others, because I have so few good thoughts, so little to say.

Let me never interrupt: also, let me always hear all, before I attempt to form a judgment or give a reply. Wisdom, wisdom, Lord, for Thy glory only, only! Give me power to command myself. 'He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city.' 'A fool hath no delight in understanding but that he may discover himself.' Make me abhor display, as hateful to Thee. It is a sign of a little mind to be anxious to deliver oneself of a new thought. I have Thy glory to seek and not my own. If I were considered the wisest and the most apt of men, would it be anything compared with glorifying Thee truly, by the humble use of the meanest talent?"

Scathing, is it not? Introspective? Perhaps so; but "Let a man examine himself" is not an obsolete command. His quick temper: "How I sin in clamour!" he writes as regards that temptation of the East to shout when dealing with tiresome servants. "Cannot I make them understand when I talk in a low tone, and without impatient gestures?" The tendency to fret over trifles: "Let it be seen that I have not my heart so set on the little things about me as to be ruffled by slight derangements. Oh do not allow me to go on lamenting, but slothful and unimproving. Give me meekness out of Christ's meekness." And just about the same time another man with razor-edged words at his command was writing: "Mr. Ward kept his temper-to compress, bottle up, cork down, and prevent your anger from present furious explosion is to keep your temper." We breathe another air when we walk with Ragland.

Life even in those days, which appear from our distance so placid, could be complicated and perplexing enough, and once Ragland consoled a worried brother by reminding him that our Master "does not give us two things to be done at the same moment; and He only expects what He gives time, talents, and strength for. This thought was most comforting to me, and was the means of keeping me quiet when I had much to think about, and wonderfully helped me in getting through work." The man to whom he was writing owned that work was invading his quiet morning hour. "But this ought not to be; and let us say, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall not be. My brother knows as well or better than I do, what a poor meagre ministry must be the consequence of a minister's neglecting to keep his own vineyard." Did he never know depression apart from that greater emotion, repentance? Saints, martyrs, warriors, was there one who never knew it? There are days in India when one cannot see the hills; not because of mighty clouds and mists-these carry rain, and the very word has a good sound to Indian ears-but because of a faint, thin grey heat-haze that blots out as effectually as any cloud the brave joys of peak and crag and the sweetness of the valleys between. In all souls' weather there are days of heat-haze, when that cheerless sin accidie makes to lay hands upon us. But what can feelings do to facts except for the moment obscure them? The only thing on such days is to look up, and go on, and try not to make it harder for others: "Many, as Thou knowest, are our temptations. Oh let me not increase those of my poor brethren by selfishness, arbitrariness, want of kindness and sympathy." For in all Ragland's habits of thinking he never poses; one never comes across mere covering phraseology; he deals with real things. It is evident that light upon the keeping power of our Lord Jesus Christ came in fuller and fuller measure as he went on, and the thrice blessed words "Able to keep you from falling" became illuminated in his experience; his friends write of a brighter, gladder, more

triumphant faith being born in him. But his sensitiveness towards God-I know not by what other name to call it-never grew less tender, nor his grief for any lapse less fine in edge: "It won’t be always as it has been," he wrote on a day, not of heat-haze but rather of mingled sun and shower. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under my feet shortly. I want a settledness, a settled holy fear of sin and, if it might be, continual upholding of my going in the Lord’s ways, that my feet slip not, never, never."

1.07.09. Book 7: 9. From the House Roof

9. FROM THE HOUSE ROOF

LIFE of the orderliest sort, office, routine, parochial work, committee meetings, "social duties"-and these bored him badly; hear his feeling little word about purposeless callers: "Many visitors. They take up my time and weary my spirits, and I do them no good, nor they me at all in proportion to the expenditure of time."

Suddenly up shot a flame (but the fire had burned below for a long, silent year): this quiet man in his office chair who turned to the world a soul as even as a calm, ("You could time your watch by Ragland," they used to say at Cambridge), was one tingling wild desire to fly it all, to fly to some distant place where there was no office or committee meeting or polite society: "Some place where there is no English protection, and where very great hardships have to be endured, and life, in short, carried in the hand"-to Japan, then closed, the land where they crucified their martyrs as his Lord was crucified. "Should I go," he writes significantly, "it will be without asking any counsel from dear friends." And he likens the longings that possess him to the longings of a lover: "The thought makes my heart burn and makes me indeed ask, Am I in my senses?" But this was only to his mother-friend, to whom he had opened his fugitive hopes. For he was not in the least understood. His curious spiritual restlessness offended people. One can hear the ponderous sentences of perplexed expostulation pounding flat-footed down on him. But there are some now who will understand. Life in India can be as formal, as petty, as remote from the valiant endeavours of a real campaign for Christ and souls as life can be in England. Ragland was being slowly sucked into such a life. He had to break loose somehow, and there were so many to tell him he was making a mistake, and that he should be patient (as if this yielding to the strange, strong current surging through him night and day must needs be impatience), that he did in fact begin to feel he must be very wrong, and four months later, to revert to an early metaphor, we find the poor lawn busy turf-laying: "I am so sorry I said a word on the Japan matter; such a very improbable thing." And again, "I have not a word to say worth saying. To say what I think would be to wish for a quiet following of Christ, without caring for such high things as to be a missionary at the risk of my life (I am sometimes ashamed of myself for what I said), but a steady holy following of Him every day the same." But he still feels the bluster of the storm, and comforts himself by remembering how "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship got safe to shore: clinging to some simple promise, which a high-minded one would think unbeseeming those who have known Christ for years."

He calls the plan "visionary" now, which means the decent turf has covered it from the cold scrutiny of man. Visions are for other eyes. But something had happened within him, a new passion had awakened; the lava still flowed. He would walk up and down his roof in the late evenings while the noisy Hindu worship was going on in the temple court below. He might close his eyes and try to commune with his God, but the coloured lights and flaring torches struck through his eyelids, pricked him back to earth.

Then he would ponder over it, this that pulled him down from heavenly places. Go and stand at that temple-court door and preach to the worshippers? But he had not had time to get the language well. They would not listen. Ask someone else who had Tamil better to come? All were engaged with equally needy people. "But it seems sad to watch them night after night, and to feel that prayer is all that can be done. The pagoda near me, the streets on streets round about it, the very many other pagodas throughout Madras, and the multitudes of streets round about them, have no one with time to attempt anything to deliver the souls in them from the power of Satan. They must go on with their tom-toming and jingling of bells, just as if there were no Christians, to say nothing of missionaries, in the land." The words read almost true to-day. Leave the open roadways of Madras, where churches look across at each other, go to the city proper, and though you know, thank God, there are little lamps burning bravely somewhere among those dark streets, it is possible to walk for hours and never see them. It is possible to pass thousands of people without, so far as you know it, meeting one who has even the look of being about the things of the Father. You may sit in the late evening on the stone steps of a temple and (if you are inconspicuous) look in and see and hear many things not set down in any missionary book. You may penetrate into rooms that do not care to open their small barred windows to the clean light of God; you may see the huge, cynical, sensual creature straight from the holy Benares, stretched full length in his foul den, waiting for the coming of his dupes. But the white angels you do not see; and certain streets in that city are so, that if they did come you feel they would have to pick their steps carefully. The very air of the place still is "as if there were no Christians, to say nothing of missionaries, in the land."

1.07.10. Book 7: 10. The Stairways of Desire

10. THE STAIRWAYS OF DESIRE

ABOUT this time he had the cheer of Allnutt’s company. But Allnutt was ill, and Ragland just then was down-hearted and bothered by the duties and formalities of a formal age, so the weeks were foggy. Still the friends talked and read together, and often, Allnutt says, the clouds were cleared away by the brightness of their kind Lord’s presence. At last they had to part: Allnutt was ordered home.

It was a wild day, heavy seas broke on the shore, and the surf flag went up, to signal that it was dangerous or impossible to cross from the beach to the ship. One poor lady had to give up the attempt, and saw the ship with her baggage sail without her. Ragland stuck to his friend through the excitement of the hour. Could Allnutt go or not? If he could go to the ship at all, so could Ragland; and it was done. Together they pitched across the surf in the little surf-boat. A wave lifted them above the deck, to drop them below the lowest step of the ship’s ladder, while the crew yelled themselves hoarse, as is their pleasing custom. For a moment it seemed as if they must be swallowed up. Then the boat lifted. Allnutt sprang up and on to the ladder. Ragland followed. For a second they stood together, and in that second Ragland said, "Unto Him that loved us"-"Amen!" they both exclaimed; Ragland leaped into the plunging boat, Allnutt climbed the ladder. And the spray sprang up between.

Quite evidently Ragland had been plainly told that he was not suitable for the glories of what was then termed "a work of high emprise." And his sensitive soul shrank into itself: "I have much to thank God for in the little chillings I occasionally meet with from dear Christian friends," is his final gentle summary. The sheer goodness of the man makes him add, "I believe they were frequently creatures of my imagination."

Japan being too great for him, that hope must end, and he turned humbly to the poorer English-speaking folk of the city, the little congregation in Black Town, who cheered his heart by loving him and listening to his words. He was tired of the big mission-house with its comings and goings, the many servants who had to be looked after, the time that had to be spent as it seemed to no profit at all. He would live in an outhouse in the compound, with one servant, two small rooms would suffice for him, there would be the less to look after.

"What if I were to say to the Society, I will be your Secretary for the next twelve months; but then, whether you have found a person or not, I must resign, and I will work in one of the churches of Black Town on my own resources?"

He broke this new madness to the Madras Committee. And who that has seen that discreet Committee sitting round its table but can imagine the scene? The inevitable minute disapproving the suggestion was drawn up and went home. The Home Committee, still more august and surprised, "was averse to the proposed change." As Secretary, it said, he was using his administrative talents for the good of the whole mission. In Black Town he would be laying them up

in a napkin.

It was all perfectly wise and right, as will presently appear; God had something else for His son to do. But for the moment it was a bitter blow: "I clomb the dreadful stairways of desire." It was verily that. "My soul lay stabbed by all the swords of sense." It was that too. The heart that burned with the longings of a lover froze under the cool hand of disappointment, and the man to whom the freedom of the unsown fields, or even the crowded streets of the city, was nothing less than a mystic gate that opened into life indeed, stood outside it sorrowfully:

It will not open! Through the bars I see The glory and the mystery Wind upward ever. And here again we meet and touch. Which of us in the hour of our greatest decision or of our sharpest disappointment looked upon it as a little thing?

1.07.11. Book 7: 11. Never More Again

11. NEVER MORE AGAIN

"IT is the last thing I would allow, murmuring. I hope I do not murmur; often I am about to wish matters were differently arranged, and sometimes am about to try to effect a change, but I generally stop short," thus Ragland as he sat down after his first rebuff and tried to compose his mind. There is no doubt that it was strangely ruffled, and the deeps within him moved rebelliously for a time. "I pray, though I am sorry to say with some difficulty, ‘Let me be a corn of wheat,’ " he had written just before speaking to his three special friends on the Committee, from whom he did not get much encouragement, and now that the two Committees had turned down his second hope, he sets himself valiantly not "to grow weary of his work." This just then included long journeys as Secretary, and he addressed himself to the required preparations. "My secularities begin to be drudgery," he had remarked, a little testily perhaps, some time before, being but human after all; he was knee-deep in them now.

Fusses of packing and getting off, who does not know them? For never by any remote chance does an Indian journey of the sort now required consent to arrange itself without every kind of tangle-up known to the ingenious Oriental mind. At the last hour things-tent-pegs, for example, lanterns, pots and pans, or anything you happen to be unable to do without-"are not." Relatives of indispensables fall ill, marry-if need be, die. Prove that they have frequently died before and you start the fox on a fresh run; you don’t unearth him. If you have engaged bulls, or hope you have, you find prices have risen. It is the marriage season, or a festival is on, or ploughing or sowing or harvesting. And as all these functions occur oftener than once a year, you cannot possibly elude them all at any time. If by any blessed chance you slip through, you are pulled up by "more-than-may-be-borne-sun," or, if that won’t do, "rain that says I cease not." At last he was off and, trundling slowly through his hundreds of miles of bullock-cart travelling, he had time to think, time to remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.

He acquiesced in the Committee’s ruling. The big garden-roller and all the little rollers did their best to roll the lawn back to its wonted respectable smoothness, and being a good lawn, and indeed most properly ashamed of itself, it tried to lend itself to the process. But, as poets are made, so are pioneers:

Making a poet out of a man: The true gods sigh for the cost and the pain, For the reed which grows never more again As a reed with the reeds of the river.

1.07.12. Book 7: 12. Impossible?

12. IMPOSSIBLE?

SOUTH, by way of Arcot, Salem, Dindigal, Madura, that bullock-cart and its attendant bullock-carts, piled with the required baggage and servants, crawled through the stuffy weeks. For a large part of nine months it was Ragland's home, a cramped little vehicle, with a low mat roof, too low to sit up under, too short to stretch out in, for the cart has yet to be evolved that can contain comfortably an Englishman. And as it passed unhastingly through the northern part of the most southern district occupied by the C.M.S., Ragland found himself in a waste land (not that that was new, but a waste land for which as a C.M.S. man he felt responsible), for it was unevangelized. Then, as he saw day after day people who had heard nothing, could hear nothing of Christ, his heart walked after his eyes, and his spirit was greatly set on fire, and his soul was in distress. Why must they go on without hearing? Was there no way by which they could hear?

There was a way; but no one had ever tried it. In all India, so far as we can discover, it had never once been tried. That which has never been tried is usually called "impossible" and dismissed. Ragland was a very modest man, very unsure of himself, diffident to a fault, the opposite of the accepted typical pioneer; but here he was again upon the dreadful stairways of desire; the Impossible called him and would not cease. These people must be reached. Impossible or not, the thing must be attempted. And after long pondering (who that has travelled in a South Indian bullock-cart but can imagine that interrupted pondering?) he put into words thoughts which had grown up in his heart as he communed with his dear Lord, and asked not only to be set free entirely from all other work, but to be given for fellow-workers men to whom the Cross was the attraction.

It could mean nothing less. They must be willing to forgo much then (and now) usually considered essential to the well-being of Englishmen. They must be willing to live among the people, as nearly as possible one with them, camping out month after month, moving from place to place as the leading came, preaching to all within walking distance of each camp, separating as they grew more at home in the work, each Englishman taking an Indian brother, the two to live together as brothers. English home life could not be; it would hinder the work. How could a man give himself to this kind of life, how fulfil its unceasing demands without a care or a distraction if he had a wife and little children whose health and happiness must be his charge?

Only so could the men of that district be reached (the women could only be reached by women, and it fell to the lot of his spiritual successor, Walker of Tinnevelly, to help forward the first women's band). Such a plan must mean sacrifice. There was no easier way.

Sacrifice-when was anything worth attempting accomplished without sacrifice? The very word allured him, enchanted him; but it was a disciplined man and no vague dreamer who calmly set down in black and white what the work demanded and must have if it was to be done as it ought to be done. And as we read we note a change of manner since the day when he burned for far

flights, for martyrdom in Japan. From this distance it is clear as light that the little chillings had had their part to play in the plan of his life; to the ardent man thus chilled those trials of the spirit turned to a tempering of the steel. Burning fires of eager loves, then the plunge into iciest water; thus are God’s sword-blades made.

1.07.13. Book 7: 13. Vaira: Savi

13. VAIRA: SAVI WOULD he be understood? There was an abandon about the idea that caught at the breath and made men wonder, as he had once about himself, if he were in his senses. Would any understand? But his time had come. When the Lord opens who can shut? Very wistfully-for he was a child to the end in simplicity of character and did most truly trust his fellows and longed for their full sympathy-he unfolded in detail the desires of his heart, pleading for men in real sympathy, and with candid earnestness showing how if the plan were to be tried at all it should have a fair trial, which could not be unless men of steadfast purpose were entrusted with carrying it out.

"They will have very many temptations to change their way of working. Perhaps some of the best Christians, nay, even my dear brethren already in Tinnevelly, may prove in this respect temptations. They see not the matter precisely as I do." So the men must be steadfast. And humble. "I am more prolix than I intended to be, but I must still say what I meant by the requirement of peculiar humility. First, the work will be, in appearance at least, more self-denying than that of our South Indian missionaries generally; and therefore only to a very humble man would I entrust it. My hopes would be at an end if those engaged in it gave the least indication that they thought themselves a superior class of missionaries. It would most probably considerably alienate from them our present excellent missionaries in the south; and, what is far worse, would withhold God’s blessing. Another reason for peculiar humility has reference to the intention, which I should be glad if those engaged in this work formed, of not marrying for a few years. I can conceive of no one forming this [resolve] so as not to be ensnared by it, except a person who has so little care for his reputation among men as to be content, on seeing good reasons, simply to say he had been mistaken in imagining he could live a single life."

He had another unusual idea. It was, as regards Indian workers, "not to get money from the Society and then go to the market and buy them," but to write, when he wanted them,

"to the missionaries in their different districts, and press upon them to stir up their people to supply the want; to find the men, and men of a right missionary spirit, who would leave their homes, not for larger salaries nor for batta [extra pay given to men who serve away from home], but for Christ and souls." And he had as new a thought about himself and his English colleagues. He wanted men looking not to any promised support, but cast in what was then a new way upon God. Personally he purposed to resign his Fellowship (which supplied sufficient for his needs) and to take only what might be given to him by his Master through free-will gifts from Christians in India, even though he knew that might be very little, for he could not ask his colleagues to walk in a path he had not trodden himself. He knew, too, that this, his whole thought about working without guaranteed support and breaking new ground in this new way, would be called "romantic," and so he takes the bull by the horns and writes straightly, "St. Paul considered it as wages to work at Corinth without wages, and had a feeling (which in anyone else we should call romantic) about preaching Christ where he had not been named before. . . . Indeed, I am not clear that the feeling commonly called ’romantic’ is not, as much as any other natural feeling, sanctifiable, and

applicable to Christ’s purposes."

He wanted men to whom even this would commend itself, for to do that particular work he required only such men as had burned their boats, every little spar of them, men ready for anything. It was fourteen years before the birth of the China Inland Mission. But Ragland of India and Hudson Taylor of China were blood-brothers. In India we call sound timber vaira, diamond. Poorer stuff is savi. Tap a palmyra palm and you know in a moment which is within. The one makes roofs that for strength and lightness cannot be equalled except by teak, the other fails under strain.

Ragland dared not ask for less than vaira, and he besought those responsible to send only that-an anxious charge for them. (Would to God soul-substance were as quickly discoverable as palms!) But he had no choice. To ask for less was to court defeat. He was up against a power that had never been attacked, much less conquered, a power that knew how to use every element of difficulty and discouragement, climatic and other, in this tremendous warfare. "That supernatural power standing behind the national gods," as Delitzsch has it, in commenting upon the prince of the kingdom of Persia who was able to withstand even an angel of God for three full weeks, is no myth. The princes of the many kingdoms of India, the particular prince of this particular and as yet unchallenged territory, who may measure his force? Of what use would savi be in the stress of life? He must have men whose hearts were fixed To defy power that seems omnipotent, To love and bear, to hope till hope creates From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent:

Yes, he must have vaira, men with no weak strain in them, no reservations, and no " buts."

Quiet waiting months followed upon the letter-writing. He had once more been judged worthy to anticipate, as Hannington put it years afterwards, but much had to happen before things could ripen for action. The Committees of Madras and London had to be satisfied. This took time, for he would not hurry. He had learned to wait. He kept back his letter to Mr. Venn for a month, lest he should run before his Lord. And when the letter finally went, with what earnestness he held himself in stillness before God, praying, praying for the right men: Searcher of souls, send vaira. Was it all foolishness? Did he ask for too much? Has the Cross ceased to attract? Surely each generation as it rises thrusts forth some men and women whose hearts bound forward at the very thought of suffering for Christ crucified. The true soldiers among those who offer, those who have it in them to be warriors to the end, ask for no creamy smoothness, no sham battle-fields. They want the real thing. And the call finds them, thrills through them. They rise and obey, and a joy that passes the joy of the morning lightens upon them and abides.

1.07.14. Book 7: 14. Dumb, Because Thou Didst It

14. DUMB, BECAUSE THOU DIDST IT

SLOWLY, slowly the long weeks passed. Raymon Lull in his great hour saw Calvary, bleeding outstretched hands, bleeding feet, eyes that followed and pierced, and from that vision was born a deathless word, "He that loves not lives not; he that lives by the Life cannot die." Zinzendorf when his moment came stood by an Ecce Homo, "I suffered this for thee: what hast thou done for Me?" was the question scored upon his heart, so that his motto AEternitate henceforth expressed him. No vision, no picture, has part in Ragland's story; but through those weeks of waiting his very being was laid upon the altar of God, his exceeding joy, and the Lord whom he loved turned to ashes his burnt sacrifice. For his offer was accepted. The good old Bishop of Madras felt the matter so far out of his reach for the pure devotion in it that he could only write, "God speed it." So said the two Committees, so said everyone whose word had weight. He was persuaded not to resign his Fellowship, and the men to be sent to him were to be the care of the C.M.S. With this one exception all his plans were commended, and by Christmas Eve, 1851, the hundred hindrances whose forbidding faces all who have attempted even the least of unattempted things know so well, were got over or under or round. The door swung open. . . then slammed shut. A sudden and serious haemorrhage from the lung seemed to end all. But it was no accident. It was the working out of the law of pains for the pioneer; was ever one who was not tested to the uttermost, beset behind and before, crushed and milled till nothing was left for the eye of man to find beauty in, or any power? And so it is that when the work is accomplished the excellency of the power is shown and known to be of God and not of us. The thing is done. Who did it? Not this poor man, how could he? Who, then, but the Lord, Karia Kartar, Doer of things? But for the moment on that strange day, like a loving child struck sharply by the hand it trusts, so was that stricken heart, and as the child speaks not a word, only tries hard to keep the tears back, so it was now: "Dumb, because Thou didst it."

Didst it, but how? Not in the sense of giving the distress of disease. But in the sense of allowing yet another battle-field to be spread out before His warrior, that strength, being perfected in weakness, should triumph gloriously.

"Put forth Thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand." And yet was ever Job, the real Job, held closer in the hand of his God than when that alien hand touched his bone and his flesh? But all down the ages the Lord God Omnipotent has turned the tremendous attack of His foe ("An enemy hath done this") into magnificent gain. In suffering, more than conquerors; see them, the Lord's peculiar treasure, by whom He sits watching as the goldsmith of the East by his gold in the red fire.

Consciously or unconsciously, Ragland must have thought along these lines, for he conquered by the grace of his God. But for the moment he was stricken hard, "Satan's angel dealing blow after blow." So for awhile he was dumb.

1.07.15. Book 7: 15. Into These God Infused a Willingness

15. INTO THESE GOD INFUSED A WILLINGNESS BUT he was not dumb to his God. Dumb to those who might have misunderstood and thought ill of his good Master, but never dumb to Him.

I beseech Thee, 0 Lord, let me have understanding. For it was not in my mind to be curious of the high things, but of such as pass us daily, namely, wherefore. . . and for what cause? . . . and why? Of these things have I asked.

Once, and for all ages, the story of days such as these now set for Ragland has been written in full. Esdras the earnest, the sincere, found at first no rest in the answer given. "I gathered you together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," the God who so expressed His love, who had called His children "as a father his sons, as a mother her daughters, as a nurse her young babes," He to allow them to be taken captive by the King of the Persians? "The thoughts of my heart were very grievous unto me, and I began to talk to the Most High again. And said, 0 Lord . . . why?" And the burden on Ragland's heart was just this that presses on ours so often: why, when God's will is the salvation of these for whom Christ died, should there be these perplexing reversals of an apparent purpose? Wherefore this? And for what cause that? And why this unexpected, this bewildering defeat?

Sitting on deck wrapped in rugs as his ship passed out of the warm tropic seas into the keen winds of early Spring, Ragland was to all seeming a man broken; but it was then he entered as never before into the private places of peace. He, Ragland, buffeted back at the very hour of achievement, was not to be bewildered, was not to give in. There were purposes of love laid up for these peoples: "in the end the love that I have promised." He was not out of his dear Lord's will as he sought to renew his strength and return to them.

Thus he was loosed from all his fears, and in the multitude of the sorrows that he had in his heart, the comforts of God refreshed his soul and made him vigorous with spiritual purpose. But it was a very sick man who landed in England in the good month of roses, and made his way slowly with his family to the south of Hampshire. Egypt or Nice was ordered, but he wanted his own country, and the doctor consented on condition he went south at once if he got worse. The various splendours of the sea, those four months round by the Cape, had done much for him, but no one believed he would ever return to India.

Just as he arrived home the two young Cambridge men, R. R. Meadows and David Fenn, who had answered to his call, were about to sail for Madras. He saw them, and his heart went out to them, went out with them indeed as they sailed away, leaving him, as it seemed, wrecked on the shore.

"There shall be no Alps," Napoleon said, and the road across the Simplon was constructed through a district formerly almost inaccessible. "Impossible," Napoleon said, "is a word only to be found in the dictionary of fools." Napoleon and Ragland-the two names do not fraternize. Who can hear Ragland talking in that crude fashion about fools? But he had no more idea of giving in than Napoleon had. He calmly kept the required exercises for his B.D. and settled down to Tamil study.

Some years later, while in camp, he made himself a plan by which he covered the Tamil Bible once a year, the New Testament three times, the Gospel of St. John four times and the Psalms twice. No one could say he had not the use of his Tamil sword; but it was long before he got the freedom of the language. Idiomatic colloquial is a matter of time and opportunity.

One gain was his at home. He got into touch with keen men and started a Prayer meeting at Cambridge: "Oh that they [meetings for prayer] were multiplied through the land! It is for want of roots such as these to suck in grace from Him that is full of grace, that the Church, and missions especially, languish."

It is not difficult to live through those months of waiting with Ragland while his people tried to show him that he could not go. It was useless:

He saw a hand they could not see That beckoned him away, He heard a voice they could not hear That would not let him stay.

"Break through, 0 Lord, and show Thyself. Oh, speak aloud that they may hear!" Have we not cried the words in the loneliest hour of our lives? And it seemed as if no answer came. We had to go on alone. But if by the grace of the Lord we were held on in obedience, did not the day come when they too saw and heard and were satisfied? In the autumn of ’53, knowing he was needed there and being able to meet his own charges, Ragland sailed for India. To be ill in India can never be easy. It is a land to live for, and (most joyfully) to die in, but it is not a land to be ill in, unless one can command seclusion and quiet, and few missionaries can do that. To return thus in weak health meant suffering. That mattered nothing to him. He believed that it should not be counted a strange thing but a natural to suffer in the service of the Lord.

It is not Christ only that must suffer, he said. The work of bringing souls to glory is one which Christ shares with us, and He calls us now to share with Him, and to be content to share with Him, some part at least of His self-denial and suffering, and not only content, but ready, forward-"I had almost said, be ambitious to suffer." The words did not break forth like froth upon the tumbling waters of speech. They occur in a sermon preached at Cambridge shortly before he sailed, and must have been weighed and measured and steeped in prayer before they were written down.

Continuing earnestly, he spoke of Ridley and Latimer and the less-known John Bradford, who wrote from prison facing painful death, " Oh what is honour here but baubles? What is glory in this world but shame? Why art thou afraid to carry Christ’s cross? Wilt thou come into His kingdom, and not drink of His cup?"; and again in the very fire turned to one who suffered with him saying, "Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall have a happy supper with the Lord this night." "Into these, three hundred years ago, God infused a willingness to become as corn of wheat," he said, and then, "If it had not been for a long chain of persecution and of shame and of humiliations and of labours and of self-denials and of prayers with strong crying and tears, we should not have the Gospel; and we cannot expect in any other way than by adding one link to that chain to have the glory of handing it down to others. If we refuse to be corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying; if we will neither sacrifice prospects, nor risk character and property and health; nor, when called, relinquish home and break family ties, for Christ’s sake and His Gospel,’ then even supposing that we do not thereby prove that we have not the root of the matter in us, that we have nothing at all to do with Christ, we shall abide alone." So he returned to India to live five glorious

years and die a glorious death. I write in the speech of the angels, not in man’s. Granted he played dice with his life, was it not worth while? God forbid that we should be too careful of our lives, or of what means so immeasurably more, the lives of our beloved.

1.07.16. Book 7: 16. The New Adventure

16. THE NEW ADVENTURE

IT was a shining December day when R. R. Meadows and David Fenn, who had spent the year in Tamil study, took a surf-boat and crossed to the ship to welcome their leader back.

Out of the dancing boat they clambered eagerly, were up on deck in a moment, and all three clasped hands in a most delightful excitement. Then Ragland led the way to his cabin, and life together began with prayer that knit heart to heart. Still together, they crossed the surf, and thereafter through all the surfy tossing of this difficult life those two were what he believed they would be to him when he looked into their eyes in his cabin that day. "Your greatest trial may be your fellow-missionaries," said a wise old Chinese missionary to the writer years ago. Yes, or your greatest joys.

"I could hardly have chosen two such men to my mind, had I had the whole Church to choose from," thus Ragland nine days later. And all in the highest spirits, ("Too high spirits, perhaps" was his cautious word; but no, blessed be gaiety), they bought tents, ponies, and the miscellaneous impedimenta of camp life, and before the stars had paled in the sky of that Wednesday morning, January 18, 1854, they set forth on their joyful adventure. The season was the best in the year for a new adventure. (And, difficult as it is to keep it in mind in a day when everywhere Ragland's thought has been accepted and developed, let it be remembered that it was nothing less.) The mighty rains of the north-east monsoon had cooled the land that opened before them, enchanting in its new green dress. Before them, too, lay the lure of the unknown, and each day beckoned through wonderful and lovely changes; starlight, for they rose long before starset; dawn, seen over vast spaces through air like sparkling crystal; sunlight, so lavish, so golden to eyes toned to northern grey that at first, "Oh what a beautiful day!" is the involuntary exclamation, and the amused smile of the accustomed who would prefer an English day strikes curiously; sunset and after-glow, dreams of wonder these, when the after-glow falls on the red soil of the South, kindling the dust to rubies. And the nights; who can forget the first nights in the East? There is the night of velvet depths when the stars burn in ordered distances, one beyond the other for ever and for ever. And there is the night when the sky, lit with a little moon, is asleep in gauzy blue and the constellations appear in bright groups, and again there are full-moon nights, when every colour of the earth shows clear (only most strangely holy) and you feel it ungrateful to go to sleep while the very trees stand awake and conscious and worshipful.

All this our three passed through and apprehended before the blinding heat of later months turned day into one long gridiron, with briefest respites at either end, and night herself ached with the hot men tossing on hot camp-cots. Slowly they journeyed through the perfect hours each morning, facing south all the time, led night by night by the Cross in the sky that sets far south-west over the sea. And as he travelled, Ragland found life he thought lost. On these hills, towards the end of the hot weather, forest fires seem to spring from the ground. Night after night, till the foresters get it under, those in the Plains below see an awful but brilliant pageant. Great snakes of fire coil round

the crags, lick up the grassy summits, swing across the ravines and leap upon the forest trees, which then can be seen to stand like mighty candles alight. No one who loves the forest can endure that sight. But come up a few months later, and you gaze astonished. Sheets of burnt and rain-washed bamboo lie like shining yellow cornfields thrown on the steep slopes. The rounded hilltops are emeralds. The sunlight picks out the crimson and orange colours of young shoots of jungle trees, and they are jewels alive. There it is, found again, life we thought lost.

1.07.17. Book 7: 17. Their First Camp

17. THEIR FIRST CAMP

FOUR hundred miles on foot and horseback and they reached their first camp in their own proper battle-ground. When Ragland writes his journal that first evening, English words do not feel enough, so he writes in Hebrew, "And he said, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The district they had entered now was the northern part of that tract of country about the size of Yorkshire, known by a silly mispronunciation of three sensible Tamil words connoting to the Tamil ear three desirables, religion, food, protection: Tinnevelly, poor little tin-pot sounding word for Tiru-nel-veli, It is a fair sample of the way we maul any unfortunate "foreign" word that falls into our hands.

This, then, to be called for the sake of peace North Tinnevelly, covers (or covered, for the district is otherwise divided now) some fourteen thousand square miles, and contained two hundred and seventy thousand people scattered in nearly fourteen thousand country towns, villages, hamlets; numbers that sound as nothing to one accustomed to think in millions; but two hundred and seventy thousand is a number neither one man nor ten can reach effectively. The people in this one plain, one out of India’s myriad similar plains, were unreached. It matters not, says the Tamil proverb, whether the water above your head be an inch or a fathom, an inch of water can drown. The country is featureless, flat and for the most part given up to cotton and the coarser kinds of grain. Cotton soil is black, drying to grey. It does not offer anything for the afterglow to turn to carpets of gems. It is eminently prosaic and useful. But all plains have a beauty of their own; wide spaces, edged with blue mountains, patches of bright green where the young grain grows, or miles of dull gold when it is ripening; a long, green, snaky line where a road moves on, its beaten, dusty grey shaded by trees planted by the virtuous; villages, made of the same grey clay-this is North Tinnevelly. And here was the town, Sri-vilaiputhur, with its mountains in the background, and its famous temple, and sheet of temple water, and its twenty-two thousand Hindus; nothing, after all, was worth a thought but how best to bring to them the good news of Christ.

One week of eager work, and Ragland sat by Fenn’s camp-cot in speechless anxiety. Fenn had fever which would not yield. Ragland was alone with him, as Meadows had had to go to the hills, another month’s journey. Who that has nursed a beloved comrade through an unknown illness, earnestly searching for guidance in books, baffled by symptoms not described or not recognized, with a heart racked by fears of making a mistake, but will sympathize with him? At last, to reach a doctor a dreadful journey north had to be undertaken. A typhus patient in a bullock bandy in the blazing sun of February-there are some experiences better left undescribed.

Fifteen long months were to trail past before the comrades met again. Those who judged the rightness of an action by its immediate result had doubtless much to say. As leader, the only one who could be blamed when things went wrong, Ragland drank of a bitter cup. "Lord, is it I? Who am I that I should be here at all? And yet, hast Thou not sent me? Strengthen me once again."

1.07.18. Book 7: 18. Three Frogs and a Corn of Wheat

18. THREE FROGS AND A CORN OF WHEAT AND now, having met again, they were so joyful that they set others singing. All over the fields and in the villages a little song in Tamil ran, set to an adaptation of "Men of Harlech," and Ragland was as pleased as a boy over the small triumph of writing down the notes without an instrument, notes proved correct when at last he had the chance to try them on a decrepit piano. "I do not know when I have had so much enjoyment of life," he wrote in the freshness of his happiness. And this happiness, so evidently not caused by circumstances but by something invisible and abiding, affected the people among whom they camped; for it impinged upon an existence bounded for the most part by fear pushed far into the background of consciousness, but always there, in spite of periods of gay excitement. And except the mysterious aloofness of asceticism, nothing is so attractive in India as supernaturally sustained happiness. So there were constantly people about the tent door during the hot hours of the day and again in the evening. Sometimes they really wanted help and got it; but sometimes they talked for talk’s sake. One morning to the tent soon after breakfast came a young man who seemed in no need of teaching. So Ragland said to him, "You know so much about Christ and the way of salvation, how is it you are not yourself a believer?"

"I am," said the young man. "But are you baptized?"

"No, a man is not a Christian and safe merely because he is baptized."

"Certainly not," Ragland agreed, and he instanced the thief on the Cross. "But, then, if a man when he might be baptized will not be, I cannot believe in the man’s salvation." And he turned to Matthew 10:1-42, '"Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in heaven.’ Is it not because you are afraid of confessing Christ?"

"No," said the other. "Read St. Mark 13:20. ‘Except the Lord had shortened those days-’ "

"But what has that to do with baptism?" asked Ragland, mystified.

"Read on."

Ragland did so. "And false Christs and false prophets shall rise."

"Yes," said the young man, sure he had made his point. "There is my reason for not being baptized. Christ says there shall be false prophets. How do I know when I go to a missionary to be baptized whether he is a false or a true one, and so whether his baptism will profit me or not?" To which Ragland, using the way of the East, replied, "There is a loaf, no doubt, that has poison in it. Must I therefore never eat bread?" And he explained that it is not the baptism or the character of the baptizer that is of so much importance, but the confessing of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Will you walk down the village street with me," he asked, "and confess yourself a believer?" And the young man said in effect, "No, thanks." Then Ragland, in his kind, straight way, looked his questioner in the eyes, "Your own soul’s salvation, that is the important matter; and it is my belief"-and he said this very gently, as well as very seriously-"that you are not baptized simply because you are

ashamed of Christ."

Thus in poor, flimsy coverings do souls screen themselves to this day; for the latest question asked us by a would-be enquirer was this, "Of what wood was the Cross made? If you cannot tell me that, of what profit is all else that you can tell me?" And the curious thing was that he believed he had said something very wise.

Once Ragland found himself alone among a crowd of scoffers. Imagine him, the polished gentleman (his courtly manners are remembered still), standing earnest but rather helpless in the midst of a delighted rabble who mimicked him, catechized him about his pay and relations, and altogether made hay of him, he the while serving up to them that which he had so laboriously acquired in many an arduous hour over intricate print.

"Bring your du-bashi!" (two-language man, interpreter), they shouted at last, in full chorus, and as his servant did as a matter of fact help him out of difficulties in the kind way servants do, his biographer, thus innocently trapped, illuminates the page with a footnote, "i.e., to come attended by a servant if he would command respect." This stage was passed, of course; but, though the complicated niceties of the Tamil written language were mastered in a scholarly way, Tamil spoken never became easy; he had begun it too late and had been too much interrupted. His fellow-workers were younger and got on well. He toiled long. One year, in the rainy season, he got a rustic to come to him every morning and patiently extracted words from him. These he would look up later and learn, quoting the verse about the slothful man not roasting what he took in hunting. Sometimes he made the most comical slips. Which of us has not? And these are remembered because of the humble way he used to be sorry when he got upset over the result. A slight change makes a towel into a frog, and one day he sent his servant in a hurry to get a towel. The boy looked blank, searched long, and at last appeared with a frog. Ragland, amazed, repeated his order, and the boy vanished, to reappear after a still longer interval with a bigger frog.

Then Ragland-it was hot and he was very tired-got properly cross, "I told you FROG," he exclaimed, and a third was added to his collection. At last he knew what he had done, and as he said about his sermons, shame covered his face. He laid his hand on the boy’s shoulder and apologized. He was so sorry that the boy was embarrassed. "We did not know what to do," said the old man who told me the story, and the incident was never forgotten, not because of the mistake, but because of the humility. "In him is a great gentleness; he is fine gold," said the servants one to another, and in a land where gentleness counts for more than eloquence he was loved for it.

It was not a virtue that came of itself, like the bloom on the peach. "Do I well to be angry?" he wrote once in an hour of distress. "Oh no, 0 my God, I pray Thee to forgive me for Thy dear Son’s sake. And teach me what to do about the various matters all so little in themselves which disturb me." The difficulty about the language caused a trial of spirit which perhaps only a missionary can appreciate; especially he felt it when one whom he had been addressing in flawless Tamil turned from him with that vague look of incomprehension which is usually followed by a gesture of complete bewilderment: "To me English is unknown!" And, as his wont is, he puts his trouble into plain words of pitiless honesty on one of those slips of paper which served to shield his privacy:

"Know how to be abased: Tamil: not distressed when I hear (Fenn) speak so well, so easily understood, and understanding so well; when persons turn away from me, not understanding me; when I cannot get out what I have to say; or when (Meadows) speaks what is orderly, interesting, gets attention. Let me thank Thee from my heart for them, be content, acknowledge Thy goodness. Not too anxious to make excuse for myself; not too fond of speaking of my deficiency; not trying to show off; not holding back out of a sinful shame or sloth. Two talents gained 'Well done.' What a little matter deficiency is if I am only poor in spirit."

Here is another of these heart entries, the very pith of prayer: "Not loving to have the pre-eminence, to be called h.d. (highly devoted, as a missionary magazine had called him); impatient of being contradicted; disliking to have my faults pointed out in conduct, in spirit, in Tamil.

"Not vexed because as a missionary I am perhaps despised; not anxious to be thought anything more; not angry with any persons who seem to despise me."

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too, But single men in barracks, most remarkable like you.

Imagination refuses such a remark from such lips; but fitted into tidier words, Ragland would certainly have set his seal to them. Here we have him most humanly tempted to fret about the silly little mosquito stings of life that do so persistently beset us. That particular mosquito, the temptation to resent the foolish judgments of man, seems too small to write about, and yet able men of our day have known what it is to feel its sharp, minute irritation, and in those days even the C.M.S. Committee could remark after a Cambridge graduate who had offered to them had left the room, "A man with so many accomplishments should go out as a chaplain, not as a missionary," and as a chaplain he went out. So Venn, ashamed, told, and so the C.M.S. history reports. Its sting, then, must have been uncomfortably venomous at times. For Ragland found that it was one thing to be Fellow of his College (Senior Fellow he was soon to become, and had the option of being preferred to any living that fell vacant in the Society's gift), and quite another to be "only a missionary," especially only an evangelist: ("Poor old Ragland! A back number, you know.") Among the ordinary he passed as ordinary. It was part of the dying of the corn of wheat:

Dead to the world and its applause, To all the customs, fashions, laws, Of those that hate the humbling Cross. So dead that no desire may rise To appear good, or great, or wise In any but my Saviour's eyes.

Stern words, and "narrow." Perhaps so; but they show the man of this book.

1.07.19. Book 7: 19. A Fragment from the Day

19. A FRAGMENT FROM THE DAY

THERE are some men whose influence is like dawn on mountain crags, that, passing over them, brings into swift beauty shapes and colours that slept before. Ragland was such a man. And the joy of dawn was his; his life had its nights, but never night that has no dawn, and there is the feel of the morning in the record of those years on the plains with Meadows and Fenn and the Indian brothers he loved so much.

"It is not beyond the power of His grace to keep us, all three of us, in the most perfect concord and love; and to render us continual helpers of each other’s peace and joy and strength and fruitfulness," he had written to the two before he joined them in India. And passing guests could not help noticing the uncommon love that bound the band together. They were one’d.

"Had we only such men everywhere we should have no divisions among us; they would be impossible," wrote a friend, and he tells how Ragland delighted in the good work of the others, their free Tamil, readiness in answer (as compared with his own difficulty in the language, so surely his prayer had been splendidly answered) and how he, the acknowledged leader, was servant of all. And the keen, dark eyes that watched the band every day and from all sides saw what pleased them well. The Tamil language scintillates with sayings about love and friendship. If love be, the impossible becomes possible. True friends are as flower and its scent, inseparable; as soul and body, as nail and flesh. They have caustic proverbs too, on the follies of silly friendships, and the perils of too close an intimacy where perfect affinity is not; never were clearer eyes than theirs. But they were satisfied now. These men lived as they talked. They were men of love.

It is not difficult for one who knows South India to walk through their day with them. There was the early start, always before star-set, because only so can the villagers be reached before they leave home for their fields. So to get quiet alone it was needful to be up about three (2.45 was the usual rising hour during the journey south), and those of us who have had such an itinerating band staying with us well remember the sound of the little alarm clocks going off at three. Then came a cup of tea, and the regulation slices of toast, and plantains, and then at half-past four the start on foot or in bullock-carts or on ponies for the appointed villages. But one thing that matters has been missed. "In the morning, before setting out to preach, the brethren kneel together to ask for thoughts, words, fluency, skill, audiences not blasphemous or indifferent." So wrote one of those short-time guests.

Sunrise over the wide spaces of this land is always a wonder; but very soon to those out preaching the beauty seems to race into something much less welcome, even pitiless, searching glare, and it is extraordinary how quickly this sun-glare sucks an Englishman’s strength; he may go on working, but the vigour in him is drained dry. Then, too, the people are engaged in their own affairs and, though there are always some who seem to have nothing to do, not a great deal can be effected out of doors after the morning has well set in. So by half-past ten the camp is at breakfast, the

curry and rice of the country; then comes rest, and, if there is energy for it, study and talk with people who come to the tent, till the afternoon begins to think of cooling; then tea and off again, and back for supper at sunset. And all the time, in and out of the day, winds that curiously woven, many-coloured thread of Hindu life; a thread dyed in no two parts of its long length alike, and yet always one, and indivisible. Nothing in our superficial religious divisions can approach the varieties of creed that obtain in this land, where two Hindus walking together in amity can truthfully describe each other as fundamentally opposite in faith. And now, how can one best show a fragment of Ragland's day to the reader who does not know India? Generalities mislead, so does too minute a morsel from the mosaic. And yet perhaps one half-hour from Ragland's certainly usual morning may show this India of our tale as clearly as anything can, and India at her best.

Morning by morning as the men walked through the open country, just before sunrise, in the twilight deified as one of the twin sons of the sky, the evening twilight being the other twin, they came upon the worship of the caste-men, going on at that hour all over India. When first you come upon this worship, which is always performed by any convenient water, stream or pond, you withdraw hastily, feeling intrusive; but you soon learn that you might as well be a crow, for all the notice the worshipper takes of you; you are not in the least disturbing. So you get into the way of drawing near, and watching with a kind of longing, loving sympathy, and this is what you see and what Ragland saw uncounted numbers of times. A man sitting in a crouching position by the shallow water, murmuring an invocation to the Ganges, which for the moment this small water personates. He has bathed and is now beginning his ceremonies. And first he marks his forehead (and if he be a worshipper of Siva his breast and arms) with the signs which show not only his sect but his particular cult of that sect, and then he ties his long wisp of hair into a tight knot lest a stray hair, now regarded as unclean, should fall into the water.

Follows the sipping of water, poured from the right hand shaped like a cup into the mouth. This is for interior purification. He invokes his god as he sips, and thus cleansed from (ceremonial) impurity begins his worship proper. At first it is difficult to understand and follow the movements in the ritual called "The Regulation of the Breath." But it is never varied, and gradually becomes clear. The right nostril is pressed with the thumb, and the breath expelled through the left. Then the order is reversed. This movement is repeated with the forefinger. Then both thumb and forefinger are used, and the breath held. This fixes the wandering thoughts, and prepares the mind for prayer.

Follows that part of the ritual about which so much has been written, the repetition of the sacred Syllable OM. (A. U. M., Agni, Vayu, Mitra. Fire, Wind, Sun; or Agni, Fire, Varuna, watery atmosphere, investing sky, and Marut, Wind.) Set in the blue sea at the Cape is a little old grey temple. From that temple, up through the plains of this mighty land, over the snow mountains, through Tibet to the Chinese frontiers, wherever Hindus or Buddhists be, that same Syllable rises from myriads and myriads this day, and will this night. It is a fact that lays hold upon the imagination, and among all the many byways of Indian knowledge none is more alluring than that which leads to the Aryan uplands where first that Syllable was created. After the repetition there is a pause.

I do not know anything more heart-moving than what follows. Turning to the eastern sky the man says solemnly;

"Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the Vivifying Sun, may he enlighten our understanding."

It is the prayer that has risen from countless hearts through the dawns of three thousand years. "If the light of a thousand suns were to burst forth at once in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that mighty One." This (a line from the Bhagavad-Gita) is the truth at the heart of the ceremony. Blessed be the word that says, "The Being, whom, without knowing Him, you revere, Him I now proclaim to you." For among those myriads did not some revere? And now the second part of the ritual is about to begin. First comes that daily self-baptism, the sprinkling of water on the head, which accompanies a prayer for vigour and strength. There is one great line in this prayer: "We come to you (the waters) for cleansing from all guilt." And another is a petition to be preserved from sin and forgiven for it. Yet another prayer, called the Sin-annihilation, follows, which prayer, repeated three times, is believed to remove all sin. But sin, as it is generally understood in India, is not what we mean by the word. At this point for a moment it is as if creation held her breath and watched. Colours kindle and spread, clouds that see the advancing sun flame suddenly, and he is here. Then, just as the keen, curved, flashing line appears above the horizon, there is a sparkle of water as the worshipper throws it three times into the air towards the east, an act of homage to the eternal miracle of day. The next part of his worship is less appealing to the Western mind; it is called the Imposition of Fingers, and stands upon a belief that each part and organ of the body is pervaded by a separate essence of some divinity, the highest in order occupying the head. Still, nothing that concerns a fellow-man can be void of interest to his fellow, and so one watches the complicated ceremonial of the touching of various parts of the body with the fingers of the right hand, regarded as sacred to Vishnu, and listens to the great prayer to the sun again, and notes the hidden hand (for the act must not be seen) fumbling at the rosary keeping count of the 108 repetitions of that same prayer. As the man rises, stands facing the sun that streams in great waves of light to him, he uses the old, old name Daniel must have heard many a time, Mitra, the Mitra of Persian tales and Vedic hymns; he chants an invocation to him, and then, "Hail, brilliant Dawns," an invocation to the dawns of all time, and looking hack over his own short day, he names his forbears, and once more invoking the God of gods, "May the one Supreme Lord of the universe be pleased with this my morning Service," he ends by sipping water for the cleansing for the inward man. Can we ever grow accustomed to such a scene? The sunlight is shining over the earth, the little stream where it all happened, or the poor little pond if such it were, is like molten gold, and the whole world sings. And the man? India has her spiritual men, here and there one finds them. God has not left Himself without witnesses among this people. There are those who "touch the fringes of the outer stars." But let no one be deceived by the beauty and, in parts, the simple dignity of worship such as this. Among the sins explicitly mentioned in the prayer for forgiveness and preservation is one which is deified now and has been for very many centuries. It is round the temples, if anywhere in the land, that the old Dragon swings the scaly horror of his folded tail-a line that says all that need be said. The man who has just chanted words which, sincerely meant, would have led him straight to God, smiles indulgently at you as at one hardly accountable when you try to meet him on the ground of this prayer. And if hard pressed, he would say as a young ascetic who went through the ritual to-day said, when faced with the sin for which he had asked forgiveness but which he had not the least intention of forsaking, "Sin, what is sin? A word, a breath, mere maya, delusion." And he stretched himself, touching himself delicately with his right hand, "How can I sin, I not being I, but Brahma?"

Here, then, is a fragment of Ragland’s day. With such men he talked lovingly, his wise mind meeting them in sympathy; for no modern impression is more unjust than that which imagines the "old" missionary as inevitably ignorant and unsympathetic; but then, as now, very few of these to whom one might expect the appeal to come with most alluring force could bring themselves to believe that they needed anything. And with the uninstructed peasant whose foot would pollute the street where the other lived and whose horizon is bounded by the terrible horror of demons, he pleaded too, and here an invincible ignorance barred the way. But sometimes the peasant believed and sometimes so did the scholar: the fruit was all hand-picked, and never made much show; for in this part of India there is very little true conversion in the mass, and Ragland was not out to pile numbers in reports, but to win souls for Jesus Christ. The day closed, the guest quoted before tells us, as we should have expected it would. "Can He fail to bless it who commanded it and encouraged us so to work? Will He not bless what has been done in Him and for Him? He does bless it; refreshes jaded spirits; gives energy, perseverance, hopefulness."

1.07.20. Book 7: 20. Cholera

20. CHOLERA

"GOD who has the almighty power sleeps. The Lord Bishop and the Committee have shut up their eyes. The Executive members have lost their consciousness. The Church of Christ at Middletown is daily falling down dead." This candid paragraph concerning a place in the South is from a letter received by the Bishop of Madras in 1893. Lest things should be thus, when converts began to come out in connection with Ragland’s work, and also for the sake of the poor relapsed Christians who were to be found scattered on the Plain, and whom the band had influenced for good, a fine man, C. Every, came out and was welcomed with thanksgiving.

Immediately-a missionary will understand what this meant-Every had to be taken for another need, and when at last he was retrieved it was a relief, for he was getting Tamil well, and had just reached the place where it is possible really, not merely nominally, to lift burdens-"likely to be a very great help and comfort to us," wrote Ragland with a thankful heart. Eleven months later cholera smote him. Once again, as when Fenn went down with typhus, Ragland was alone, and he had never nursed cholera. Swiftly the chill of death came on. Ragland wrapped him in his railway rug, but nothing could help him. Wrapped in that rug he was laid to sleep by the little house then being built where they had hoped to spend the approaching wet season together.

"What a bright holy course he has run, never trifling. The Lord seems to take the best first," and tests to the uttermost those He leaves behind. But help came, another was found to fill the gap, another of choice spiritBarenbrock. Seven months later he too fell, struck down by that same cholera. And as they dug his grave by Every’s, it seemed as if before the next sun set they would have to dig one by his side for Fenn.

1.07.21. Book 7: 21. It is a Serious Task

21. IT IS A SERIOUS TASK

FENN recovered and the Band pulled itself together and fought through that sinking of the spirits which makes us feel as if the bottom of things had been knocked out and nothing much mattered any more. Straight through the hot weather now upon them they worked steadfastly, preaching in hundreds of villages and towns, and rejoicing mightily when here and there they came upon ground already made soft with showers. In such ground they sowed the seed with a sure hope, and watched with grateful delight the ever-new miracle of its upspringing (there is no missionary song like the 65th Psalm). But though they had these good hours sometimes, they never disguised the fact that as a whole the ground was very dry. "To this-side-cow that side looks green," says the Tamil. "Far green cools the eyes." Far hills look blue. But the far green is probably tussocky elephant grass. Climb the hills, and you find them hard going.

Ragland was a man who had no use for paint where truth was concerned. Perhaps mathematics and paint do not run together. At all events he writes about things exactly as he finds them. Every now and then he strikes sharply against the much pleasanter view usually accepted now about the "Spiritual East." Is it always remembered that Westcott's rather over-emphasized remark touched only that rarest type of soul, the seeker after God, whose ritual docs indeed express him? Be that as it may, here is the word of another Cambridge scholar, one who knew the people not from books only, but in the thousand contacts of life.

"I find it [the work] likely to prove not such as those I have spoken to in England and in India have thought, particularly interesting or exciting; but rather just what I expected myself from the first, quiet, humble plodding day after day, and returning again and again to the same dull-minded (or if quick-minded, gainsaying) people, and endeavouring to make them care about their souls and seek the Lord Jesus Christ; a work requiring very much patience and love, faith and perseverance. Oh that I might have all this!"

Pioneer work sounds splendid; there is glamour in the very word; there is usually none in the life itself. Hear another of God's pioneers, Coillard of the Zambesi:

"The evangelization of the heathen world in the place where it is carried on is certainly not a tissue of strange customs and adventures as thrilling as a romance; it is a desperate struggle with the Prince of Darkness, and with everything his rage can stir up in the shape of obstacles, vexations, oppositions, and hatred, whether by circumstances or by the hand of man. It is a serious task. It should mean a life of consecration and faith." But because they had entered into the field with earnest hope, and because they could not be satisfied with anything short of reality, and never (this is a Tamil word) showed brass for gold, Ragland and his colleagues searched themselves to find cause for the disappointments which did certainly meet them, and, ever methodical, Ragland drew up a set of questions and answers probing into the matter.

First, as regards the Hindus, there were certain hindrances: their thorough worldliness, an almost universal forgetfulness of a future state (in spite of their doctrine of transmigration) and a great unwillingness to believe in it; their habits of idolatry and sensuality, for both can co-exist with the most intriguing philosophy; and in the domestic arrangements of some castes, allowed gross immorality. These he regarded as natural difficulties; but, then, though confessedly great, they would prove as nothing before the power of God and His quickening Spirit. So he goes deeper: our preaching itself may be faulty. Is it always the Gospel? Always to the point? Do we avail ourselves of every opportunity and every mode of approaching the people?

Then, going deeper still: Do they see in us hindering things? Worldliness of mind? Levity? Impatience and anger? Selfishness? And our friends, "Do they not sometimes commend us too much?"

But, in spite of disappointment, the three who were left were very happy. They were often tired of the perpetual travelling under conditions which never grew restful. They were discouraged at times, being as we are. But they had the splendid, unassailable happiness of freedom to pour themselves out to the very last drop, and they dearly loved one another.

"His ways with the Hindus were most impressive and tender," writes Meadows; "he would put his two hands on their shoulders and plead with them." (These would be the peasant folk; others of course could not be touched, they would have felt it defiling.) And he tells how for himself and Fenn it was as if language would not yield strong enough words of love. It was the same with his Indian brothers and fellow-workers. "Oh, may we all faithfully grow in pure and fervent love to one another. Our time of labour will soon be over, but then our time of fullest enjoyment of our Saviour’s love and one another’s love will only just be beginning," he wrote to one of them.

Such love is never forgotten in India. "What was he like?" I asked one of our oldest pastors, who had been, I was told, one of Ragland’s men. The dear old man was breakfasting with us, he had just told us the frog and towel story, and he turned where he sat beside me and looked at me with eyes that shone with the coming of a host of sweet memories. "He was loving, he loved us much," he said in Tamil, after a long pause; "without measure, without boundaries he loved us." To one who could so love, the longing to see a great turning of the people to the Lover of them all was no endurable faint desire, but a consuming passion, and the chill of hope deferred was as ice to his hot heart. Not that there were no individuals; a little church was soon gathered out, to which Every was to minister: but he longed to see crowds. Who does not? And it never becomes easier to see the greater number turn away unaffected, as it would appear, and undesiring.

Still the joy when it does come is unearthly for sweetness. It is wonderful to watch the unyielding attitude, the definite choice of sin, change gradually or suddenly to a concern, a sense of need, the tenderness of penitence, a longing after Jesus the Saviour of the world, an understanding of what is meant by that mysterious but simple coming to Him for life. We rejoice with Ragland as he tells of one, a wealthy landowner, who, for no earthly reason but the love of our Lord, came to Him and followed Him through good report and ill. But here again we come straight upon the innate honesty of the man. He knows how the Christian public at home springs upon quick results, and how well it likes the man who will give it what it wants, but he utterly refuses to convey false impressions. "How many such converts may we expect to be given us? Will not nine out of every ten be persons brought to us and kept with us by motives more or less worldly, and at length, only after a long

pressing of God’s word upon their hearts, brought just to such a measure of knowledge and correctness of walk and desire for salvation as to justify our admitting them to baptism? If we were to look only at what has been, there would be no grounds for any high expectations. But are we to limit our expectations by what has been only?" No, verily.

These words were written in that great year, 1858. Echoes of what was happening in America had reached South India and stirred most ardent longings. Nothing could satisfy Ragland but souls. But, like many another as earnest, he never saw the fields white unto the harvest. He was trusted to go on without seeing what he longed to see; and he went on.

1.07.22. Book 7: 22. The Stub of a Sword

22. THE STUB OF A SWORD

IT was the good wet month of October 1858, on the plains of North Tinnevelly, near the town of Siva's Benares. After the panting heat of the three previous months the very earth seems to cry out for the rains. October, generally about half-way through, brings them grey sheets that fall straight and solid, as if sluice-gates above were opened and the water descended in bulk, not drops. Glorious days are to follow, days when the world washed clean, and consoled, sings and shouts for joy. Open your heart to the sound of the land, not to the birds' talk only or to the multitudinous tiny talk of the unseen life among leaves and grass, but to those thousand little singing voices of the lowliest weed-flowers of the earth, and you know that every created thing carries its note within it, sings it forth and contributes to the rapture of the world. Why be reminded that it is but for a moment, that everything that can feel will be stretched on the frying-pan not six months hence? There is nothing less rememberable or recoverable to memory than heat. The very thought of it passes like a little puff of smoke. So in the house lately furnished, the one inharmonious thing on the Plains, for it was new and raw and starey-eyed, Ragland and his band settled down with thankfulness. What did it matter that the Tamil carpenter, unlike his brother of China and Japan and even of our Indian West Coast, thinks of a roof in terms of a lid, and that only? So long as the close-clipped roof kept out the drenching rain it spelt luxury to the men underneath. And the solid bare walls were luxury, too, after flapping canvas. After long sojourn in tents the veriest hut is luxury. And Ragland indeed needed luxury now, he had owned to being ill. So had his fellow-worker Meadows, and he (Meadows) had started on the month's journey to get medical help in Madras. But Ragland knew the journey would be wasted time for him; he did not believe in the treatment, drugs and leeches and blisters then used for his trouble, but in food and rest. And yet, as he carefully explains in a letter home, in India your doctor is your friend, you cannot ask for advice and then refuse to follow it. It is not a question of fee, but of kindness. If he went to Madras he would either have to submit to reducing treatment and lose the little strength he had (" Spare me the stub of a sword," he says in effect as he enlarges upon that), or return to England to escape from it. This last he says he does not intend to do because he knows if he went home he would never get out again. So, to the great relief of his fellows, he decided to stay and do the hundred odd things he could do to help, and in utter contentment of spirit settled down to the wet-weather work in the bungalow. But he was very tired. Five unbroken, strenuous years of work on the Plains lay behind him, and all the time there had been that which one in sympathy with the Father finds hardest to bear, the grief of seeing His poor children blindly turning away from their good. Morning by morning all over South India the silence before dawn is crossed and jarred by the melancholy, long-drawn wail of the conch. Flashes then across the inward sight the priest in charge of the idol in the temple near by; one sees him as he blows his shell, follows him as, having wakened the sleeping god, he proceeds to minister to it through petty barren rites, aches-yes, aches is the only word-to lead him to the living fountains of waters, recalls his refusals. Thus, for the man who has ears to hear and a heart that cannot help loving, the Indian day begins. And at

sunset, through the treasures of colour and the general sense of peace, once more that wail proceeds discordant, empty of triumph as of hope. And often in the night, always in these parts on Tuesdays and Fridays, and often at other times, there is the persistent beat of the tom-tom that tells of demon-worship unashamed. The listener must be strangely impervious to the thousand cries and calls and feelings of the air if he can lie and listen and turn again to sleep without a pang. Surely when we see our Lord Jesus we shall not ask Him to forgive us for our foolish over-caring, but rather that we cared so little, cared so coldly that souls are perishing for whom He died.

Ragland was his Lord’s dear lover. Here and there among the old biographies that fill dull-looking bookcases we find the tracks of such and kindle our poor little fires at their bright furnaces. They appeared merely ordinary to the people about them, for they wore no grand airs; but they walked with their God, and they went on; love held them on. They endured and did not give way. Of such was Ragland. He was ill now, but it never crossed his mind to give in. The pain of the land lay upon him, the pain of his hidden hurt, but here in the lull of the fight he stood, and asked only for strength to go on. Not that he was above temptation to weakness:

"I am very well now," he had written two years before, cheerfully ignoring the lung. "Nevertheless I long for rest from travelling. Rest from travelling-how quickly this little string of words suggests the thought of the longed-for rest!" And he anticipates that for a moment and then adds, "Oh that I knew something of the love of Jacob which made his seven years of servitude seem only so many days." But he never listened to the voices that would have weakened him. The fear of fatigue never deterred him, was the witness borne to him afterwards.

1.07.23. Book 7: 23. An Open Window

23. AN OPEN WINDOW

DOWN came the rain, and the Plains smoked. Indoors Ragland wrote letters, did accounts, and unpacked his box from home, a precious box from Cambridge long looked forward to. One can almost see his careful hands taking the first of his four old silver prize cups, and the plate to match, from their tissue-paper wrappings, his pleased, kind eyes examining every detail, almost feel the warm heart-glow over this sign of unforgetting affection (for the plate was the gift of the Master and Fellows), and follow him to the holy quiet Communion with his Lord and the newly-won disciples, those joys of missionary life that pass the reach of words. And now at last, as at first, obedience to his Master’s command translated into terms of service was to Ragland, office work.

He could help the younger men by counsel and by the ever-growing gladness of his love for them and faith in them. He could talk quietly to the people, often tedious folk, who came and went; but he could not do the more strenuous part of the work any more. Letter-writing, account-keeping, consulting, the thousand multiplicities of the "secular"-these he could undertake. "And if they were all thrown upon us two younger brethren I think things could hardly go on," was David Fenn’s view of the matter. In the land where heavenly values are noted, the unselfish men and women in our mission offices are known for what they are. So Ragland went on and met his last day, but not at all recognizing it, sat down to write his mail. In it he explained how he now hoped to help, and David Fenn interpolated as above, adding out of the fulness of his loving heart as seemed good to him. And Ragland, cheered to think he was wanted so much, continued his letter. It was his last letter. On that morning, October 22, 1858, life was as usual brimful of duties, and, as usual in India, if one lives with the people, there was much coming and going; a small boy hanging halfway through an open window would not be noticed. There was nothing unusual in that. But as the small boy looked, taking stock of the white men’s ways, he saw the man whose kindly face had pleased his sense of the fitness of things, walk quickly across his bedroom to a little room opening off it; heard a stifled call, saw the younger man run to the older, help him to his camp-cot set in a corner of the room, into which the boy now gazed fascinated. The man on the cot said something the boy could not understand, and he looked up. The boy looked up too, and very quickly, eager to miss nothing. But he saw nothing. Only he heard one word he recognized, "Jesus," saw a smile that no passing of the years could blot from memory, and before he realized what it was he saw, he was looking upon death.

"And I could only look upon her as a wounded victor in possession of the field, and the enemy out of sight," wrote Henry Venn of his dead wife. He would have said the same of the dead man whom, to his eternal joy, he had called forth to the Great War, could he have seen him then.

They laid him beside Every and Barenbrock, his faithful forerunners. One Englishman (Fenn) and a little group of Indian brothers stood together amazed, in tears. Then they turned to the house and took up life again, and the heavy grey skies seemed in sympathy as they came low down in rain. But as a dream when one awakeneth is the memory of such hours when the clouds have

broken and the sun streams forth; and for these three friends it has been for a long time a morning without clouds.

. . . . And yet it might all have happened yesterday; for times change and customs; phrases pass, our very speech takes to itself new dress, the old sounds outworn to us, but the great elemental things of life do not change at all; like earth, air, water, fire, they abide unaltered and unalterable.

Deep in the quiet heart of the man who came and went before we were born, burned the fire of a great love. Many waters cannot quench such love, nor can the dust of years smother it. "Oh what a name is that," he wrote from the midst of life’s oppressions, "the name of our dear Redeemer, how easily it makes every rough thing smooth." And we? We have warmed ourselves for an hour by his fire, can we be as we were before? Can we bear our tepid lives? Can we call that poor little smouldering heap of ashes within us by the fiery name of love? What do the angels call it? Oh they are winds and flaming fires, those ministers of His that do His pleasures. And we? Are we winds and flames of fire?

1.07.24. Book 7: 24. Fifty Years Afterwards

24. FIFTY YEARS AFTERWARDS

JUNE 3, 1851, a breathless date, for no rain from the western hills had come as yet to cool the air, and the pitiless heat of six parched months makes the average Englishman feel akin to the yellow stubble of grass in the dry watercourses. All flesh is grass, and withered grass, in June before the rains. On that date, in that heat, the man, whom we now know a little, wrote the words we copied before: "Of all plans of ensuring success, the most certain is Christ’s own, becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground, and dying."

June 11, 1901, on just such a day, those same words were repeated slowly by a man like-minded, Walker of Tinnevelly. No life of Ragland was to be had then, the ancient blue Memoir was discovered later; but this one sentence was like a winged seed, it had flown down the fifty years to us. More than any other human words, they influenced the man who quoted them now. On that day, sultry to exhaustion, after a long, sticky railway journey and a hotter, stickier bullock-cart drive, we had walked from the nearest mission station to Ragland’s grave. A bare, baked road, six hot missionaries trudging along in more or less silence, for there was no visitor to delude into the belief that nobody was particularly tired-it does not sound an inspiring spectacle. Nor was it. Dust lay thick everywhere, the heat was visible, as it is in our hottest days: you can see it in tremulous waves flowing knee-deep along the levels, breast-high sometimes where spaces are vast. The sun, knowing he was near his setting, thrust at us in long, sharp, slanting stabs, and the wind we longed for lay low and said nothing. In silence, then, we stood beside the place where the shell of Ragland lay, near by the house where he had died. Desolation reigned. Not a green thing breathed. But that word, quick as the day it was first written on paper long since turned to dust, was at work then, is at work to-day, imperishable as energy. Which was the boy’s window? It was rather a small question to ask, and it broke on the great silence like the foolish little chirp of a bird. But it would have been interesting to know, and we walked round the poor, weather-beaten house, looking in through the gaping holes, trying to see, trying to hear. If walls could speak, what a strange confusion of words there would be! Or would each house have its dominant word? This surely would. We could almost hear it now, Word of words, Name of names, Jesus. That boy never forgot it. One day, a man grown, and still a Hindu, he stood by a dying friend. "I have learned ten thousand stanzas," the dying man gasped in his awful mortal terror, "but the bough that I clutch breaks in my hand, the branch that I stand on snaps under my feet." And he turned in his agony to the man by his side. There was silence for a while.

Lord, in the darkness I wander, Where is the lamp? Is there no lamp?

Nothing know I, but I wonder, Is there no lamp? Where is the lamp? The words (thus very freely translated) were wrung from the heart of the noblest of Tamil poets:

Lord, in the vastness I wander, Where is the way? Is there no way?

How may I reach Thee, I wonder, Is there no way? Where is the way?

They cried again through the dying man’s soul. Was there no one to light a lamp, no one to show a way?

Then the younger man in sore distress remembered; told of the open window, the look, the smile, the one great Word, "Jesus." And that memory of a Christian death was all the light the Hindu had to die by.

1.07.25. Book 7: 25. Except

25. EXCEPT THIS book has been written in the green depths of a recess among the mountains which Ragland saw from the Plains. And as I end it I look up and see the final chapter framed in forest and grey rocks. For below flashes a mountain river, clear as crystal. The colours of the rocks under water here run from red-brown, through all yellows to orange, almost flame colour at times, and there are cool washes of jade-green and grey. It is as if some giant brush dipped in pools of melted jewels had dealt out the colours in great smooth, sweeping strokes; the very gravel sparkles like crushed chrysolite, and the river flows over this loveliness as if it knew the glories that lie in it; and the heart in one wonders, "Can there be even in paradise anything more lovely than clear water upon lighted coloured rocks?" But as the river turns for a leap round and over the curved shoulder of a boulder, slashed with rose-red now, as a beam from the sunset strikes it, a little, angry, determined hurry of foam meets it, spreads across it, thrusts forth a series of frothy tongues, makes as if to forbid it to proceed. And the curious thing is that the little tongues seem to be making headway, or is it that the dance of the water bewilders eye and thought? Granted that, are they not at least holding their own? Surely that little forbidding, fretted line has not by one inch given way. So possibly think the water-beetles caught unawares in its flurry. But they imagine a vain thing.

We know better. The changeless front is changing. Every drop of that ruffle of water is being carried down even as it lifts itself up. A score of such eddies foam and fuss in this one little reach of calm water alone. The river takes no heed. And soon the great day for the river· will come. A night of the rumbling of thunder among the mountains, a whisper of mist in the morning, more thunder; the rains. Then in the twinkling of an eye-the floods. Domination, irresistible majesty, that will be what whoso stands here on that day will see. Rocks will be spun down, their crash will reverberate through the ravine, great trees will be tossed about as if they were rivers' toys. Where will this impotent ripple be then? For awhile indeed it will be. As the tremendous force from above strikes the obstructing shoulder with greater vehemence, there will spring up plumes of white water, curled feathers of foam; higher and higher they will rise, as more and more grandly the floods sweep down, till they lift themselves for the last time, curl over and disappear. Then, then will be seen only the flow of the river, and that sound which is like nothing else on earth, the glorious noise of waters in the fullness of their might, will fill the whole ravine.

To-day we stand on the edge of a river the fullness of whose might we have never yet seen. Futile forces play upon it, make to withstand it; poor little puerile tongues of froth, they think they are barring the river's way. But the Lord shall laugh at them. As spume before the flying winds they shall be on the day when the river rises in spate.

Ragland did not live to see the splendour of that day. We may not live to see it. But some one will. Let us never lose heart. That day is nearer than when we first believed. And in the time between this and then, be it long or short, by the love of the Lover of souls, by the love of all fellow-lovers, let us live, by the power of that love, the life that is all poured forth.

What if we waste our lives? . . . Down those steep mountain-sides scores of waterfalls race in joyful eager streams. From our valley halfway up the heights we can see them spring from their secret places among the crags a thousand feet above; we can watch them in their headlong flight to our river here. And as we watched them the other day after the first rain had overflowed their pools, a child’s voice beside me said, quoting from one of our children’s songs, "What do they know of measured love, or meagre?

Let Him take all." Shall the waterfalls do more for their river than we are willing to do for our Lord? The joy of life, the strength of youth, the gathered fruit of study, the powers of the whole being and all its riches of love-are these too much to pour forth upon Him, at the feet of our Lord, our Redeemer?

It is the old word in a new form, and with that we end. But all through life I see a Cross, Where sons of God yield up their breath:

There is no gain except by loss, There is no life except by death, And no full vision but by Faith, Nor glory but by bearing shame, Nor Justice but by taking blame; And that Eternal Passion saith, "Be emptied of glory and right and name."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, ‘Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.’ "

Chapter 105

1.07.26. Book 7: 26. The Dohnavur Fellowship

HE DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP THE work known by this name began in 1901. There exists in connection with the temples of India a system like that which obtained in such places as the great temple of Corinth with its Thousand Servants. Young children trained for temple service have no chance to grow up good. They are the most defenceless of God’s innocent little creatures. We gave ourselves to save them, and as we lived in a village called Dohnavur the work became known by that name. In 1918 we began to take boys too, for they also are used in the temples, and still more often in the evil dramatic societies of Southern India. The story of the Fellowship is told in Gold Cord. From the first we thought of the children as our own. We did not make a Home for them; when they came to us they were at home. And so from the beginning we were a family, never an institution; and we all, Indian and European men and women, live and work together on the lines of an Indian family, each contributing what each has to offer for the help of all. We have no salaried workers, Indian or foreign; make no appeal for funds; and authorize none to be made for us. We have never lacked; as the needs grew supplies came; and as we advance we find that our Unseen Leader is moving on before us. There are between six and seven hundred in the family, several outposts in the villages and medical work.

1.08.00. Book 8: Lotus Buds (1909)

LOTUS BUDS

LOTUS BUDS BY AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL Keswick Missionary C.E.Z.M.S.

AUTHOR OF "THINGS AS THEY ARE"; "OVERWEIGHTS OF JOY";

"THE BEGINNING OF A STORY," ETC. WITH FIFTY HALF-TONE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOS SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR THIS WORK MORGAN AND SCOTT LD.

12 PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS LONDON MCMXII Copyright, Morgan & Scott Ld., 1909 FIRST EDITION, Quarto (Fifty Photogravure Illustrations) 2,000 Nov., 1909 EDITION DE LUXE (Fifty Photogravures on Japon Vellum)250 Nov., 1909 OCTAVO EDITION (Fifty Half-tone Engravings)5,250 July, 1912 TO THOSE WHO CARE Dohnavur, Tinnevelly District,

South India Christmas, 1909.

Each for himself, we live our lives apart, Heirs of an age that turns us all to stone;

Yet ever Nature, thrust from out the heart, Comes back to claim her own.

Still we have something left of that fair seed God gave for birthright; still the sound of tears Hurts us, and children in their helpless need Still call to listening ears.

Owen Seaman. From "In a Good Cause."

FOREWORD TO THE

PRESENT EDITION WHEN first "Things as they are" trod the untrodden way, it walked as a small child walks when for the first time it ventures forth upon young, uncertain feet. It has to walk; it does not know why: it only knows there is no choice about it. But there is an eager looking for an outstretched hand, and an instant gratefulness always, for even a finger. A whole hand given without reserve is something never forgotten.

It was only a child after all, and it had not anticipated having to find its way alone among strangers. It had thought of nothing further than a very short walk among familiar faces. If it had understood beforehand how far it would have[viii] to walk, I doubt if it would have had the courage to start; for it was not naturally brave. But once on its way it could not turn back; and thanks to those kindly outstretched hands, it grew a little less afraid, and it went on.

Then another small wayfarer followed. It also was very easily discouraged; an unfriendly push would have knocked it over at once. But nobody seemed to want to push so unpretentious a thing, so it gained courage and went on. And now a more grown-up looking traveller (though indeed its looks belie it) has started on its way; more diffident, if the truth must be told, than even its predecessors. For it thought within itself—Perhaps there will be no welcoming hands held out this time; hands may grow tired of such kind offices. But it has not been so. And now the sense of

gratefulness cannot longer be repressed.

All of which means that I want to thank sincerely those kings of the Book World—Reviewers—and those dwellers in that world who are my[ix] Readers, for their insight and the sympathy to which I owe so much.

Once I read of a soldier who wrote a letter home from the midst of a battle, on a crumpled piece of paper laid upon a cannon ball. His home people he knew would overlook the appearance of the paper and the lack of various things expected in a letter written in a quiet room upon a study table. And he knew he could trust them not to bring too fine a criticism to bear upon the unstudied words hot from the battle's heart.

I have thought sometimes that these books were not unlike that soldier's letter; and those who read them seem to me very like his home people, for they have been so generous in the kindness of their welcome.

Amy Wilson-Carmichael.

Dohnavur, Tinnevelly District

S. India.

Feb. 19, 1912. THE WRITER TO THE READER THE photographs (except two) were taken by Mr. Penn, of Ootacamund, whose work is known to all who care to possess good photographs of the South Indian hills. The babies were a new experience to him, and something of a trial, I fear, after the mountains, which can be trusted to sit still. The book has been written for lovers of children. Those who find such young life tiresome will find the story dull, and the kindest thing it can ask of them is not to read it at all.

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1.08.01. Book 8: 1. Lotus Buds

CHAPTER I

Lotus Buds

LOTUS FLOWERS. From that same pool, afterwards gathered by permission and given to us.

LOTUS BUDS

CHAPTER I

Lotus Buds

NEAR an ancient temple in Southern India is a large calm, beautiful pool, enclosed by stone walls, broken here and there by wide spaces fitted with steps leading down to the water’s edge; and almost within reach of the hand of one standing on the lowest step are pink Lotus lilies floating serenely on the quiet water or standing up from it in a certain proud loveliness all their own.

We were travelling to the neighbouring town when we came upon this pool. We could not pass it with only a glance, so we stopped our bullock-carts and unpacked ourselves—we were four or five to a cart—and we climbed down the broken, time-worn steps and gazed and gazed till the beauty entered into us. Who can describe that harmony of colour, a Lotus-pool in blossom in clear shining after rain! The grey old walls, the brown water, the dark green of the Lotus leaves, the delicate pink of the flowers; overhead, infinite crystalline blue; and beyond the old walls, palms. With us was a young Indian friend. "I will gather some of the lilies for you," he said, with the quick Indian desire to give pleasure; but some one interposed: "They must not be gathered by us. The pool belongs to the Temple."

It was as if a stone had been flung straight at a mirror. There was a sense of crash and the shattering of some bright image. The Lotus-pool was a Temple pool; its flowers are Temple flowers. The little buds that float and open on the water, lifting young innocent faces up to the light as it smiles down upon them and fills them through with almost a tremor of joyousness, these Lotus buds are sacred things—sacred to whom? For a single moment that thought had its way, but only for a moment. It flashed and was gone, for the thought was a false thought: it could not stand against this—"All souls are Mine."

All souls are His, all flowers. An alien power has possessed them, counted them his for so many generations, that we have almost acquiesced in the shameful confiscation. But neither souls nor flowers are his who did not make them. They were never truly his. They belong to the Lord of all the earth, the Creator, the Redeemer. The little Lotus buds are His—His and not another’s. The children of the temples of South India are His—His and not another’s. So now we go forth with the Owner Himself to claim His own possession. There is hope in the thought, and confidence and the purest inspiration. And, stirred to the very depths, as we are and must be many a time when we see the tender Lotus buds gathered by a hand that has no right to them, and crushed underfoot;

bewildered and sore troubled, as the heart cannot help being sometimes, when the mystery of the apparent victory of evil over good is overwhelming: even so there will be always a hush, a rest, a repose of spirit, as we stand by the Lotus-pools of life and seek in His Name to gather His flowers.

1.08.02. Book 8: 2. Opposites.

CHAPTER II

Opposites

BALA is nearly four. There are so many much younger things in the nursery, that Bala feels almost grown up: four will be quite grown up; it will be nice to be four. Bala takes life seriously, she has always done so; she thinks it would be monotonous to have too many frivolous babies. But Bala's eyes can sparkle as no other eyes ever do; and her mirth is something by itself, like a little hidden fountain in the heart of a wood, with the sweetness of surprise in it and very pure delight. When Bala came to us first she was between one and two, an age when most babies have a good deal to say. Bala said nothing. She was like a book with all its leaves uncut; and some who saw her, forgetting that uncut books are sometimes interesting, concluded she was dull. "Quite a prosaic child," they said; but Bala did not care. There are some babies, like some grown-up people, who show all they have to show upon first acquaintance and to all. Others cover the depths within, and open only to their own. Bala is one of these; and even with her own she has seasons of reserve. Her first remark, however, shown rather than said, was not romantic. She was too old for a bottle, and she seemed to feel sore over this. But she noted the time the infants were fed, and followed the nurses about while they were preparing the meal; and when they sat down to give it, each to her respective baby, Bala would choose the one of most uncertain appetite, and sit down beside it and wait. There was an expression on her face at such times which suggested a hymn, set it humming in one's head in fact, in spite of all efforts to escape it. More than once we have caught ourselves singing it, and pulled up sharply: "Even me! Even me! Let some droppings fall on me."

"God's Fire."

Taken on the bank of the Red Lake, near Dohnavur.

Most of our family remind us very early that they trace their descent to the mother of us all. Bala, on the contrary, was good: so we almost forgot she was human, and began to expect too much of her; but she got tired of this after a while, and one day suddenly sinned. The surprise acted like "hypo," and fixed the photograph. The place was the old nursery, which has one uncomfortably dark corner in it. Something had offended Bala; she marched straight into that corner and stamped. We can see her—poor little girl—as she rumpled her curls with both her hands, and flashed on the world a withering glance. "Scorn to be scorned by those I scorn" was written large all over the indignant little face.

After this shock we were prepared for anything, but nothing special happened; only when the demands made upon her are unreasonable, then Bala retires into herself and turns upon all foolish insistence a face that is a blank. If this point is passed, the dark eyes can flash. But such revealings are rare. When Bala was something under three, she was very tender-hearted. One evening, after the first rains had flooded the pools and revived the mosquitoes, the nursery wall was the scene of many executions; and Bala could not bear it. "Sittie, don't kill the poor pûchies!"

she said pitifully; and Sittie, much touched, stopped to comfort and explain. The other babies were delighting in the slaughter, pointing out with glee each detested "pûchie"; but Bala is not like the other babies. Later, the ferocious instinct common to most young animals asserted itself in a relish for the horrible, which rather contradicted the mosquito incident. Bala visibly gloats over the gory head of Goliath, and intensely admires David as he operates upon it. Her favourite part of the story about his encounter with the lion is the suggestive sentence, "I caught him by the beard"; and Bala loves to show you exactly how he did it. But then that is different from seeing it done; and after all it is only a story, and it happened long ago.

God’s Fire

I have told how the ignorant once called Bala prosaic. Bala knows nothing of poetry, but is full of the little seeds of that strange and wonderful plant; and the time to get to know her is when the evening sky is a golden blaze, or glows with that mystic glory which wakens something within us and makes it stir and speak.

"God has not lighted His fire to-night," she said wistfully one evening when the West was colourless; but when that fire is lighted she stands and gazes satisfied. "What does God do when His fire goes out?" was a question on one such evening, as the mountains darkened in the passing of the after-glow; and then: "Why does He not light it every night?"

"Amma! I have looked into Heaven!" she said suddenly to me after a long silence. "I have seen quite in, and I know what it is like." "What is it like? Can you tell me?" and the child’s voice answered dreamily: "It was shining, very shining." Then with animation, in broken but vivid Tamil: "Oh, it was beautiful! all a garden like our garden, only bigger, and there were flowers and flowers and flowers!"—here words failed to describe the number, and a comprehensive sweep of the hand served instead. "And our dolls can walk there. They never can down here, poor things! And Jesus plays with our babies there" (the dear little sisters who have gone to the nursery out of sight, but are unforgotten by the children). "He plays with Indraneela—lovely games."

"What games, Bala?" I asked, wondering greatly what she would say. There was a long, thoughtful pause, and Bala looked at me with grave, contented eyes:—

"New games," she said simply.

Bala’s opposite is Chellalu. We never made any mistake about her. We never thought her good. Not that she is impossibly bad. She was created for play and for laughter, and very happy babies are not often very wicked; but she is so irrepressible, so hopelessly given up to fun, that her kindergarten teacher, Rukma, smiles a rueful smile at the mention of her name. For to Chellalu the most unreasonable thing you can ask is implicit obedience, which unfortunately is preferred by us to any amount of fun. She will learn to obey, we are not afraid about that; but more than any of our children, her attitude towards this demand has been one of protest and surprise. She thinks it unfair of grown-up people to take advantage of their size in the arbitrary way they do. And when, disgusted with life’s dispensations, she condescends to expostulate, her "Ba-a-a-a" is a thing to affright. But this is the wrong side of Chellalu, and not for ever in evidence. The right side is not so depressing.

It is a brilliant morning in late November. The world, all washed and cooled by the rains, has not had time to get hot and tired, and the air has that crystal quality which is the charm of this season in South India. Every wrinkle on the brown trunks of the trees in the compound, every twig and leaf, stands out with a special distinctness of its own, and the mountains in the distance glisten as if made of precious stones. The Blameless Chellalu

Suddenly, all unconscious of affinity or contrast, a little person in scarlet comes dancing into the picture, which opens to receive her, for she belongs to it. Her hands are full of Gloriosa lilies, fiery red, terra-cotta, yellow, delicate old-rose and green—such a mingling of colour, but nothing discordant—and the child, waving her spoils above her head, sings at the top of her voice something intended to be the chorus of a kindergarten song:—

Oh, the delight of the glorious light! The joy of the shining blue!

Beautiful flowers! wonderful flowers!

Oh, I should like to be you!

"But, Chellalu, where did you get them?" for the lilies in the garden are supposed to be safe from attack. Chellalu looks up with frank, brown eyes. "For you!" she says briefly in Tamil; but there is a wealth of forgiveness in the tone as she offers her armful of flowers. Chellalu wonders at grown-up hearts which can harbour unworthy suspicions about blameless little children. As if she would have picked them!

"But, Chellalu, where did you get them?" and still looking grieved and surprised and forgiving, Chellalu explains that yesterday evening the elder sisters went for a walk in the fields, and brought home so many lilies, that after all just claims were met there were still some over—an expressive gesture shows the heap—so Chellalu thought of her Ammal (mother) and went and picked out the best for her. Then by way of emphasis the story is attempted in English: "Very good? Yesh. Naughty? No. Kindergarten room want flowers? No. I" (patting herself approvingly) "very good; yesh." With Chellalu, speech is a mere adjunct to conversation, a sort of footnote to a page of illustration. The illustration is the thing that speaks. So now both Tamil and English are illuminated by vivid gesture of hands, feet, the whole body indeed; curls and even eyelashes play their part, and the final impression produced upon her questioner is one of complete contrition for ever having so misjudged a thing so virtuous.

"AIYO!"

(Fingers and toes curled in grieved surprise.) "Did you think I would have done it?" But Chellalu wastes no sympathy upon herself. She is accustomed to be believed; and perfectly happy in her mind, casts a keen glance round, for who knows what new delights may be somewhere within reach! "Ah!"—the deep-breathed sigh of content—is always a danger signal where this innocent child is concerned. I turn in time to avert disaster, and Chellalu, finding life dull with me, departs.

Then the little scarlet figure with its crown of careless curls scampers across the sunny space, and dives into the shadow of a tree. There it stays. Something arresting has happened—some skurry of squirrel up the trunk, or dart of lizard, or hurried scramble of insect, under cover out of reach of those terrible eyes. Or better still, something is "playing dead," and the child, fascinated, is waiting for it to resurrect. And then the song about the lilies begins again, only it is all a jumble this time;

for Chellalu sings just as it comes, untrammelled by thoughts about sequence or sense, and when she forgets the words she calmly makes them up. And I cannot help thinking that Chellalu is very like her song; here is an intelligible bit, a line or two in order, then a cheerful tumble up, and an irresponsible conclusion. The tune too seems in character—"Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing"; the swinging old Jacobite air had fitted itself to a nursery song about the brave fire-lilies, and something in its abandon to the happy mood of the moment seems to express the child.

It is not easy to express her. "If you had to describe Chellalu, how would you do it?" I asked my colleague this morning, hoping for illumination. "I would not attempt it! Who would?" she answered helpfully.

Only More So

"Chellalu! Oh, you need ten pairs of eyes and ten pairs of hands, and even then you could never be sure you had her"—this was her nurse’s earliest description. She was six months old then, she is three and three-quarters now; but she is what she was, "only more so."

Before Chellalu had a single tooth she had developed mother-ways, and would comfort distressed babies by thrusting into their open mouths whatever was most convenient. At first this was her own small thumb, which she had once found good herself; but she soon discovered that infants can bite, and after that she offered rattle-handles. Later, she used to stagger from one hammock to another and swing them. And often, before she understood the perfect art of balance, she would find herself, to her surprise, on the floor, as the hammock in its rebound knocked her over. She felt this ungrateful of the baby inside; but she seemed to reflect that it was young and knew no better, for she never retaliated, but picked herself up and began again. These hammocks, which are our South Indian cradles, are long strips of white cotton hung from the roof, and they make delightful swings. Chellalu learned this early, and her nurse’s life was a burden to her because of the discovery.

"She could walk before she could stand"—this is another nursery description, and truer than it sounds. Certainly no one ever saw Chellalu learning to walk. She was a baby one day, rapid in unexpected motion, but only on all fours; the next day—or so it seems, looking back—she was everywhere on her two feet. "Now there will be no place where she won’t be!" groaned the family, the first time she was seen walking about with an air of having done it all her life. And appalling visions rose of Chellalu standing on the wall of the well looking down, or sitting in the bucket left by some careless water-drawer just on the edge of the wall, or trying to descend by the rope.

Before this date such diversions as the classic Pattycake had been much in favour. Chellalu’s Attai (the word here and hereafter signifies Mrs. Walker, "Mother’s elder sister") had taught it to her; and whenever and wherever Chellalu saw her Attai, she immediately began to perform "Prick it and nick it" with great enthusiasm. But after she could walk, Chellalu would have nothing more to do with such childish things. "Show us Edward Rajah!" the older children would say; and instead of standing up with a regal dignity and crowning her curls with the appropriate gesture, Chellalu would merely look surprised. They had forgotten. She was not a baby now. Such trifles are for babies.

1.08.03. Book 8: 3. The Scamp

CHAPTER III The Scamp

"PAT-A-CAKE is a thing of the past, but the stage from the highest point of view is still distinctly attractive"; so decided Chellalu, and resolved to devote herself thenceforth to this new and engrossing pursuit. She chose the scene of her first public performance without consulting us. It was the open floor of the church, on a Sunday morning, in the midst of a large congregation. This was how it happened.

Chellalu's Attai, who in those days was unaware of all the painful surprises in store, had taken her to morning service, and allowed her to sit beside her on the mat at the back of the church. All through the first part of the service Chellalu was good; and as the sermon began, she was forgotten. In our church we sit on the floor, men on one side, women and children on the other. A broad aisle is left between, and the Iyer (Mr. Walker), refusing to be boxed up in the usual manner, walks up and down as he preaches. This interested Chellalu. That morning the sermon was to children, and the subject was "Girdles." The East of this ancient India is the East to which the prophet spoke by parable and picture; and, following that time-worn path, the preacher pictured the parable of Jeremiah's linen girdle: the attention of the people was riveted upon him, and no one noticed what was happening on the mat at the end of the church. Only we, up at the front with all the other children, saw, without being able to stop it, the dreadful pantomime. For Chellalu, wholly absorbed and pleased with this unexpected delight, first stood on the mat and acted the girdle picture; then, growing bolder, advanced out into the open aisle, and, following the preacher's gestures, reproduced them all exactly. It was a moment of tension; but if ever a child had a good angel in attendance, Chellalu has, for something always stops her before the bitter end. I forget what stopped her then; something invisible, and so, doubtless, the angel. But we did not breathe freely till we had her safe at home.

CHELLALU, WATCHING THE PICTURE-CATCHER WITH SOME SUSPICION.

"Whatever is he doing with that black box?"

Chellalu's visible angel is the gentle Esli, a young convert-helper, of a meek and lowly disposition. At first sight nothing seems more unsuitable, for Chellalu needs a firm hand. But firmness without wisdom would have been disastrous; so as we had not the perfect combination, we chose the less dangerous virtue, and gave the nursery scamp to the gentlest of us all. Sometimes, to tell the whole unromantic truth, we have been afraid less Esli was spilling emotion in vain upon this graceless soul; and we have suggested an exchange of angels—but somehow it has never come to pass. Once we almost did it. For a noise past all bounds called us down to the nursery, and we found the cause of it in a huddled heap in the corner. "Chellalu! what is the matter?" Only the softest of soft sobs, heard in the silence that followed our advent, and one round shoulder heaved, and the curly head went down on the arm in an attitude of woe. Now this is not Chellalu's way at all. Soft sobbing is not in her line; and I turned to the twenty-nine children now prancing about in

unholy glee, and they shouted the explanation: "Oh, she is Esli Accal! She was very exceedingly naughty. She would not come when Accal called; she raced round the room so fast that Accal could not catch her, and then she jumped out of her cumasu" (the single small garment worn), "and ran out into the garden! And Esli Accal sat down in a corner and cried. And Chellalu is Esli Accal!" Their Real Use But the pet opportunity in those glad days was when some freak of manner in friend or visitor suggested a new game. We used to wish, sometimes, that these kind people understood how much pleasure they were giving to the artless babe who was studying them with such interest, while they, all unconscious of their real use, imagined probably she was thinking of nothing more serious than sweets. After an hour in the bungalow, Chellalu would wander off, apparently because she was tired of us, but really because she was full of a new and original idea, and wanted an audience. Once she puzzled the nursery community who had not been visiting the bungalow, by mincing about on pointed toes, with shoulders shrugged like a dancing master in caricature. The babies thought this a very nice game, and for weeks they played it industriously.

Chellalu talked late—she has long ago made up for lost time—but she was never at a loss for an answer to a question which could be answered by action. "Who is in the nursery now?" we asked her one afternoon when she had escaped before the tea-bell, that trumpet of jubilee to the nursery, had rung. She smiled and sat down slowly, and then sighed. Another sigh, and she proceeded to perform her toilet. When the small hands went up to the head with an action of decorously swinging the back hair up and coiling it into a loose knot, and when a spasmodic shake suggested it must be done over again, there was no doubt as to who was in charge. No one but the excellent Pakium, one of our earlier workers, ever did things quite like this. No one else was so ponderous. No one sighed in that middle-aged manner, no one but Pakium. We never could blame Pakium for Chellalu’s escape. As well blame a mature cat for the escapades of her kitten. Chellalu, watching for a clue as to her fate, would sigh again profoundly. It was never easy to return her.

"OH, IT’S A JOKE!"

We were not sorry when this phase passed into something safer for herself, though perhaps not so charming to the public. Chellalu at two and three-quarters had surgical ambitions. Medical work she considered slow. She liked operations. Her first, so far as we know, was performed upon the unwilling eye of a smaller and weaker sister. "Lie down!" she had commanded, and the patient had lain down. "Open your eyes!" At this point the victim realised what she was in for, and her howls brought deliverance; but not before Chellalu had the agitated baby’s head in a firm grip between her knees, and holding the screwed-up eye wide open with one hand, was proceeding to drop in "medicine" with the other. Mercifully the medicine was water.

Thwarted in this direction, Chellalu applied herself to bandaging. She would persuade someone to lend her a finger or a toe; the owner was assured it was sore—very sore. She would then proceed to bandage it to the best of her ability. But all this was mere play. What Chellalu’s soul yearned for was a real knife, or even only a needle, provided it would prick and cause red blood to flow. Oh to be allowed to operate properly, as grown-up people do! Chellalu had seen them do it—had seen thorns extracted from little bare feet, and small sores dressed; and it had deeply interested her. The difficulty was, no one would offer a limb. She walked up and down the nursery one morning with a bit of an old milk tin, very jagged and sharp and inviting, and secreted in her curls was a long, bright darning needle; but though she took so much trouble to prepare, no one would give

her a chance to perform, and Chellalu was disgusted. Someone who did not know her suggested she should perform on herself. This disgusted her still more. Do doctors perform on themselves!

Yesh: No

Chellalu's latest phase introduces the kindergarten. For an educational comrade, perceiving our defects in this direction, furnished a kindergarten for us, and gave us a kind push-off into these pleasant waters; so the little boat sails gaily, and the children at least are content.

Chellalu has never been so keen about this institution as the other babies are. "Do you like the kindergarten?" some one asked her the other day; and she answered with her usual decision: "Yesh. No." We thought she was talking at random, and tested her by questions about things which we knew she liked or disliked. But she was never caught. "Well, then, don't you like the kindergarten?" "Yesh. No." It was evident she knew what she meant, and said it exactly. Bits of it she likes, other bits she thinks might be improved. The trouble is that she has an objection to sitting in the same place for more than a minute at longest. Other babies, steady, mature things of five, are already evolving quite orderly sentences in English—the language in which the kindergarten is partly taught—and we feel they are getting on. Chellalu never stops long enough to evolve anything, and yet she seems to be doing a little. From the first week she has talked all she knew in unabashed fashion. "Good morning very much" was an early production; and it was followed by many oddments forgotten now, but comical in effect at the time, which perhaps may explain the otherwise inexplicable fact that she sometimes learns something.

One only of those early dashes into the unexplored land is remembered, because it enriched us with a new synonym. It was at afternoon tea that a sympathetic Sittie (the word means "Mother's younger sister"), knowing that Chellalu had received something thoroughly well earned, asked her in English: "What did Ammal give you this morning?" Chellalu caught at the one familiar word in this sentence (for the babies learn the names of the flowers in the garden before they are troubled with lesser matters), and she answered brightly: "Morning-glory!" So Morning-glory has become to us an alias for smacks. This same Morning-glory is the subject of one of the kindergarten songs. For after searching through two or three hundred pages of nursery rhymes, and interviewing many proper kindergarten songs, we found few that belonged to the Indian babies' world; and so we had to make them for ourselves. These songs are about the flowers and the birds and other simple things, and are twittered by the tiniest with at least some intelligence, which at present is as much as we can wish. All the babies sing to the flowers, but it is Chellalu who gives them surprises. One day we saw her standing under a bamboo arch, covered with her favourite Morning-glory. She had two smaller babies with her, one on either side. "Amma! Look!" she called; but italics are inadequate to express the emphasis. "Look, Morning—glory—kissing—'chother," and she pointed with eagerness to the nestling little clusters of lilac, growing, as their pretty manner is, close to each other. Then, seizing each of the babies in a fervent and somewhat embarrassing embrace, she hugged and kissed them both; and finally wheeling round on the flowers, addressed them impressively: "For—all—loving—little—Indian—children—want—to—be—like—you."

1.08.04. Book 8: 4. The photographs

CHAPTER IV The Photographs "THAT THING AGAIN!"

I DO not know how they will strike the critical public, but the photos are so much better than we dared to expect, that we are grateful and almost satisfied. Of course, they are insipid as compared with the lively originals; but the difficulty was to get them of any truthful sort whatsoever, for the babies regarded the photographer—the kindest and mildest of men—with the gravest suspicion: and the moment he appeared, little faces, all animation before, would stiffen into shyness, and the light would slip out of them, and the naturalness, so that all the camera saw, and therefore all it could show, was a succession of blanks.

Then, too, when our artist friend was with us we were in the grasp of an epidemic of cholera. Morning and evening, and sometimes into the night, we were tending the sick and dying in the village; and in the interval between we had little heart for photographs. But the visit of a real photographer is a rare event in Dohnavur, and we forced ourselves to try to take advantage of it. Remembering our difficulties, we wonder we got anything at all; and we hope that stranger eyes will be kind.

PYÂRIE AND VINEETHA.

"Do smile, you little Turk!"

Often when we looked at the pretty little reversed picture in the camera, with its delicate colouring and the grace of movement, we have wished that we could send it as we saw it, all living and true. The photos were taken in the open air; underfoot was soft terra-cotta-coloured sand; overhead, the cloudless blue. In such a setting the baby pictures look their brightest, something very different from these dull copies in sepia. An Oriental scene in print always looks sorry for itself, and quite apologetic. It knows it is almost a farce, and very flat and poor.

Then there were difficulties connected with character. Our photographer was more accustomed to the dignified ways of mountains than to the extremely restless habit of children; and he never could understand why they would not sit for him as the mountains sat, and let him focus them comfortably. The babies looked at things from an opposite point of view, and strongly objected to delays and leisureliness of every description. Sometimes when the focussing process promised to be much prolonged, we put a child we did not wish to photograph in the place of one upon whom we had designs, and then at the last moment exchanged her. But the baby thus beguiled seemed to divine our purpose; and, resenting such ensnarements, would promptly wriggle out of focus. It was like trying to observe some active animalculæ under a high power. The microscope is perfect, the creatures are entrapped in a drop of water on the slide; but the game is not won by any means. Sometimes, after spoiling more plates than was convenient, our artist almost gave up in despair; but he never quite gave up, and we owe what we have to his infinite patience. The Bête Noir

Pyârie was the most troublesome of these small sitters, though she was old enough to know better. My mother was with us when she came to us, a tiny babe and very delicate. She had loved her and helped to nurse her, and so we wanted a happy photograph for her sake; but nothing was further from Pyârie's intentions, and instead of smiling, she scowled. Our first attempt was in the compound, where a bullock-bandy stood. Pyârie and Vineetha, a little girl of about the same age, were very pleased to climb over the pole and untwist the rope and play see-saw; but when the objectionable camera appeared, they stared at it with aversion, and no amount of coaxing would persuade Pyârie to smile. "Can't you do something to improve her expression?" inquired the photographer, emerging from his black hood; then someone said in desperation: "Do smile, you little Turk!" Vineetha, about whose expression we were not concerned, obediently smiled; but Pyârie looked thunderclouds, and turned her head away. She was caught before she turned, poor dear, so that photograph was a failure.

Once again our kind friend tried. This time he gave her a doll. Pyârie is most motherly. She is usually tender and loving with dolls, and we hoped for a sweet expression. But in this we were disappointed. She accepted the doll—a beautiful thing, with a good constitution and imperturbable temper; and she looked it straight in the face—a rag face painted—smiling as we wanted her to smile. Then she smote it, and she scolded it, and called for a stick and whacked it, and called for a bigger stick and repeated the performance. Finally she stopped, laid the doll upon the step, sat down on it, and smiled. But she was hopelessly out of focus by this time, and it was weary work getting her in. She smiled during the process in a perfectly exasperating manner, but the moment all was ready she suddenly wriggled out; and when invited to go in again, she shook her head decidedly, and pointing to the camera with its glaring glass eye, covered at that moment with its cloth, she remarked, "Naughty! Naughty!" and we had to give her up.

"DISGUSTING!" SHE REMARKED IN EXPLICIT YOUNG TAMIL, AND LOOKED DISGUSTED.

"Perhaps she would be happier in someone's arms," next suggested the long-suffering artist; and so one morning, just after her bath, she was caught up, sweet and smiling, and played with till the peals of merry laughter assured us of an easy victory. But the camera was no sooner seen stalking round to the nursery, than suspicions filled Pyârie's breast. That thing again! And the photograph taken under such circumstances is left to speak for itself. Why did it follow her everywhere? Life, haunted by a camera, was not worth living—in which sentiment some of us heartily concur.

I want a birthday

Once an attempt was made when Pyârie and two other little girls were busily playing on the doorstep. Pyârie soon perceived and expressed her opinion about the fraud—for the camera's stealthy approach could not be kept from the children. "Disgusting!" she remarked in explicit young Tamil, and looked disgusted. The photograph which resulted was perfect in detail of little rounded limb and curly head, but it was lamentable as regards expression; so once more our persevering friend tried to catch her unawares. He showed us the result at breakfast in the shape of a negative which we recognised as Pyârie. He seemed very pleased. "Look at the pose!" he said. There was pose certainly, but where was the smile? Pyârie's one idea had evidently been to ward off something or someone; and our artist explained it by saying that in despair of getting her quiet for one second, he had directed his servant to climb an almost overhanging tree, and the child

apparently thought he was going to tumble on the top of her, and objected. "I got another of her smiling beautifully, but the plate is cracked," we were told, after the table had admired the pose. That is a way plates have. The one you most want cracks.

"'LOOK AT THE POSE!'

He said. There was pose, certainly, but where was the smile?"

Poor little Pyârie; we sometimes fear lest her "pose" should be too true of her. She takes life hardly, and often protests. "I want a birthday!"—this was only yesterday, when everyone was rejoicing over a birthday jubilation. Pyârie alone was sorrowful. She stood by her poor little lonely self, with her head thrown back and her mouth wide open, and her tears ran into her open mouth as she wailed: "Aiyo! Aiyo! (Alas! Alas!) I want a birthday!" But she is such a loving child, so loyal to her own and so unselfish to all younger things, that we hope for her more than we fear. And yet underneath there is a fear; and we ask those who can understand to remember this little one sometimes, for the world is not always kind to its poor little foolish Pyâries.

I am writing in the afternoon, and two little people are playing on the floor. One has a picture-book, and the other is looking eagerly as she turns the pages and questions: "What is it? What is it?" I notice it is always Pyârie who asks the question, and Vineetha who answers it: "It is a cow. It is a cat." "Why don't you let Vineetha ask you what it is?" I suggest; but Pyârie continues as before: "What is it? What is it?" varied by "What colour is it? What shape is it? Who made it?" and the mischief in her eyes (would that our artist could have caught it!) explains the game. It is decidedly better to be teacher than scholar, because suitable questions can cover all ignorance. Pyârie has not been to the kindergarten of late, and has reason to fear Vineetha is somewhat ahead of her; so she ignores my proposals, and continues her safe questions. We sometimes think we shall one night be heard talking in our sleep, and the burden of our conversation will be always—"What is it? What colour is it? What shape is it? Who made it?"

1.08.05. Book 8: 5. Tara and Evu

CHAPTER V

Tara and Evu

TARA. OUR nurseries are full of contrasts, but perhaps the two who are most unlike are the little Tara and Evu, aged, at the hour of writing, three years and two and a half. I am hammering at my typewriter, when clear through its metallic monotony comes in distinct double treble, "Amma! Tala!" "Amma! Evu!" They always announce each other in this order, and with much emphasis. If it is impossible to stop, I give them a few toys, and they sit down on the mat exactly opposite my table and play contentedly. This lasts for a short five minutes; then a whimper from Tara makes me look up, and I see Evu, with a face of more mischief than malice, holding all the toys—Tara's share and her own—in a tight armful, while Tara points at her with a grieved expression which does not touch Evu in the least. A word, however, sets things right. Evu beams upon Tara, and pours the whole armful into her lap. Tara smiles forgivingly, and returns Evu's share. Evu repentantly thrusts them back. Tara's heart overflows, and she hugs Evu. Evu wriggles out of this embrace, and they play for another five minutes or so without further misadventure.

Only once I remember Evu sinned beyond forgiveness. The occasion was Pyârie's rag-doll of smiling countenance, which had been badly neglected by the family. But Tara felt for it and loved it. She was small at the time, and the doll was large, and Tara must have got tired of carrying it; but she would not tell it so, and for one whole morning she staggered about with the cumbersome beauty tilted over her shoulder, which gave her the appearance of an unbalanced but very affectionate parent. This was too much for Evu, to whom the comic appeals much more than the sentimental. She watched her opportunity, and pounced upon the doll. Tara gave chase; but Evu's fat legs can carry her faster than one would suppose, and Tara's wails rose to a shriek when across half the garden's width she saw that ruthless sinner swing her treasure round by one arm and then deliberately jump on it. It was hours before Tara recovered.

Such a breach of the peace is happily rare; for the two are a pretty illustration of the mutual attraction of opposites. At this moment they are playing ball. This is the manner of the game: Tara sits in a high chair and throws the ball as far as she can. Evu dashes after it like an excited kitten, and kitten-wise badly wants to tumble over and worry it; for it is made of bits of wool, which, as every sensible baby knows, were only put in to be pulled out. She resists the temptation, however, and presents the ball to Tara with a somewhat inconsequent "Tankou!" "Tankou!" returns Tara politely, and tosses the ball again. This time Evu sits down with her back to Tara, and proceeds to investigate the ball. It is perfectly fascinating. The ends are all loose and quite easily pulled out. Evu forgets all about Tara in her keen desire to see to the far end of this delight. "Evu!" comes from the chair in accents of dignified surprise. "Tala!" exclaims Evu abashed, and hurries up with the ball. "Tankou!" she says as before, and Tara responds "Tankou!" This is an integral part of the game. If either forgets it, the other corrects her by remarking inquiringly, "Tankou?" whereupon the echo replies in a tone of apology, "Tankou!"

Devotions

Both these babies are devout, as most things Indian are. But Evu cannot sit still long enough to be promoted to go to church; and perhaps this is the reason why in religious matters Tara takes the lead, for she does go to church. In secularities it is always Evu who initiates, and Tara admiringly follows. The ball game was exceptional only because Evu prefers the rôle of kitten to that of queen. This little characteristic is shown in common ways. The two are sitting on your knee entirely comfortable and content. The prayer-bell rings. Down struggles Tara. "To prayers I must go!" she says with decision in Tamil. "Evu too," urges Evu, also in Tamil. "Tum!" says Tara in superior English, and waits. Evu "tums," and they hastily depart. Or it is the time for evening hymns and good-night kisses. We have sung through the chief favourites, ending always with, "Jesus, tender Shepherd." "Now sing, 'Oh, luvvly lily g'oing in our garden!'" This from Tara. Echo from Evu: "Yes; 'Oh, luvvly lily g'oing in our garden!'" You point out to the garden: "It is dark, there are no lovely lilies to be seen; besides, that is not exactly a hymn; shall we have 'Jesus, tender Shepherd,' again, and say good-night?" But this is not at all satisfactory. Tara looks a little hurt. "Tender Shepperd, no! Oh, luvvly lily!" Evu wonders if we are making excuses. Perhaps we have forgotten the tune, and she starts it:—

Oh, lovely lily, Growing in our garden, Who made a dress so fair For you to wear? Who made you straight and tall To give pleasure to us all?

Oh, lovely lily, Who did it all?

Oh, little children, Playing in our garden, God made this dress so fair For us to wear.

God made us straight and tall To give pleasure to you all.

Oh, little children,

God did it all.

Then Tara smiles all round, and you are given to understand you have earned your good-night kisses. Evidently to Tara at least there is a sense of incompleteness somewhere if the lovely lilies are excluded from the family devotions. To Tara and to Evu, as to most babies, the garden is a pleasant place. But when they grow up and make gardens, they will not fill them with forbidden joys as we do. One of the temptations of life is furnished by inconsiderate ferns, which hold their curly infant fronds just within reach. Then there are crotons, with bright leaves aggressively yellow and delightful, and there are "tunflowers"; and the babies think us greedy in our attitude towards all these things. The croton was especially alluring; and one day Tara was found tiptoe on a low wall, reaching up with both hands, eagerly pulling bits of leaf off. She was brought to me to be judged; and I said: "Poor leaves! Shall we try to put them on again?" And hand in hand we went to the garden, and Tara tried. But the pulled-off bits would not fit on again; and Tara's face was full of serious thought, though she said nothing. Next day she was found on the same low wall, reaching up tiptoe in the same sinful way to the shining yellow leaves overhead. Quite suddenly she stopped, put her hands behind her back, and never again was she known to pick croton leaves to pieces. The same plan prevailed with the ferns. The poor little crumples of silver and green moved her to pity, and she left them to uncurl in peace when once she had tried and sadly failed to help them. But the sunflowers' feelings did not affect her in quite the same way. The kind we have in

abundance is that little dwarf variety with a thin stalk, and a cheerful face which smiles up at you even after you behead it, and does not seem to mind. Tara was convinced such treatment did not hurt them. They would stop smiling if it did. But one day she suddenly seemed to feel a pang of compunction, for she looked at the little useless heads and sighed. I had suggested their being fitted on again, as with the croton leaves and ferns. But this idea had failed; and what worked the change I know not, for Tara never told. But "tunflowers" now are left in peace so far as she is concerned; and she is learning to pick the free grasses and wild-flowers, which happily grow for everybody, and to make sure their stalks are long enough to go into water, which is the last thing untutored babies seem to think important.

Tara’s Way

There is much to be done for all our children, but perhaps for Tara especially, if she is to grow up strong in soul to fight the battles of life. We felt this more than ever on the day of our last return from the hills, after nearly seven weeks’ absence. On the evening when we left them, we had gone round the nurseries after the little ones had fallen asleep, and said goodbye to each of them without their knowing it; but when we came to Tara’s mat, and kissed the little sleeping face, she stirred and said, "Amma!" in her sleep; and we stole away fearing she should wake and understand. Now in the early morning we were home again, and all the children who were up were on the verandah to welcome us, each in her own way. It was Tara’s way which troubled us. At first most of the babies were shy, for six weeks are like six years to the very young; but soon there was a general rush and a thoroughly cheerful chatter. Tara did not join in it. She stood outside the little dancing dazzle of delight—the confusion of little animated coloured dots is rather like the shake of a kaleidoscope—and she just looked and looked. Then, as we drew her close, the little hands felt and stroked one’s face as if the evidence of eye and ear were not enough to make her sure beyond a doubt that her own had come back to her; and then, as the assurance broke, she clung with a little cry of joy, and suddenly burst into tears.

If only we could hold her safe and sheltered in our arms for ever! How the longing swept through one at that moment: for the winds of the world are cold. But it cannot be, it should not be, for such love would be weak indeed. Rather do we long to brace the gentle nature so that its very sensitiveness may change to a tender power, and the fountain of sweet waters refresh many a desert place. But who is sufficient for even this? Handle the little soul carelessly, harden rather than brace, misinterpret the broken expression, misunderstand the signs—and the sweet waters turn to bitterness. God save us from such mistake!

We covet prayer for our children. We want to know that around them all is thrown that mysterious veil of protection which is woven out of prayer. We need prayer, too, for ourselves, that our love may be brave and wise.

Kittenhood

Evu’s disposition is different. It would not be easy to imagine Evu overcome by her feelings as Tara was at that hour of our return. One cannot imagine a kitten shedding tears of joy; and Evu is a kitten, a dear little Persian kitten, with nothing worse than mischief at present to account for. Of that there is no lack. "Oh, it is Evu!" we say, and everyone knows what to expect when "it is Evu." Evu’s chief sentiment that morning, so far as she expressed it, was rather one of wonder at our

ignorant audacity. "You vanished in the night when we were all asleep, and now you suddenly drop from the skies before we are properly awake, and expect us all to begin again exactly where we left off. How little you know of babies!" Doubtless this sentence was somewhat beyond her in language; but Evu is not dependent on language, and she conveyed the sense of it to us. She backed out of reach of kisses, and stood with a small finger upraised; much as a kitten might raise its paw in mock protest to its mother. She soon made friends, however, and proved herself an affectionate kitten, though wholly unemotional. When Tara is naughty, as she is at times, like most people of only three, a reproachful look brings her spirits down to the lowest depths of distress. Evu is more inclined to hold up that funny little warning first finger, and shake it straight in your face. This, at two and a half, is terrible presumption; but the brown eyes are so innocent, you cannot be too shocked. Sometimes, however, the case is worse, and Evu tries to sulk. She sits down solemnly on the ground, and throws her four fat limbs about in a dreadful recklessness, supposed to strike the grown-up offender dumb with awe and penitence. Sometimes she even tries to put out her lower lip, but it was not made a suitable shape, for it smiles in spite of itself; and then there is a sudden spring; and two little arms are round your neck, and you are being told, if you know how to listen, what a very tiresome thing it is to feel obliged to sin. Then, with the comforting sense of irresponsible kittenhood fully restored, Evu discovers some new diversion, and you find yourself weakly wishing kittens need not grow into cats.

1.08.06. Book 8: 6. Principalities, Powers, Rulers

CHAPTER VI Principalities, Powers, Rulers

IT may seem a quick transition from nursery to battle-field; but rightly to understand this story, it must be remembered that our nursery is set in the midst of the battle-field. It is a little sheltered place, where no sound of war disturbs the babies at their play, and the flowers bloom like the babies in happy unconsciousness of battles, and make a garden for us and fill it full of peace; but underlying the babies' caresses and the sweetness of the flowers there is always a sense of conflict just over, or soon coming on. We "let the elastic go" in the nursery. We are happy, light-hearted children with our children; sometimes we even wonder at ourselves; and then remember that the happiness of the moment is a pure, bright gift, not meant to be examined, but just enjoyed, and we enjoy it as if there were no battles in the world or any sadness any more. And yet this book comes hot from the fight. It is not a retrospect written in the calm after-years, when the outline of things has grown indistinct and the sharpness of life is blurred. There is nothing mellowed about a battle-field. Even as I write these words, the post comes in and brings two letters. One tells of a child of twelve in whom the first faint desires have awakened to lead a different life. "She is a Temple girl. Pray that she may have grace to hold on; and that if she does, we may be guided through the difficult legal complications. Poor little girl! It makes one sick to think of her spoiled young life!" The other is a Tamil letter, about another child who is in earnest, so far as the writer can ascertain, to escape from the life planned out for her. She learned about Jesus at school, and responded in her simple way; but was suddenly taken from school, and shut up in the back part of the house and not allowed to learn any more. "Like a little dove fluttering in a cage, so she seemed to me. But she is a timid dove, and the house is full of wickedness. How will she hold out against it? By God's grace I was allowed to see her for one moment alone. I gave her a little Gospel. She kissed it with her eyes" (touched her eyes with it), "and hid it in her dress."

Only a little while ago we traced a bright young Brahman girl to a certain Temple house, and by means of one of our workers we made friends with her. The child, a little widow, was ill, and was sent to the municipal hospital for medicine. It was there our worker met her, and the child whispered her story in a few hurried words. She had been kidnapped (she had not time to tell how), and shut up in the Temple house, and told she must obey the rules of the house and it was useless to protest. "If we could help you," she was asked, "would you like to come to us?" The child hesitated—the very name "Christian" was abhorrent to her—but after a moment's doubt she nodded, and then slipped away. Our worker never saw her again. The conversation must have been noticed by the child's escort, and reported. She was sent off to another town, and all attempts to trace her failed.

"The Great" And the god to whom these young child-lives are dedicated? In South India all the greater symbols of deity are secluded in the innermost shrine, the heart of the Temple. In our part of the country the approach to the shrine is always frequented by Brahman priests, who would never allow the foreigner near, even if he wished to go near. "Far, far! remove thyself far!" would

be the immediate command, did any polluting presence presume to draw near the shrine. There are idols by the roadside, and these are open to all; but they are lesser creations. The Great, as the people call that which the Temple contains, is something apart. It is to these—The Great—that little children are dedicated; the whole Temple system is worked in their name.

"Have you ever seen the god to whom your little ones would have been given?" is a question we are often asked; and until a few days ago we always answered, "Never." But now we have seen it, seen it unexpectedly and unintentionally, as we waited for an opportunity to talk to the crowds of people who had assembled to see it being ceremonially bathed. We cannot account for our being allowed to see it, except by the fact that the Brahmans had withdrawn for the moment, and we being, as our custom is, in Indian dress, were not noticed in the crowd.

Near the place where the idol was being bathed, with much pomp by the priests, was a little rest-house, where we had waited till some child told us all was over. Then we came out and mingled with the throng, not fearing they would misunderstand our motive. While we talked with them, the Brahmans, who had been bathing in the river after the water had been sanctified by the god, began to stream up the steps and pass through the crowd, which opened respectfully and made a wide avenue within itself: for well the smallest child in that crowd understood that no touch might defile those Brahmans as they walked, wringing out their dripping garments and their long black hair.

How we searched the faces as they passed!—sensual, cynical, cold faces, faces of utter carelessness, faces full of pride and aloofness. But there were some so different—earnest faces, keen faces, faces sensitive and spiritual. Oh, the pathos of it all! How our hearts went out to these, whose eager wistfulness marked them out as truly religious and sincere! How we longed that they should hear the word, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest"! They passed, men young and old, women and children, and very many widows; and then suddenly two palanquins which had been standing near were carried down to the awning where the idol had been bathed; and before we realised what was happening, they passed us. In the first was the disk, the symbol of the god; in the second, the god itself.

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"—this was the word that flashed through us then. That small, insignificant, painted, and bejewelled image, in its gaudy little palanquin, was not only that. It was the visible representative of Powers.

We thought of a merry child in our nursery who was dedicated at birth to this particular Power. By some glad chance that little girl was the first to run up to us in welcome upon our return home in the evening. We thought of her with thankfulness which cannot be expressed; but the sorrow of other children bound to this same god swept over us as we stood gazing after the palanquins, till they became a coloured blur in the shimmering sunshine. There was one such, a bright little child of eight, who was in attendance upon an old blind woman belonging to that Temple. "Yes," she had answered to our distressed questions, "she is my adopted daughter. Should I not have a daughter to wait upon me and succeed me? How can I serve the god, being blind?" We thought of another, only six, who was to be given to the service "when she was a suitable age." Her parents were half-proud and half-ashamed of their intention; and when they knew we were aware of it, they denied it, and we found it impossible to do anything.

We turned to the people about us. They were laughing and chatting, and the women were showing each other the pretty glass bangles and necklets they had bought at the fair. Glorious sunshine filled the world, the whole bright scene sparkled with life and colour, and all about us was a "lucid paradise of air." But "only as souls we saw the folk thereunder," and our spirit was stirred within us. There is something very solemn in such a scene—something that must be experienced to be understood. The pitiful triviality, the sense of tremendous forces at work among these trivialities; the people, these crowds of people, absorbed in the interests of the moment—and Eternity so near; all this and much more presses hard upon the spirit till one understands the old Hebrew word: "The burden which the prophet did see." Does this sound intolerant and narrow, as if no good existed outside our own little pale? Surely it is not so. We are not ignorant of the lofty and the noble contained in the ancient Hindu books; we are not of those who cannot recognise any truth or any beauty unless it is labelled with our label. We know God has not left Himself without witnesses anywhere. But we know—for the Spirit of Truth Himself has inspired the description—how desolate is the condition of those who are without Christ. We dare not water down the force of such a description till the words mean practically nothing. We form no hard, presumptuous creed as to how the God of all the earth will deal with these masses of mankind who have missed the knowledge of Him here; we know He will do right. But we know, with a knowledge which is burnt into us, how very many of the units live who compose these masses. We know what they are missing to-day, through not knowing our blessed Saviour as a personal, living Friend; and we know what it means to the thoughtful mind to face an unknown to-morrow. A Hindu in a town in the northern part of our district lay dying. He knew that death was near, and he was in great distress. His friends tried to comfort him by reminding him of the gods, and by quoting stanzas from the sacred books; but all in vain. Nothing brought him any comfort, and he cried aloud in his anguish of soul.

Then to one of the watchers came the remembrance of how, as a little lad, he had seen a Christian die. In his desperation at the failure of all attempts to comfort the dying man, he thought of this one little, far-back memory; and though he could hardly dare to hope there would be much help in it, he told it to his friend. The Christian was Ragland, the missionary. He was living in a little house outside the town, when a sudden hæmorrhage surprised him, and he had no time to prepare for death. He just threw himself upon his bed, and looking up, exclaimed, "Jesus!" and passed in perfect peace. Outside the window was a little Hindu boy, unobserved by any in the house. He had climbed up to the window, and, leaning in, watched all that happened, heard the one word "Jesus," saw the quick and peaceful passing; and then slipped away unnoticed. The dying Hindu listened as his friend described it to him. And this little faint ray was the only ray of comfort that lightened the dark way for him.

Compare that experience with this:—

"Oh for a Love——" The missionary to whom this tale was told by the Hindu who had tried to console his dying friend, was himself smitten with dangerous illness, and lay in the dim borderland, unable to think or frame a prayer. Then like the melody of long familiar music, without effort, without strain, came the calming words of the old prayer: "Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord; and by Thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the

love of Thine only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Could any two scenes present a more moving contrast? Could any contrast contain a more persuasive call? As we went in and out among the crowd, there were many who turned away uninterested; but some listened, and some sat down by the wayside to read aloud, in the sing-song chant of the East, the little booklets or Gospels we gave them. We, who are constantly among these people, feel our need of a fresh touch, as we speak with them and see them day by day. We need renewed compassions, renewed earnestness. It is easy to grow accustomed to things, easy to get cool. We pray not only for those at home, who as yet are not awake to feel the eloquence and the piteousness of the great "voiceless silence" of these lands, but we pray for ourselves with ever deepening intensity:—

Oh for a love, for a burning love, like the fervent flame of fire!

Oh for a love, for a yearning love, that will never, never tire!

Lord, in my need I appeal unto Thee;

Oh, give me my heart’s desire!

1.08.07. Book 8: 7. How the Children come

CHAPTER VII How the Children Come

THEY come in many ways through the help of many friends. We have told before[A] how our first two babies came to us through two pastors, one in the north, the other in the south of our district. Since then many Indian pastors and workers, and several warm-hearted Christian apothecaries and nurses in Government service, have become interested; with the result that little children who must otherwise have perished have been saved.

One little babe, who has since become one of our very dearest, was redeemed from Temple life by the wife of a leading pastor, who was wonderfully brought to the very place where the little child was waiting for the arrival of the Temple people. We have seldom known a more definite leading. "I being in the way, the Lord led me," was surely true of that friend that day, and of other Indian sisters who helped her. Later, when she came to stay with us, she told us about it. "When first I heard of this new work, I was not in sympathy with it. I even talked against it to others. But when I saw that little babe, so innocent and helpless, and so beautiful too, then all my heart went out to it. And now——" Tears filled her eyes. She could not finish her sentence. Nor was there any need; the loving Indian heart had been won. My mother was with us when this baby came; and she adopted her as her own from the first, and always had the little basket in which the baby slept put by her bedside. When the mosquitoes began to be troublesome, the basket was slipped under her own mosquito net, lest the little pink blossom should be disturbed. But the baby did not thrive at first; and the pink, instead of passing into buff, began to fade into something too near ivory for our peace of mind. It was then the friend who had saved the little one came to stay with us; and she proposed taking her and her nurse out to her country village, in hopes of getting a foster-mother for her there. So my mother, the pastor’s wife, the baby, and her nurse, went out to the Good News Village, and stayed in the pastor’s hospitable home. The hope which had drawn them there was not fulfilled; but the memory of that visit is fresh and fragrant. We read of alienation between Indian Christians and missionaries. We are told there cannot be much mutual affection and contact. We often wonder why it should be so, and are glad we know by experience so little of the difficulty, that we cannot understand it. We have found India friendly, and her Christians are our friends. In these matters each can only speak from personal experience. Ours has been happy. There may be unkindness and misunderstanding in India, as in England; but nowhere could there be warmer love, more tender affection.

All sorts of people help us in this work of saving the children. Once it was a convert-schoolboy who saw a widow with a baby in her arms. Noticing the bright large eyes, and what he described as the "blossoming countenance of the child," he got into conversation with the mother, and learned that she had been greatly tempted by Temple women in the town, who had admired the baby and wanted to get it. "If I give her to them, she will never be a widow," was the allurement there. The bitterness of widowhood had entered into her soul, and poisoned the very mother-love within her; and yet there was something of it left, for she did not want her babe to be a widow. The boy, with

the leisureliness of the East, dropped the matter there; and only in a casual fashion, a week or so later, mentioned in a letter that he had seen this pretty child, and that probably, the mother would end in yielding to the temptation to give her to the Temple—"but it may be by the grace of God that you will be able to save her." We sent at once to try to find the mother; but she had wandered off, and no one knew her home. However, the boy was stirred to prayer, and we prayed here; and a search through towns and villages resulted at last in the mother being traced and the child being saved. The Talk on the Verandah

Christian women have helped us. One such, sitting on her verandah after her morning's work, heard two women in the adjoining verandah discuss the case of a widow who had come from Travancore with a bright little baby-girl, whom she had vowed she would give to one of our largest temples. The Christian woman had heard of the Dohnavur nurseries, and at once she longed to save this little child, but hardly knew how to do it. She feared to tell the two women she had overheard their conversation, so in the simplicity of her heart she prayed that the widow might be detained and kept from offering her gift till our worker, old Dévai, could come; and she wrote to old Dévai.

Happily Dévai was at home when the letter reached her; otherwise days would have been lost, for her wanderings are many. She went at once, and found the mother most reasonable. Her idea had been to acquire merit for herself, and an assured future for her child, by giving it to the gods; but when the matter was opened to her, she was willing to give it to us instead. In her case, as in the other, our natural instinct would have been to try to make some provision by which the mothers could keep their babies; but it would not have been possible. The cruel law of widowhood had begun to do its work in them. The Temple people's inducements would have proved too much for them. The children would not have been safe.

Once it was a man-servant who saved a lovely child. He heard an aside in the market which put him on the track. The case was very usual. The parents were dead, and the grandmother was in difficulties. For the parents' sake she wanted to keep the dear little babe; but she was old, and had no relatives to whose care she could commit it. Mercifully we were the first to hear about this little one; for even as a baby she was so winning that Temple people would have done much to get her, and the old grandmother would almost certainly have been beguiled into giving her to them. How often it has been so! "She will be brought up carefully according to her caste. All that is beautiful will be hers, jewels and silk raiment." The hook concealed within the shining bait is forgotten. The old grandmother feels she is doing her best for the child, and the little life passes out of her world.

"It is a dear little thing, and the man (its grandfather) seemed really fond of it. He said he would not part with it; but its parents are both dead, and he did not know what might happen to it if he died." This from the letter of a fellow-missionary, who saved the little one and sent her out to us, is descriptive of many. "Not the measure of a rape-seed of sleep does she give me. I have done my best for her since her mother died, but her noise is most vexatious." This was a father's account of the matter only a week or two ago. "Have you no women relations?" we asked him. "Numerous are my womenfolk, but they are all cumbered with children: how can they help me?" Not Waifs and Strays

Given these circumstances of difficulty, and the strong under-pull of Temple influence—is it wonderful that many an orphaned babe finds her way to the Temple house? For in the South the

child of the kind we are seeking to save is never offered to us because there is no other place where she is wanted. Everywhere there are those who are searching for such children; and each little one saved represents a counter-search, and somewhere, earnest prayer. The mystery of our work, as we have said before, is the oftentimes apparent victory of wrong over right. We are silent before it. God reigns; God knows. But sometimes the interpositions are such that our hearts are cheered, and we go on in fresh courage and hope.

Among our earliest friends were some of the London Missionary Society workers of South Travancore. One of these friends interested her Biblewomen; and when, one morning, one of these Biblewomen passed a woman with a child in her arms on the road leading to a well-known Temple, she was ready to understand the leading, and made friends with the mother. She found that even then she was on her way to a Temple house. A few minutes later and she would not have passed her on the road.

There was something to account for this directness of leading. At that time we had our branch nursery at Neyoor, in South Travancore, ten miles from the place where the Biblewoman met the mother. On that same morning, Ponnamal, who was in charge there, felt impelled to go to the upper room to pray for a little child in danger. She remained in prayer till the assurance of the answer was given, and then returned to her work. That evening a bandy drove up to the nursery, and she saw the explanation of the pressure and the answer to the prayer. A little child was lifted out of the bandy, and laid in her arms. She stood with her nurses about her, and together they worshipped God. This prayer-pressure has been often our experience when special help is needed to effect the salvation of some little unknown child. It was our Prayer-day, July 6, 1907. Three of us were burdened with a burden that could not be lightened till we met and prayed for a child in peril. We had no knowledge of any special child, though, of course, we knew of many in danger. When we prayed for the many, the impression came the more strongly that we were meant to concentrate upon one. Who, or where, we did not know.

Five days later, a letter reached us from a friend in the Wesleyan Mission, working in a city five hundred miles distant. The letter was written on the 8th:—

"On the morning of the 6th, a woman who knows our Biblewomen well, told them of a little Brahman baby in great danger; so J. and two others went at once and spent the greater part of the morning trying to save the child. It was in the house of a so-called Temple woman, who had adopted it, and she had taken every care of it. For some reason she wanted to go away, and could not take it with her. Two or three women of her own kind were there and wanted it. One had money in her hand for it. But J. had already got the baby into her arms, and reasoned and persuaded until the woman at last consented. They at once brought it here. Had the friendly woman not told J., the baby would now be in the hands of the second Temple woman. I visited the woman afterwards. She had two grown girls in the room with her, the elder such a sweet girl. She told me openly it was all according to custom, and that God had arranged their lives on those lines, and they could not do otherwise. It is terribly sad, and such houses abound."

"Father, we adore Thee"

Happenings of this sort—if the word "happen" is not irreverent in such a connection—have a curiously quieting effect upon us. We are very happy; but there is a feeling of awe which finds

expression in words which, at first reading, may not sound appropriate; but we write for those who will understand:—

Oh, fix Thy chair of grace, that all my powers May also fix their reverence ;. . .

Scatter, or bind, or bend them all to Thee!

Though elements change and Heaven move, Let not Thy higher court remove, But keep a standing Majesty in me.

FOOTNOTE:

[A] "Overweights of Joy."

1.08.08. Book 8: 8. Others

CHAPTER VIII

Others STURDY AND STOLID, AND LITTLE VEERA —whose story, however, is different.

WE have some children who were not in Temple danger, but who could not have grown up good if we had not taken them. "If peril to the soul is of importance," wrote the pastor who sent us two little girls, "then it is important you should take them": so we took them. These little ones were in "peril to the soul," because their nominal Christian mother had, after her husband's death, married a Hindu, against the rules of her religion and his. The children were under the worst influence; and both were winning little things, who might have drifted anywhere. We have found it impossible to refuse such little ones, even though danger of the Temple kind may not be probable.

Such a child, for example, is the little girl the Moslem is ready to adopt and convert to the faith. Our first redeemed from this captivity (literally slavery under the name of adoption) was a cheerful little person of six, with the sturdy air the camera caught, and a manner all her own. An American missionary in an adjoining district heard of her and her little sister, and wrote to know if we would take them if he could save them. We could not say No; so he tried, and succeeded in getting the elder child; the little one had been already "adopted," and he could not get her. "The whole affair was the most astonishing thing I have ever seen in India," he wrote when he sent the little girl. The child upon arrival made friends with another, and confided to her in a burst of confidence: "Ah, she was a jewel, my own little sister—not like me, not dark of skin, but 'fair' and tender; and the great man in the turban saw her and desired her, and he took her away; and she cried and cried and cried, because she was only such a very little girl."

"The business was being discussed out in the open street"—the writer was another missionary—"the pastor heard of it from a Christian who was passing, and saw the cluster of Muhammadans round the mother and her children. It was touch-and-go with the child." These two, Sturdy and Stolid, side by side in the photograph, are in all ways quite unlike the typical Temple child; but the danger from which they were delivered is as real, and perhaps in its way as grave.

We know what her Heart is Saying

One of the sweetest of our little girls, a child with a spiritual expression which strikes all who see her, came to us through a young catechist who heard of her and persuaded her people to let her come to Dohnavur. She is an orphan; and being "fair" and very gentle, needed a mother's care. Her nearest relatives had families of their own, and were not anxious for this addition to their already numerous daughters; and the little girl, feeling herself unwanted, was fretting sadly. Then an offer came to the relations—not made expressly in words, but implied—by which they would be relieved of the responsibility of the little niece's future. All would not have been straight for the child, however, and they hesitated. The temptation was great; and in the end it is probable they would have yielded, had not the catechist heard of it, and influenced them to turn from temptation. It was the evening of our Prayer-day when the little Pearl came; and when we saw the sweet little

face, with the wistful, questioning eyes like the eyes of a little frightened dog taken away alone among strangers, and when we heard the story, and knew what the child's fate might have been, then we welcomed her as another Prayer-day gift. We do not look for gratitude in this work; who does? But sometimes it comes of itself; and the grateful love of a child, like the grateful love of a little affectionate animal lifted out of its terror and comforted, is something sweet and tender and very good to know. The Pearl says little; but her soft brown eyes look up into ours with a trustful expression of peaceful happiness; and as she slips her little hand into ours and gives it a tight squeeze, we know what her heart is saying, and we are content.

Two more of these "others" are the two in the photograph who are playing a pebble game. Their parents died leaving them in the care of an aunt, a perfectly heartless woman whose record was not of the best. She starved the children, though she was not poor; and then punished them severely when, faint with hunger, they took food from a kindly woman of another caste. Finally she gave them to a neighbour, telling her to dispose of them as she liked.

About this time our head worker, Ponnamal, was travelling in search of a child of whom we had heard in a town near Palamcottah. She could not find the child, and, tired and discouraged, turned into the large Church Missionary Society hall, where a meeting was being held to welcome our new Bishop. As Ponnamal was late, she sat at the back, and could not hear what was going on; so she gave herself up to prayer for the little child whom she had not found, and asked that her three days' journey might not be all in vain.

PEBBLES. As she prayed in silence thus, another woman came in and sat down at the back near Ponnamal. When Ponnamal looked up, she saw it was a friend she had not met for years. She began to tell her about her search for the child; and this led on to telling about the children in general, and the work we were trying to do. The other had known nothing of it all before; but as she listened, a light broke on her face, and she eagerly told Ponnamal how that same morning she had come across a Hindu woman in charge of two little girls. The Tamils when they meet, however casually, have a useful habit of exchanging confidences. The woman had told Ponnamal's friend what her errand was. Ponnamal's talk about children in danger recalled the conversation of the morning. In a few hours more Ponnamal was upon the track of the Hindu woman and her two little charges. It ended in the two little girls being saved.

1.08.09. Book 8: 9. Old Dévai

CHAPTER IX Old Dévai

SHE has been called "Old Dévai" ever since we knew her, twelve years ago; and she is still active in mind and body. "As I was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in," she would tell you with a courageous toss of the old grey head. Her spirit at least is untired.

We knew her first as a woman of character. One Sunday, in our Tamil church, a sermon was preached upon the love of the Father as compared with the love of the world. That Sunday Dévai went home and acted upon the teaching in such fashion that she had to suffer from the scourge of the tongue in her own particular world. But she went on her way, unmoved by adverse criticism. Some years later, when we were in perplexity as to how to set about our search for children in danger of being given to temples, old Dévai offered to help. She was peculiarly suitable, both in age and in position, for this most delicate work; and we accepted her offer with thanksgiving. Since then she has travelled far, and followed many a clue discovered in strange ways and in strange company. Perhaps no one in South India knows as much as Dévai knows about the secret system by which the Temple altars are supplied with little living victims; but she has no idea of how to put her knowledge into shape and express it in paragraph form. We learn most from her when she least knows she is saying anything interesting. When first we began the work, our great difficulty was, as it is still, to get upon the track of the children before the Temple women heard of them. Once they were known to be available, Temple scouts appeared mysteriously alert; and it is doubly difficult to get a little child after negotiations have been opened with the subtle Temple scout. How often old Dévai has come to us sick at heart after a long, fruitless search and effort to save some little child who, perhaps, only an hour before her arrival was carried off in triumph by the Temple people! "I pursued after the bandy, and I saw it in the distance; but swiftly went their bullocks, and I could not overtake it. At last they stopped to rest, and I came to where they were. But they smiled at me and said: 'Did you ever hear of such a thing as you ask in foolishness? Is it the custom to give up a child, once it is ours?'" Sometimes a new story is invented on the spot. "Did you not know it was my sister's child; and I, her only sister, having no child of my own, have adopted this one as my own? Would you ask me to give up my own child, the apple of my eye?" Oftener, however, the clue fails, and all Dévai knows is that the little one is nowhere to be found. Once she traced it straight to a Temple house, won her way in, and pleaded with tears, offering all compensation for expenses incurred (travelling and other) if only the Temple woman would let her take the child. But no: "If it dies, that matters little; but disgrace is not to be contemplated." When all else fails, we earnestly ask that the little one in danger may be taken quickly out of that polluted atmosphere up into purer air; and it is startling to note how solemnly the answer to that prayer has come in very many instances. The Knock at Night The clue for which we are always on the watch is often like a fine silk thread leading down into dark places where we cannot see it, can hardly feel it; it is so thin a thread. Sometimes, when we thought we held it securely, we have lost it in the dark.

Sometimes it seems as if the Evil One, whose interest in these little ones may be greater than we know, lays a false clue across our path, and bewilders us by causing us to spend time and strength in what appears to be a wholly useless fashion. Once old Dévai was lured far out of our own district in search of two children who did not even exist. She had taken all precautions to verify the information given, but a false address had baffled her; and we can only conclude that, for some reason unknown to us, but well known to those whom we oppose, they were permitted on that occasion to gain an advantage over us. We made it a rule, after that will-of-the-wisp experience, that any address out of our own district must be verified; and that the nearest missionary thereto, or responsible Indian Christian, must be approached, before further steps are taken. This rule has saved many a fruitless journey; but also we cannot help knowing it has sometimes occasioned delays which have had sad results. For distances are great in India. Dévai herself lives two days' journey from us, and her address is uncertain, as she sets off at a moment's notice for any place where she has reason to think a child in danger may be saved. Then, too, missionaries and responsible Indian Christians are not everywhere. So that sometimes it is a case of choosing the lesser of two evils, and choosing immediately.

LATHA (FIREFLY) BLOWING BUBBLES.

Once in the night a knock came to Dévai's door. A man stood outside, a Hindu known to her. "A little girl has just been taken to the Temple of A., where the great festival is being held. If you go at once you may perhaps get her." The place named was out of our jurisdiction; but in such cases Dévai knows rules are only made to be broken. Off she went on foot, got a bandy en route, reached the town before the festival was over, found the house to which she had been directed—a little shut-up house, doors and windows all closed—managed, how we never knew, to get in, found a young woman, a Temple woman from Travancore, with a little child asleep on the mat beside her, persuaded her to slip out of the house with the child without wakening anyone, crept out of the town and fled away into the night, thankful for the blessed covering darkness. The child was being kept in that house till the Temple woman to whom she was to be given produced the stipulated "Joy-gift," after which she would become Temple property. Some delay in its being given had caused that night's retention in the little shut-up house. The child, a most lovable little girl, had been kidnapped and disguised; and the matter was so skilfully managed, that we have never been able to discover even the name of her own town. We only know she must have been well brought up, for she was from the first a refined little thing with very dainty ways. She and her little special friend are sitting on the steps looking at Latha (Firefly), who is blowing bubbles. The other little one has a similar but different history. Her father brought her to us himself, fearing lest she should be kidnapped by one related to her who much wanted to have her. "I, being a man, cannot be always with the child," he said, "and I fear for her."

"It" On another occasion the clue was found through Dévai's happening to overhear the conversation of two men in a wood in the early morning. One said to the other something about someone having taken "It" somewhere; and Dévai, whose scent is keen where little "Its" are concerned, made friends with the men, and got the information she wanted from them. Careful work resulted in a little child's salvation; but Dévai hardly dared believe it safe until she reached Dohnavur. When that occurred we were all at church; for special services were being held in week-day evenings, and old Dévai had to possess her soul in patience till we came out of church. Then there was a rush round to the nursery, and an eager showing of the "It." I shall never forget

the pang of disappointment and apprehension. Several little ones had been sent to us who could not possibly live; and the nurses had got overborne, and we dreaded another strain for them. It was a tiny thing, three pounds and three-quarters of pale brown skin and bone. Its face was a criss-cross of wrinkles, and it looked any age. But "Man looketh upon the outward appearance" would have been assuredly quoted to us, regardless of context, had we ventured upon a remark to old Dévai, who poured forth the story of its salvation in vivid sentences. Next evening the old grannie of the compound told us the baby could not live till morning. She laid it on a mat and regarded it critically, felt its pulses (both wrists), examined minutely its eyes and the bridge of its nose: "No, not till morning. Better have the grave prepared, for early morning will be an inconvenient hour for digging." Others confirmed her diagnosis, and sorrowfully the order was given and the grave was dug. But the baby lived till morning; and though for two years it needed a nurse to itself, and over and over again all but left us, this baby has grown one of our healthiest; and now when old Dévai comes to see us she looks at it, and then to Heaven, and sighs with gratitude.

1.08.10. Book 8: 10. Failures?

CHAPTER X

Failures? BUT sometimes old Dévai brings us little ones who do not come to stay. Failures, the world would call them. Twice lately this has happened, and each time unexpectedly; for the babies had stories which seemed to imply a promise of future usefulness. Surely such a deliverance must have been wrought for something special, we say to ourselves, and refuse to fear.

One dear little fat "fair" baby was brought to us as a surprise, for we had not heard of her. It had seemed so improbable that Dévai could get her, that she had not written to us to ask us to pray her through the battle, as she usually does. The sound of the bullock-bells' jingle one moonlight night woke us to welcome the baby. She had travelled fifty miles in the shaky bullock-cart, and she was only a few days old; but she seemed healthy, and we had no fears. "Ah, the Lord our God gave her to me, or never could I have got her! Her mother had determined to give her to the Temple; and when I went to persuade her, she hid the baby in an earthen vessel lest my eyes should see her. But earthen pots cannot hide from the eyes of the Lord. And here she is!" The details, fished out of Dévai by dint of many questions, made it clear that in very truth the Lord, to whom all souls belong, had worked on behalf of this little one; moving even Hindu hearts, as His brave old servant pleaded, making it possible to break through caste and custom, those prison walls of most cruel convention, till even the Hindus said: "Let the Christian have the babe!" We do not know why she was taken. She never seemed to sicken, but just left us; perhaps she was needed somewhere else, and Dohnavur was the way there. The other meant even more to us, for she was our first from Benares, the heart of this great Hinduism; and her very presence seemed such a splendid pledge of ultimate victory. This little one was saved through a friend, a Wesleyan missionary, who had interested her Indian workers in the children. The baby's mother was a pilgrim from Benares, and her baby had been born in the South. A Temple woman had seen it and was eager to get it, for it was a child of promise. Our friend's worker heard of this, and interposed. The mother consented to give her baby to us. It was not a case in which we dare have persuaded her to keep it; for such babies are greatly coveted, and the mother was already predisposed to give her child to the gods. When we heard of this little one, old Dévai was with us. She had only just arrived after a journey of two days with a little girl, but she knew the perils of delay too well to risk them now. "Let me go! I will have some coffee, and immediately start!" So off she went for five more days of wearisome bullock-cart and train. But her face beamed when she returned and laid a six-weeks-old baby in our arms—a baby fair to look upon. We gathered round her at once, and she lay and smiled at us all. Hardly ever have we had so sweet a babe. But the smiling little mouth was too pale a pink, and the beautiful eyes were too bright. She had only been with us a month when we were startled by the other-world look on the baby's face. We had seen it before; we recognised it, and our hearts sank within us. That evening, as she lay in her white cradle, the waxy hands folded in an unchildlike calm, she looked as if the angel of Death had passed her as she slept, and touched her as he passed.

Passion-flowers

She stayed with us for another month, and was nursed day and night till more and more she became endeared to us; and then once more we heard the word that cannot be refused, and we let her go. We laid passion-flowers about her as she lay asleep. The smile that had left her little face had come back now. "She came with a smile, and she went with a smile," said one who loved her dearly; and the flowers of mystery and glory spoke to us, as we stood and looked. "Who for the joy that was set before Him ;. . . endured." The scent of the violet passion-flower will always carry its message to us. "Let us be worthy of the grief God sends." And oh that such experiences may make us more earnest, more self-less in our service for these little ones! Someone has expressed this thought very tenderly and simply:—

Because of one small low-laid head, all crowned With golden hair, For evermore all fair young brows to me A halo wear.

I kiss them reverently. Alas, I know The pain I bear!

Because of dear but close-shut holy eyes Of heaven’s own blue, All little eyes do fill my own with tears, Whate’er their hue.

And, motherly, I gaze their innocent, Clear depths into.

Because of little pallid lips, which once My name did call, No childish voice in vain appeal upon My ears doth fall.

I count it all my joy their joys to share, And sorrows small.

Because of little dimpled hands Which folded lie, All little hands henceforth to me do have A pleading cry.

I clasp them, as they were small wandering birds, Lured home to fly.

Because of little death-cold feet, for earth’s Rough roads unmeet, I’d journey leagues to save from sin and harm Such little feet. And count the lowliest service done for them So sacred—sweet.

"Until He find it" But grief is almost too poignant a word for what is so stingless as this. And yet God the Father, who gives the love, understands and knows how much may lie behind two words and two dates. "Given ;. . . Taken ;. . ." Only indeed we do bless Him when the cup holds no bitterness of fear or of regret. There is nothing ever to fear for the little folded lambs. If only the veil of blinding sense might drop from our eyes when the door opens to our cherished little children, should we have the heart to toil so hard to keep that bright door shut? Would it not seem almost selfish to try? But the case is different when the child is not lifted lovingly to fair lands out of sight, but snatched back, dragged back down into the darkness from which we had hoped it had escaped. This work for the children, which seems so strangely full of trial of its own (as it is surely still more full of its own particular joy), has held this bitterness for us, and yet the bitter has changed to sweet; and even now in our "twilight of short knowledge" we can understand a little, and where we cannot we are content to wait.

Four years ago, after much correspondence and effort, a little girl was saved from Temple service in connection with a famous Temple of the South from which few have ever been saved. She had

been dedicated by her father, and her mother had consented. Dévai got a paper signed by them giving her up to us instead. But shortly after she left the town, the father regretted the step he had taken, and followed Dévai, unknown to her. Alas, the child had not been with us an hour before she was carried off. For two years we heard nothing of her. Old Dévai, who was broken-hearted about the matter, tried to find what had been done with her, but it was kept secret. She almost gave up in despair. At last information reached her that the child was in the same town; and that her father having died of cholera, the mother and another little daughter were in a certain house well known to her. She went immediately and found the older child had not been given to the gods. Something of her pleadings had lingered in the father's memory, and he had refused to give her up. But the mother was otherwise minded, and intended to give both children to the Temple. Dévai had been guided to go at the critical time of decision. The mother was persuaded, and Dévai returned with two sheaves instead of one—and even that one she had hardly dared to expect. Once more we were called to hold our gifts with light hands. The younger of the welcome little two was one of ten who died during an epidemic at Neyoor. The elder one is with us still—a bright, intelligent child. The only other one whom we have been compelled to give up in this most hurting way was saved through friends on the hills, who, before they sent the little child to us, believed all safe as to claims upon her afterwards. She was a pretty child of five, and we grew to love her very much; for her ways were sweet and gentle and very affectionate. Lala, Lola, and Leela were a dear little trio, all about the same age, and all rather specially interesting children. But the father gave trouble. He was not a good man, and we knew it was not love for his little daughter which prompted his action. He demanded her back, and our friends had to telegraph to us to send her home. It was not an easy thing to do; and we packed her little belongings feeling as if we were moving blindly in a grievous dream, out of which we must surely awaken.

There was some delay about a bandy, but at last it was ready and standing at the door. We lifted the little girl into it, put a doll and a packet of sweets in her hands, and gave our last charges to those who were taking her up to the hills, workers upon whom we could depend to do anything that could yet be done to win her back again. Then the bandy drove away. But we went back to our room and asked for a great and good thing to be done. We thought of little Lala, with her gentle nature which had so soon responded to loving influence, and we knew her very gentleness would be her danger now; for how could such a little child, naturally so yielding in disposition, withstand the call that would come, and the pressure that had broken far stronger wills? So we asked that she might either be returned to us soon or taken away from the evil to come. A week passed and our workers returned without her; they evidently felt the case quite hopeless. But the next letter we had from our friends told us the child was safe.

Carried by the Angels

She had left us in perfect health, but pneumonia set in upon her return to the colder air of the hills. She had been only a few days ill, and died very suddenly—died without anyone near her to comfort her with soothing words about the One to whom she was going. Even in the gladness that she was safe now, there was the pitiful thought of her loneliness through the dark valley; and we seemed to see the little wistful face, and felt she would be so frightened and shy and bewildered; and we longed to know something about those last hours. But one of the heathen women who had been about her at the last told what she knew, and our friends wrote what they heard. "She said she was Jesus' child, and did not seem afraid. And she said that she saw three Shining Ones

come into the room where she was lying, and she was comforted." Oh, need we ever fear? Little Lala had been with us for so short a time that we had not been able to teach her much; and so far as any of us know, she had heard nothing of the ministry of angels. We had hardly dared to hope she understood enough about our Lord Himself to rest her little heart upon Him. But we do not know everything. Little innocent child that she was, she was carried by the angels from the evil to come.

Old Dévai keeps a brave heart. When she comes to see us, she cheers herself by nursing the cheerful little people she brought to us, small and wailing and not very hopeful. She is full of reminiscences on these occasions. "Ah," she will say, addressing an astonished two-year-old, "the devil and all his imps fought for you, my child!" This is unfamiliar language to the baby; but Dévai knows nothing of our modern ideas of education, and considers crude fact advisable at any age. "Yes, he fought for you, my child. I was sitting on the verandah of the house wherein you lay, and I was preaching the Gospel of the grace of God to the women, when five devils appeared. Yea, five were they, one older and four younger. Men were they in outward shape, but within them were the devils. I had nearly persuaded the women to let me have you, my child; and till they fully consented, I was filling up the interval with speech, for no man shall shut my mouth. And the women listened well, and my heart burned within me—for it was life to me to see them listening—when lo! those devils came—yea, five, one older and four younger—sent by their master to confound me. And they rose up against me and turned me out, and told the women folk not to listen; and you—I should never get you, said they; and so it appeared, for with such is might, and their master waxes furious when he knows his time is short. But the Lord on high is mightier than a million million devils, and what are five to Him? He rose up for me against them and discomfited them"—Dévai does not go into secular particulars—"and so you were delivered from the mouth of the lion, my child!"

We are not anxious that our babies should know too much ancient history. Enough for them that they are in the fold—

I am Jesus’ little lamb, Happy all day long I am;

He will keep me safe from harm, For I’m His lamb— is enough theology for two-year-olds; but Dévai’s visits are not so frequent as to make a deep impression, and the baby thus addressed, after a long and unsympathetic stare, usually scrambles off her knee and returns unscathed to her own world.

1.08.11. Book 8: 11. God heard: God answered

CHAPTER XI God Heard: God Answered

OLD Dévai, with her vivid conversation about the one old devil and four younger, does not suggest a conciliatory attitude towards the people of her land. And it may be possible so to misinterpret the spirit of this book as to see in it only something unappreciative and therefore unkind. So it shall now be written down in sincerity and earnestness that nothing of the sort is intended. The thing we fight is not India or Indian, in essence or development. It is something alien to the old life of the people. It is not allowed in the Védas (ancient sacred books). It is like a parasite which has settled upon the bough of some noble forest-tree—on it, but not of it. The parasite has gripped the bough with strong and interlacing roots; but it is not the bough.

We think of the real India as we see it in the thinker—the seeker after the unknown God, with his wistful eyes. "The Lord beholding him loved him," and we cannot help loving as we look. And there is the Indian woman hidden away from the noise of crowds, patient in her motherhood, loyal to the light she has. We see the spirit of the old land there; and it wins us and holds us, and makes it a joy to be here to live for India. The true India is sensitive and very gentle. There is a wisdom in its ways, none the less wise because it is not the wisdom of the West. This spirit which traffics in children is callous and fierce as a ravening beast; and its wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. . . . And this spirit, alien to the land, has settled upon it, and made itself at home in it, and so become a part of it that nothing but the touch of God will ever get it out. We want that touch of God: "Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke." That is why we write. For we write for those who believe in prayer—not in the emasculated modern sense, but in the old Hebrew sense, deep as the other is shallow. We believe there is some connection between knowing and caring and praying, and what happens afterwards. Otherwise we should leave the darkness to cover the things that belong to the dark. We should be for ever dumb about them, if it were not that we know an evil covered up is not an evil conquered. So we do the thing from which we shrink with strong recoil; we stand on the edge of the pit, and look down and tell what we have seen, urged by the longing within us that the Christians of England should pray.

"Only pray?" does someone ask? Prayer of the sort we mean never stops with praying. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it," is the prayer’s solemn afterword; but the prayer we ask is no trifle. Lines from an American poet upon what it costs to make true poetry, come with suggestion here:—

Deem not the framing of a deathless lay The pastime of a drowsy summer day. But gather all thy powers, and wreck them on the verse That thou dost weave. . . . The secret wouldst thou know To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?

Let thine eyes overflow, Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill.

"And call. . . . So will I hear thee"

"Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the night watches pour out thine heart like water before the Lord; lift up thine hands towards Him for the life of thy young children!" The story of the children is the story of answered prayer. If any of us were tempted to doubt whether, after all, prayer is a genuine transaction, and answers to prayer no figment of the imagination—but something as real as the tangible things about us—we have only to look at some of our children. It would require more faith to believe that what we call the Answer came by chance or by the action of some unintelligible combination of controlling influences, than to accept the statement in its simplicity—God heard: God answered. In October, 1908, we were told of two children whose mother had recently died. They were with their father in a town some distance from Dohnavur; but the source from which our information came was so unreliable that we hardly knew whether to believe it, and we prayed rather a tentative prayer: "If the children exist, save them." For three months we heard nothing; then a rumour drifted across to us that the elder of the two had died in a Temple house. The younger, six months old, was still with her father. On Christmas Eve our informant arrived in the compound with his usual unexpectedness. The father was near, but would not come nearer because the following day being Friday (a day of ill-omen), he did not wish to discuss matters concerning the child; he would come on Saturday. On Saturday he came, carrying a dear little babe with brilliant eyes. She almost sprang from him into our arms, and we saw she was mad with thirst. She was fed and put to sleep, and hardly daring yet to rejoice (for the matter was not settled with the father), we took him aside and discussed the case with him. There were difficulties. A Temple woman had offered a large sum for the child, and had also promised to bequeath her property to her. He had heard, however, that we had little children who had all but been given to Temples, and he had come to reconnoitre rather than to decide.

"Though it tarry, wait for it . . . The position was explained to him. But the Temple meant to him everything that was worshipful. How could anything that was wrong be sanctioned by the gods? The child's mother had been a devout Hindu; and as we went deeper and deeper into things with him, it was evident he became more and more reluctant to leave the little one with us. "Her mother would have felt it shame and eternal dishonour." We were in the little prayer-room, a flowery little summer-house in the garden, when this talk took place. On either side are the nurseries, and playing on the wide verandahs were happy, healthy babes; their merry shouts filled the spaces in the conversation. Sometimes a little toddling thing would find her way across to the prayer-room, and break in upon the talk with affectionate caresses. To our eyes everything looked so happy, so incomparably better than anything the Temple house could offer, that it was difficult to adjust one's mental vision so as to understand that of the Hindu beside us, to whose thought all the happiness was as nothing, because these babes would be brought up without caste. In the Temple house caste is kept most carefully. If a Temple woman breaks the rules of her community she is out-casted, excommunicated. "You do not keep caste! you do not keep caste!" the father repeated over and over again in utter dismay. It was nothing to him that the babes were well and strong, and as happy as the day was long; nothing to him that cleanliness reigned, so far as constant supervision could ensure it, through every corner of the compound. We did not profess to keep caste; we welcomed every little child in danger of being given to Temples, irrespective altogether of her caste. All castes were welcome to us, for all were dear to our Lord. This was beyond him; and he declared he would never have brought his child to us, had he understood it before. "Let her die rather! There is no disgrace in death." As he talked and expounded his views, he argued himself further and further away from us in spirit, until he became disgusted with himself for ever

having considered giving the baby to us. All this time the baby lay asleep; and as we looked at the little face and noted the "mother-want," the appealing expression of pitiful weariness even in sleep, it was all we could do to turn away and face the almost inevitable result of the conversation. Once the father, a splendid looking man, tall and dignified, rose and stood erect in sudden indignation. "Where is the babe? I will take her away and do as I will with her. She is my child!" We persuaded him to wait awhile as she was asleep, and we went away to pray. Together we waited upon God, whose touch turns hard rocks into standing water, and flint-stone into a springing well, beseeching Him to deal with that father's heart, and make it melt and yield. And as we waited it seemed as if an answer of peace were distinctly given to us, and we rose from our knees at rest. But just at that moment the father went to where his baby slept in her cradle, and he took her up and walked away in a white heat of wrath. The little one was in an exhausted condition, for she had not had suitable food for at least three days. It was the time of our land-winds, which are raw and cold to South Indian people; and it seemed that the answer of peace must mean peace after death of cold and starvation. It would soon be over, we knew; twenty-four hours, more or less, and those great wistful eyes would close, and the last cry would be cried. But even twenty-four hours seemed long to think of a child in distress, and her being so little did not make it easier to think of her dying like that. So on Sunday morning I shut myself up in my room asking for quick relief for her, or—but this seemed almost asking too much—that she might be given back to us. And as I prayed, a knock came at the door, and a voice called joyously, "Oh, Amma! Amma! Come! The father stands outside the church; he has brought the baby back!" But the child was almost in collapse. Without a word he dropped the cold, limp little body into our arms, and prostrated himself till his forehead touched the dust. We had not time to think of him, we hardly noted his extraordinary submission, for all our thought was for the babe. There was no pulse to be felt, only those far too brilliant eyes looked alive. We worked with restoratives for hours, and at last the little limbs warmed and the pulse came back. But it was a bounding, unnatural pulse, and the restlessness which supervened confirmed the tale of the brilliant eyes—the little babe had been drugged. From that day on till our Prayer-day, January 6th, it was one long, unremitting fight with death. We wrote to our medical comrade in Neyoor, and described the symptoms, which were all bad. He could give us little hope. Gradually the brilliance passed from the eyes, and they became what the Tamils call "dead." The film formed after which none of us had ever seen recovery. Then we gathered round the little cot in the room we call Tranquillity, and we gave the babe her Christian name Vimala, the Spotless One; for we thought that very soon she would be without spot and blameless, another little innocent in that happy band of innocents who see His Face. On the evening of the 5th, friends of our own Mission who were with us seemed to lay hold for the life of the child with such fresh earnestness and faith, that we ourselves were strengthened. Next morning we believed we saw a change in the little deathlike face, and that evening we were sure the child's life was coming back to her.

". . .Because it will surely come"

It was not till then we thought of the father, who, after signing a paper made out for him by our pastor, who is always ready to help us, had returned to his own town. When we heard all that had occurred we saw how our God had worked for us. It was not fear of his baby's death that had moved the man to return to us. "What is the death of a babe? Let her die across my shoulders!" He was not afraid of the law. After all persuasions had failed, we had tried threats: the thing he purposed to do was illegal. The Collector (chief magistrate) would do justice. "What care I for your

Collector? How can he find me if I choose to lose myself? How can you prove anything against me?" And in that he spoke the truth. There are ways by which the intention of the law concerning little children can be most easily and successfully circumvented. Our pleadings had not touched him. "Is she not my child? Was her mother not my wife? Who has the right to come between this child of mine and me her father?" And so saying he had departed without the slightest intention of coming back again. But a Power with which he did not reckon had him in sight; and a Hand was laid upon him, and it bent him like a reed. We hope some ray of a purer light than he had ever experienced found its way into his darkened soul, and revealed to him the sin of his intention. But we only know that he left his child and went back to his own town. God had heard: God had answered.

1.08.12. Book 8: 12. To what Purpose?

CHAPTER XII To what Purpose?

AMONG the closest of our little children’s friends is one whose name I may not give, lest her work should be hindered; for in this work of saving the little ones, though we have the sympathy of many, we naturally have to meet the covert opposition of very many more, and it is not well to give too explicit information as to the centres of supply. This dear friend’s help has been invaluable. From the first she has stood by us, interesting her friends, Indian and English, in the children, and stirring them into practical co-operation. Then, when the babies have been saved and had to be cared for and sent off, she made nothing of the trouble, and above all she has never been discouraged. Sometimes things have been difficult. Some have doubted, and many have criticised, and even the kindest have lost heart. This friend has never lost heart. For not all the chapters of the Temple children’s story can be written down and printed for everyone to read. We think of the unwritten chapters, and remember how often when the pressure was greatest the thought of that undiscouraged comrade has been strength and inspiration. No one except those who, in weakness and inexperience, have tried to do something not attempted before can understand how the heart prizes sympathy just at the difficult times, and how such brave and steadfast comradeship is a thing that can never be forgotten.

Among the babies saved through this friend’s influence was one with a short but typical story. The little mite was seen first in her mother’s arms, and the mother was standing by the wayside, as if waiting. Something in her attitude and appearance drew the attention of an Indian Christian, whom our friend had interested in the work, and she got into conversation with the mother, who told her that her husband had died a fortnight before the baby’s birth, and she, being poor though of good caste, was much exercised about the little one’s future. How could she marry her properly? She had come to the conclusion that her best plan would be to give her to the Temple. So she was even then waiting till someone from a Temple house would come and take her little girl. The news that such a child is to be had soon becomes known to those who are on the watch, and it is improbable that the mother would have had long to wait. The Christian persuaded her to give up the idea, and the little babe was saved and sent to us. On the journey to Dohnavur a Temple woman chanced to get into the carriage where the little baby slept in its basket. There was nothing to tell who she was; and like the other women in the carriage, she was greatly interested in its story. But presently it became evident that her interest was more than superficial. She looked well at the baby and was quiet for a time; then she said to the Christian who was bringing it to us: "I see it is going to be an intelligent child. Let me have it; I will pay you." The Christian of course refused, and asked her how she knew it was going to be intelligent. "Look at its nose," said the Temple woman. "See, here is money!" and she offered it. "Let me have the baby! You can tell your Missie Ammal it died in the train!"

"He banged the door!"

Sometimes our babies have to run greater risks than this in their journeys south to us. The distances which have to be covered by train and bullock-cart are great, and the travelling tedious. And there are many delays and opportunities for difficulties to arise; so that when we know a baby is on its way to us we feel we want to wrap it round in prayer, so that, thus invisibly enveloped, it will be protected and carried safely all the way. Once a little child, travelling to us from a place as distant, counting by time, as Rome is from London, was observed by some Brahman men, who happened to be at the far end of the long third-class carriage. Our worker, who was alone with the child, noticed the whispering and glances toward her little charge, and wrapped it closer in its shawl, and, as she said, "looked out of the window as if she were not at all afraid, and prayed much in her heart." Presently a station was reached. The language spoken there was not her vernacular, but she understood enough to know something was being said about the baby. Then an official appeared, and there was a cry quite understandable to her: "A Brahman baby! That Christian there is kidnapping a Brahman baby!" The official stopped at the carriage door. She was pushed towards him amidst a confused chatter, a crowd gathered at the door in a moment, and someone shouted in Tamil, above the excited clamour on the platform: "Pull her out! A Christian with a Brahman baby!"

"Then did my heart tremble! I held the baby tight in my arms. The man in clothes said, 'Show it to me!' And he looked at its hands and he looked at its feet, and he said: 'This is no child of yours!' But as I began to explain to him, the train moved, and he banged the door; and I praised God!"

India is a land where strange things can be accomplished with the greatest ease. As all went well it is idle to imagine what might have been; but we knew enough to be thankful.

Among the unwritten chapters is one which touches a problem. There are some little children—often the most valuable to the Temple women—who cannot live with us, but can live with them, because the baby in the Temple house is nursed by a foster-mother for the sake of merit, and thus it is given its best chance of life; whereas with us it is impossible to get foster-mothers. Indian children of the castes approved for the service are not, as a class, as robust as others; the secluded lives of their mothers, and the rigid rules pertaining to widows (girl-children born after the mother becomes a widow are, as has been seen, in special danger), partly account for this; and in other cases there are other reasons. Whatever the cause, however, the effect is manifest. The baby is seldom the little bundle of content of our English nurseries. It may become so later on, if all goes well. Often it lives upon its birth-strength for four months, or less, and then slips away. We have often hesitated about taking such babies; and then we have found that by refusing one who is likely to die we have discouraged those who were willing to help us, and the next baby in danger has been taken straight to the house where its welcome was assured. So we have hardly ever dared to refuse, and we have taken little fragile things whose days we knew were numbered unless a foster-mother could be found, for it seemed to us that death with us was better than life with the Temple people; and also we have not dared to risk losing the next, who might be healthy. "One dies, one lives," say the Temple women in their wisdom, and take all who are suitable in caste and in appearance. "She will be 'fair,'" or, "She will be intelligent," settles the matter for them. They give the baby a chance: should we do less?

"To what Purpose?"

One night I woke suddenly with the feeling of someone near, and saw, standing beside my bed out on the verandah, the friend who has sent us so many little ones. She had something wrapped in a shawl in her arms, and as she moved the shawl a thin cry smote me with a fear, for a baby who has come to stay does not cry like that.

It was a dear little baby, one of the type the Temple women prize, and will take so much trouble to rear. The little head was finely formed, and the tiny face, in its minute perfection of feature, looked as if some fairy had shaped it out of a cream rose-petal. Alas, there was that look we know so well and fear so much—that look of not belonging to us, the elsewhere, other-world look. But we could not do this work at all, we would not have the heart to do it, if we did not hope. So we go on hoping. The baby filled the next half-hour, for a thing so small can be hungry and say so; and together we heated the water and made the food, till, satisfied at length that her little charge was comfortable, our friend lay down to rest. "Jesus therefore being weary with His journey, sat thus on the well." There is something in the utter weariness after a long, hot journey, ending with seven hours in a bullock-cart over rough tracks by night, which always recalls that word of human tiredness. How I wished that the morning were not so near as I saw my friend asleep at last! A few hours later she was on her homeward way, and we were left with our hopes and our fears, and the baby. For three weeks we hoped against fear, till there was no room left for any more hope, or for anything but prayer that the child might cease to suffer. And after a month of struggle for life, the tiny, tossing thing lay still.

"To what purpose is this waste?" Was it strange that the question came again to ourselves, and to others too? Our dear friend’s toilsome travelling—a journey equal in expenditure of time to one from London to Vienna and back again, and very much more exhausting, the faithful nurse’s patience, the little baby’s pain! And all the love that had grown through the weeks, and all the efforts that had failed, the very train ticket and bandy fare—was it all as water spilt on the ground? Was it waste?

We knew in our hearts it was not. The dear little babe was safe; and it might be that our having taken her, though she was so very delicate, would result in another, a healthy child, being saved, who, if she had been refused, would never have been brought. This hope comforted us; and we prayed definitely for its fulfilment, and it was fulfilled. For shortly after that little seed had been sown in death, information came from the same source through which she had been saved, that another child was in danger of being adopted by Temple women; and this information would not have been given to our friend had the first child been refused. Nundinie we called this little gift: the name means Happiness.

Sometimes in moments of depression and disappointment we go for change of air and scene to the Prémalia nursery; and the baby Nundinie, otherwise Dimples, of whom more afterwards, comes running up to us with her welcoming smile and outstretched arms; while others, with stories as full of comfort, tumble about us, and cuddle, and nestle, and pat us into shape. Then we take courage again, and ask forgiveness for our fears. It is true our problems are not always solved, and perhaps more difficult days are before; but we will not be afraid. Sometimes a sudden light falls on the way, and we look up and still it shines: and what can we do but "follow the Gleam"?

1.08.13. Book 8: 13. A story of comfort

CHAPTER XIII A Story of Comfort SEELA IS THE BABY IN THE MIDDLE.

She slipped into the picture at the last moment, and so was caught unawares. Mala is to the right; Nullinie to the left. (This little one’s left hand and foot are partially paralyzed through drugging in infancy.)

AMONG the stories of comfort is one that belongs to our merry little Seela. She is bigger now than when the despairing photographer broke thirteen plates in the vain attempt to catch her; but she is still most elusive and alluring, a veritable baby, though over two years old. Some months ago, the Iyer measured her, and told her she was thirty-two inches of mischief. For weeks afterwards, when asked her name, she always replied with gravity, "Terty-two inses of mistef."

All who have to do with babies know how different they can be in disposition and habits. There is the shop-window baby, who shows all her innocent wares at once to everyone kind enough to look. She is a charming baby. And there is the little wild bird of the wood, who will answer your whistle politely, if you know how to whistle her note; but she will not trust herself near you till she is sure of you. Seela is that sort of baby. We have watched her when she has been approached by some unfamiliar presence, and seen her summon all her baby dignity to keep her from breaking into tears of overwhelming shyness. Give her time to observe you from under long, drooping lashes; give her time to make sure—then the mischief will sparkle out, and something of the real child. But only something, never all, till you become a relation; with those who are only acquaintances Seela, like Bala, has many reserves.

Seela’s joy is to be considered old and allowed to go to the kindergarten. She takes her place with the bigger babies, and tries to do all she sees them do. Sometimes a visitor looks in, and then Seela, naturally, will do nothing; but if the visitor is wise and takes no notice, she will presently be rewarded by seeing the eager little face light up again, and the fat hands busily at work. Seela is not supposed to be learning very seriously; but she seems to know nearly as much as some of the older children, and her quaint attempts at English are much appreciated. Seela has her faults. She likes to have her own way, and once was observed to slap severely an offender almost twice her own size; but on the whole she is a peaceful little person, beloved by all the other babies, both senior and junior. Her great ambition is to follow Chellalu into all possible places of mischief. Anything Chellalu can do Seela will attempt; and as she is more brave than steady on her little feet, she has many a narrow escape. Her latest escapade was to follow her reckless leader in an attempt to walk round the top of the back of a large armchair, the cane rim of which is a slippery slant, two inches wide.

Table Manners On the morning of her arrival, not liking to leave her even for a few minutes, I carried her to the early tea-table, when she saw the Iyer and smiled her first smile to him. From that day on she has been his loyal little friend. At first his various absences from home perplexed her. She would toddle off to his room and hunt everywhere for him, even under his desk and

behind his waste-paper basket, and then she returned to the dining-room with a puzzled little face. "Iyer is not!" "Where is he, Seela?" "Gone to Heaven!" was her invariable reply. When he returned from that distant sphere she never displayed the least surprise. That is not our babies' way. She calmly accepted him as a returned possession; stood by his chair waiting for the invitation, "Climb up"; climbed up as if he had never been away—and settled down to bliss.

Part of this bliss consists in being supplied with morsels of toast and biscuit and occasional sips of tea. Sometimes there is that delicious luxury, a spoonful of the unmelted sugar at the bottom of the cup. For Seela is a baby after all, and does not profess to be like grown-up people who do not appreciate nice things to eat, being, of course, entirely superior to food; but, excitable little damsel as she is in all other matters, her table manners are most correct, and she shows her appreciation of kind attentions in characteristic fashion. A smile, so quick under the black lashes that only one on the look-out for it would see it, a sudden confiding little nestle closer to the giver—these are her only signs of pleasure; and if no notice is taken of her, she sits in silent patience. Sometimes, if politeness be mistaken for indifference, a shadow creeps into her eyes, a sort of pained surprise at the obtuseness of the great; but she rarely makes any remark, and never points or asks, as the irrepressible Chellalu does in spite of all our admonitions. If, however, Seela is being attended to and fed at judicious intervals, and she knows the intention is to feed her comfortably, then her attitude is different. She feels a reminder will be acceptable; and as soon as she has disposed of a piece of biscuit, she quietly holds up an empty little hand, and glances fearlessly up to the face that looks down with a smile upon her. This little silent, empty hand, held up so quietly, has often spoken to us of things unknown to our little girl; and as if to enforce the lesson, the other babies, to our amusement, apparently noticing the gratifying result of Seela's upturned hand, began to hold up their little hands with the same silent expectancy, till all round the table small hands were raised in perfect silence, by hopeful infants of observant habits and strong faith. THE COTTAGE NURSERY.

Mala, the rather stolid-looking little girl to the right of the photograph, is Seela's elder sister. She is not so square-faced as the photograph shows her, and she is much more interesting. This little one seems to us to have in some special sense the grace of God upon her; for her nursery life is so happy and blameless and unselfish, that we rarely have to wish her different in anything. Her coming, with little Seela's, is one of the very gladdest of our Overweights of Joy.

We heard of the little sisters through a mission schoolmaster, who—knowing that they had been left motherless, and that a Hindu of good position had obtained something equivalent to powers of guardianship, and thus empowered had placed them with a Temple woman—was most anxious to save them, and wrote to us; and, as he expressed it, "also earnestly and importunately prayed the benign British Government to intervene."

"And he said. . . . But God said" The Collector to whom the petition was sent was a friend of ours. He knew about the nursery work, and was ready to do all he could; but he did not want a disturbance with the Caste and Temple people, and so advised us to try to get the children privately. We sent our wisest woman-worker, Ponnamal, to the town, and she saw the principal people concerned; but they entirely refused to give up the children. The man who had adopted them had got his authority from the local Indian sub-magistrate; and contended that as the Government had given them to him, no one had any right to take them from him; "and even if the

Government itself ordered me to give them up, I never will. I will never let them go." This in Tamil is even more explicit: "The hold by which I hold them I will never let go." Ponnamal returned, weary in mind and in body, after three days of travelling and effort; she had caught a glimpse of the baby, and the little face haunted her. The elder child was reported very miserable, and she had seen nothing of her. The guardian, of course, had not dealt with her direct; but she heard he had taken legal advice, and was sure of his position. There was nothing hopeful to report. Once again we tried, but in vain. By this time a new bond had been formed, for the guardian had become attached to little Seela, and spent his time, so we heard, in playing with her. He let it be known that nothing would ever make him give her up. "She is in my hand, and my hand will never let go."

Then suddenly news came that he was dead. The baby had sickened with cholera. He had nursed her and contracted the disease. In two days he had died. He had been compelled to let go.

Then the feeling of all concerned changed completely. It hardly needed the Collector’s order, given with the utmost promptitude, to cause the Temple woman to give the children up. To the Indian mind, quick to see the finger of God in such an event, the thing was self-evident. An unseen Power was at work here. Who were they that they should withstand it? A telegram told us the children were safe, and next day we had them here. The baby was happy at once; but the elder little one, then a child of about three and a half, was very sorrowful. She was so pitifully frightened, too, that at first we could do nothing with her; and there was a look in her eyes that alarmed us, it was so distraught and unchildlike. "My mother did her best for them," wrote the kind schoolmaster to whose house the children had been taken when the Temple woman gave them up; "but the elder one has fever. She is always muttering to herself, and can neither stand nor sit." She could stand and sit now, only there was the "muttering," and the terrible look of bewilderment worse than pain. For days it was a question with us as to whether she would ever recover perfectly. That first night we had to give her bromide, and she woke very miserable. Next day she stood by the door waiting for her mother, as it seemed; for under her breath she was constantly whispering, "Amma! Amma!" ("Mother! Mother!") She never cried aloud, only sobbed quietly every now and then. She would not let us touch her, but shrank away terrified if we tried to pet her. All through the third day she sat by the door. This was better than the weary standing, but pitiful enough. On the morning of the fourth day she sat down again for a long watch; but once when her little hand went up to brush away a tear, we saw there was a toy in it, and that gave us hope. That night she went to bed with a doll, an empty tin, and a ball in her arms; and the next day she let us play with her in a quiet, reserved fashion. Next morning she woke happy.

Teachers—unawares The babies teach us much, and sometimes their unconscious lessons illuminate the deeper experiences of life. One such illumination is connected in my mind with the little trellised verandah, shown in the photograph, of the cottage used as a nursery when Mala and Seela came to us.

It was the hour between lights, and five babies under two years old were waiting for their supper—Seela, Tara, and Evu (always a hungry baby), Ruhinie, usually irrepressible, but now in very low spirits, and a tiny thing with a face like a pansy—all five thinking longingly of supper. These five had to wait till the fresh milk came in, as their food was special; that evening the cows had wandered home with more than their usual leisureliness from their pasture out in the jungle, and so the milk was late. The babies, who do not understand the weary ways of cows,

disapproved of having to wait, and were fractious. To add to their depression, the boy whose duty it was to light the lamps and lanterns had been detained, and the trellised verandah was dark. So the five fretful babies made remarks to each other, and threw their toys about in that exasperated fashion which tells you the limits of patience have been passed; and the most distressed began to whimper. At this point a lantern was brought and set behind me, so that its light fell upon the discarded toys, miscellaneous but beloved—a china head long parted from its body, one whole new doll, a tin with little stones in it, a matchbox, and other sundries. If anything will comfort them, their toys will, I thought, as I directed their attention to the tin with its pleasant rattling pebbles, and the other scattered treasures on the mat. But the babies looked disgusted. Toys were a mockery at that moment. Evu seized the china head and flung it as far as ever she could. Tara sat stolid, with two fingers in her mouth. Seela turned away, evidently deeply hurt in her feelings, and the other two cried. Not one of them would find consolation in toys.

Then the pansy-faced baby, Prâsie, pointed out to the bushes, where something dangerous, she was quite sure, was moving; and she wailed a wail of such infectious misery that all the babies howled. And one rolled over near the lantern which was on the floor behind me, and for safety's sake I moved it, and its light fell on my face. In a moment all five babies were tumbling over me with little exclamations of delight, and they nestled on my lap, caressing and content. Are there not evenings when our toys have no power to please or soothe? There is not any rest in them or any comfort. Then the One whom we love better than all His dearest gifts comes and moves the lantern for us, so that our toys are in the shadow but His face is in the light. And He makes His face to shine upon us and gives us peace.

"For Thou, O Lord my God, art above all things best; . . . Thou alone most sufficient and most full; Thou alone most sweet and most comfortable.

"Thou alone most fair and most loving; Thou alone most noble and most glorious above all things; in whom all things are at once and perfectly good, and ever have been and shall be.

"And therefore whatever Thou bestowest upon me beside Thyself, or whatever Thou revealest or promisest concerning Thyself, so long as I do not see or fully enjoy Thee, is too little, and fails to satisfy me.

"Because, indeed, my heart cannot truly rest nor be entirely contented unless it rest in Thee, and rise above all Thy gifts and all things created.

"When shall I fully recollect myself in Thee, that through the love of Thee I may not feel myself but Thee alone, above all feeling and measure in a manner not known to all?"

1.08.14. Book 8: 14. Pickles and Puck

CHAPTER XIV Pickles and Puck "PICKLES" AND HER FRIENDS.

"Pickles" sits with her thumb in her mouth, distrustful of photographers.

"AMMA! Amma!" then in baby Tamil, "Salala has come!" And one of the most enticing of the little interruptions to a steady hour's work scrambles over the raised doorstep, tripping and tumbling in her eagerness to get in. Now she is staggering happily about the room on fat, uncertain feet. Upsets are nothing to Sarala. She shakes herself, rubs a bumped head, smiles if you smile down at her, and picks herself up with a sturdy independence that promises something for her future. She has travelled to-day, stopping only to visit her Préma Sittie, a long way across the field all by herself. She has braved tumbles and captures, for her nurse may any minute discover her flight; and even now, safe in port, she keeps a wary eye on the door which opens on the nursery side of the compound. If she thinks I am about to suggest her departure, she immediately engages me in some interest of her own. She has ways and wiles unknown to any baby but herself; and if all seems likely to fail, she sits down on the floor, and first puts out her lower lip as far as it will go, and then springs up, climbs over you, clings with all four limbs at once, and buries her curly tangle deep into your neck. But if the case is hopeless, she sits down on the floor again and digs her small fists into her eyes, in silent indignation and despair. Then comes a howl impossible to smother, and at last such bitter bursts of woe as nothing short of dire necessity can force you to provoke. This is Sarala, one of the most affectionate, most wilful, most winsome of all the babies. She is truthful. She has just this moment pulled a drawing-pin out of its place, which happened to be within reach, and her solemn "Aiyo!" (Alas!) "Look, Amma!" shows she feels she has sinned, but wants to confess. Life will have many a battle for this baby; but surely if she is truthful and loving, and we are loving and wise, the Lord who has redeemed her will carry her through. Her first great battle royal was with the new Sittie,[B] who immediately upon arrival loved the babies. The battle was about Sarala's evening meal, which she refused to take from the new Sittie because she had offended her small majesty a few minutes before by allowing another baby to share the lap of which Sarala wished to have complete possession; and the baby had crawled off disgusted with the ways of such a Sittie. As a rule we avoid collisions at bedtime. The day should end peacefully for babies; but the contest once begun had to be carried through, for Sarala is not a baby to whom it is wise to give in where a conflict of wills is concerned. Next morning it was evident she remembered all about it. When the new Sittie (now called Préma Sittie by the children)[C] came to the nursery, Sarala hurried off and would have nothing to do with her. From the distance of the garden she would catch sight of her advancing form, and retreat round a corner. Sometimes if Préma Sittie sat down on the floor and fondled another baby, Sarala would crawl up from behind, put her arms round her neck, and even begin to sit down on her knee; but if her Sittie made the first advance, she was instantly repelled. This continued for a fortnight; and as Sarala was only a year and eight months old at the time, a fortnight's memory rather astonished us. In the end she forgot, and now there are no more devoted friends than Préma Sittie and Sarala.

Twins But it was the other Sittie, Piria Sittie by name,[D] who first made Sarala's acquaintance. She and I went to Neyoor together when the branch nursery was there; and as the new nursery was almost ready for the babies, we lightened the immense undertaking of removal by carting off whatever we could of furniture and infants. Sarala has eyes which can smile bewitchingly, and a voice which can coo with delicious affection; but those sweet eyes can look stormy, and cooing is a sound remote from Sarala's powers in opposite directions; so we wondered, as we packed her into the bandy, what would happen that night. If we had known Sarala better we should not have wondered. All this child wants to make her good is someone to hold on to. She woke frequently during the night, for we were not entirely comfortable, wedged sideways and close as herrings in a barrel. But all she did when she awoke was to push a soft little arm round either one or other of us, and cuddle as close as she possibly could; the least movement on our part, however, she deeply resented and feared. A limpet on a rock is nothing to this baby. Her very toes can cling.

Sarala's private name is Pickles. Her twin in mischief is Puck, and she, too, is fond of paying visits to the bungalow. But she always comes as a surprise; she never announces herself. You are busy with your back to the door when that curious feeling, a sense of not being quite alone, comes over you, and you turn and see an elfish thing, very still and small and shy, but with eyes so comical that Puck is the only possible name by which she could be called. Seen unexpectedly, playing among the flowers in a fragment of green garment washed to the softness of a tulip leaf, you feel she only needs a pair of small wings and a wand to be entirely in character.

Puck has none of Pickles' faults, and a good many of her virtues. She is a most good-tempered little person, loving to be loved, but equally delighted that others should share the petting. She gives up to everybody, and smiles her way through life; such a comical little mouth it is, to match the comical eyes. All she ever asks with insistence is somewhere to play. Bereft of room to play, Puck might become disagreeable, though a disagreeable Puck is something unimaginable. Yesterday it was needful to keep her in the shade; and as a special policeman-nurse could not be told off to keep watch over her, she was tied by a long string to the nursery door. At first she was sorely distressed; but presently the comic side struck her, and she sat down and began to tie herself up more securely. If they do such things at all they should do them better, she seemed to think. And this is Puck all through. She will find the laugh hidden in things, if she can. Sometimes in her eagerness to make everybody as happy as she is herself she gets into serious trouble. She was hardly able to walk when she was discovered comforting a crying infant by taking a bottle of milk from an older babe (who, according to her thinking, had had enough) and giving it to the younger one who seemed to need it more. What the older baby said is not recorded.

Disgraced Dohnavur

Puck in trouble is a pitiful sight. She tries not to give in to feelings of depression. She screws her smiling lips tight, twists her face into a pucker, and shuts her eyes till you only see two slits marked by the curly eyelashes. But if her emotions are too much for her she gives herself up to them thoroughly. There is no whining or whimpering or sulking; she wails with a wail that rivals Pickles' howl. "What an awful child!" remarked a visitor one morning, in a very shocked tone, as she went the round of the nurseries and came upon Puck on the floor abandoned to grief. We wondered if our friend knew how much more awful most babies are, and we wished the usually charming Puck had chosen some other moment to disgrace herself and us. But no, there she sat, her two small

fists crushed over her mouth—for we insist that when the babes feel obliged to cry, they shall smother the sound thereof as much as may be—and the visitor retired, feeling, doubtless, thankful the awful child was not hers. But Puck’s griefs are of short duration. Ten minutes later she was climbing the chain from which the swing hangs, trying to fit her little toes into the links, and laughing, with the tears still wet on her cheeks, because the chain shook so that she could not climb it properly, though she tried it valiantly, hand over head, like a dancing bear on a pole. Puck’s Guardian Angel, like Chellalu’s, must be ever in attendance.

FOOTNOTES:

[B] Miss Lucy Ross.

[C] "Préma" means Beloved.

[D] Miss Mabel Wade, who joined us November 15, 1907. "Piria," like "Préma," means Beloved.

1.08.15. Book 8: 15. The Howler

CHAPTER XV The Howler

PICKLES and Puck at their worst and both together are nothing to the Howler in her separate capacity. We called her the Howler because she howled.

We heard of her first through our good Pakium, who, during a pilgrimage round the district, paid a visit to the family of which she was the youngest member. "She lay in her cradle asleep"—Pakium kindled over it—"like an innocent little flower, and she once opened her eyes—such eyes!—and smiled up in my face. Oh, like a flower is the babe!" And much speech followed, till we pictured a tender, flower-like baby, all sweetness and smiles. Her story was such as to suggest fears, though on the surface things looked safe. Her grandfather, a fine old man, head of the house, was sheltering the baby and her mother and three other children; for the son-in-law had "gone to Colombo," which in this case meant he desired to be free from the responsibilities of wife and family. He had left no address, and had not written after his departure. So the old man had the five on his hands. A Temple woman belonging to a famous South-country Temple, knowing the circumstances, had made a flattering offer for the baby, then just three months old. The grandfather had refused; but the grandmother was religious, and she felt the pinch of the extra five, and secretly influenced her daughter, so that it was probable the Temple woman would win if she waited long enough. And Temple women know how to wait. THE DOHNAVUR COUNTRY IN FLOOD. A year passed quietly. We had friends on the watch, and they kept us informed of what was going on. The idea of dedication was becoming gradually familiar to the grandfather, and he was ill and times were hard. But still we could do nothing, for to himself and his whole clan adoption by Christians was a far more unpleasant alternative than Temple-dedication. After all, the Temple people never break caste.

Once a message reached us: "Send at once, for the Temple women are about to get the baby"; and we sent, but in vain. A few weeks later a similar message reached us; and again the long journey was made, and again there was the disappointing return empty-handed. It seemed useless to try any more.

About that time a comrade in North Africa, Miss Lilias Trotter, sent us her new little booklet, "The Glory of the Impossible." As we read the first few paragraphs and roughly translated them for our Tamil fellow-workers, such a hope was created within us that we laid hold with fresh faith and a sort of quiet, confident joy. And yet, when we wrote to our friends who were watching, their answer was most discouraging. The only bright word in the letter was the word "Impossible."

"Far up in the Alpine hollows, year by year, God works one of His marvels. The snow-patches lie there, frozen into ice at their edges from the strife of sunny days and frosty nights; and through that ice-crust come, unscathed, flowers in full bloom. The Glory of the Impossible

"Back in the days of the bygone summer the little soldanella plant spread its leaves wide and flat on the ground to drink in the sun-rays; and it kept them stored in the root through the winter. Then

spring came and stirred its pulses even below the snow-shroud. And as it sprouted, warmth was given out in such strange measure that it thawed a little dome of the snow above its head. Higher and higher it grew, and always above it rose the bell of air till the flower-bud formed safely within it; and at last the icy covering of the air-bell gave way and let the blossom through into the sunshine, the crystalline texture of its mauve petals sparkling like the snow itself, as if it bore the traces of the fight through which it had come.

"And the fragile things ring an echo in our hearts that none of the jewel-like flowers nestled in the warm turf on the slopes below could waken. We love to see the impossible done, and so does God."

These were the sentences which we read together. To the South Indian imagination Alpine snow is something quite inconceivable; but the picture on the cover and snow-scene photographs helped, and the Indian mind is ever quick to apprehend the spiritual, so the booklet did its work.

We have two seasons here, the wet and the dry. The dry is subdivided into hot, hotter, and hottest; but the wet stands alone. It is a time when the country round Dohnavur is swamp or lake according to the level of the ground; and we do not expect visitors—the heavy bullock-carts sink in the mud and make the way too difficult. If a letter had come just then asking us to send for the baby, we should certainly have tried to go; but no letter came, and it was then, when everything said, "Impossible," that suddenly all resistance gave way and the grandfather said: "Let her go to the Christians."

PAKIUM AND NAVEENA.

We were sitting round the dinner-table one wet evening, thinking of nothing more exciting than the flying and creeping creatures which insisted upon drowning themselves in our soup, when the jingle of bullock-bells made us look at each other incredulously; and then, without waiting to wonder who it was, we all ran out and met Rukma running in from the wet darkness. "It’s it! it’s it!" she cried, and danced into the dining-room, decorum thrown to the pools in the compound. "Look at it!" and we saw a bundle in her arms. And it howled. From that day on for nearly a week it continued consistently to howl. We called the little thing Naveena, for the name means "new"; and it was our nearest approach to Soldanella, which we should have called her if we did not keep to Indian names for our babies. New and fresh as that little flower of joy, so was our new little gift to us, a new token for good. But flowers and howlers—the words draw their little skirts aside and refuse to touch each other. From certain points of view, in this case as so often, the sublime and the ridiculous were much too close together. The very crows made remarks about the baby when she wakened the morning with her howls. Mercifully for the family’s nerves she fell asleep at noon; but as soon as she woke she began again, and went on till both she and we were exhausted. There were no tears, the big dark eyes were only entirely defiant; and the baby stood straight up with her hands behind her back and her mouth open—that was all. But we knew it meant pure misery, though expressed so very aggressively; and we coaxed and petted when she would allow us, and won her confidence at last, and then she stopped.

Friends

It took months to tame the little thing. She had been allowed to do exactly as she liked; for she was her grandfather’s pet, and no one might cross her will. We had to go very gently; but eventually

she understood and became a dear little girl, reserved but very affectionate, and scampish to such a degree that Chellalu, discerning a congenial spirit, decided to adopt her as "her friend." This fact was announced to us at the babies' Bible-class, when the word "friend," which was new to the babies, was being explained. It has four syllables in Tamil, and the babies love four-syllabled words. They were rolling this juicy morsel under their tongues with sounds of appreciation, when Chellalu pointed across to Naveena, and with an air of possession remarked, "She is my friend." The other babies nodded their heads, "Yes, Naveena is Chellalu's friend!" Naveena looked flattered and very pleased.

These friends in a kindergarten class are rather terrible. They are always separated—as the Tamil would say, if one sits north the other sits south—but even so there are means of communication. This morning, passing the door of the kindergarten room, I looked in and saw something not included in the time-table. We have a little yellow bellflower here which grows in great profusion; and some vandal taught the babies to blow it up like a little balloon, and then snap it on the forehead. The crack it makes is delightful. We do not like this game, and try to teach the babies to respect the pretty flowers; but there are so many sins in the world, that we do not make another by actually forbidding it; we trust to time and sense and good feeling to help us. So it comes to pass that the worst scamps indulge in this game without feeling too guilty; and now I saw Chellalu with a handful of the flowers, cracking them at intervals, to the distraction of the teacher and the delight of all the class. One other was cracking flowers too. It was Naveena, and there was a method in her cracks. When Rukma turned to Chellalu, Naveena cracked her flower. When she turned to Naveena, then Chellalu cracked hers. How they had eluded the search which precedes admission to the kindergarten nobody knew; but there they were, each with a goodly handful of bells. At a word from Rukma, however, they handed them over to her with an indulgent smile, and even offered to search the other babies in case they had secreted any; and as I left the room the lesson continued as before, but the friends' intention was evident: they had hoped to be turned out together.

1.08.16. Book 8: 16. The Neyoor Nursery

CHAPTER XVI The Neyoor Nursery

"The roads are rugged, the precipices steep; there may be feelings of dizziness on the heights, gusts of wind, peals of thunder, nights of awful gloom. Fear them not!

"There are also the joys of sunlight, flowers such as are not in the plain, the purest of air, restful nooks, and the stars smile thence like the eyes of God."—Père Didon (translated by Rev. Arthur G. Nash). ON THE ROAD TO NEYOOR. AND now for a chapter of history. We had not been long at the new work before we discovered difficulties unimagined before, and impossible to describe in detail. Some of these concerned the health of the younger children; and eventually it seemed best to move the infants' nursery to within reach of medical help, and keep the bigger babies and elder children, whose protection was another grave anxiety, with us at Dohnavur.

Shortly before that time we had been brought into touch with the medical missionaries at Neyoor, in South Travancore. The senior missionary, Dr. Fells, was about to retire; but his successor, Dr. Bentall, cordially agreed to let us rent a little house in the village and fill it with babies, though he knew such a houseful might materially add to the fulness of his already overflowing day. He, and afterwards Dr. Davidson (now the only survivor at Neyoor of that kind trio of doctors), seemed to think nothing a trouble if only it helped a friend. So the little house was taken and the babies installed. ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF NAGERCOIL, WHERE WE STOPPED TO REST. The first day, September 25, 1905, is a day to be remembered. I had gone on before to prepare the house, and for a day and a half waited in uncertainty as to what had happened to the little party which was to have followed close behind. I had left one baby ill. She was the first child sent to us from the Canarese country; and I thought of the friends who had sent her, newly interested and stirred to seek these little ones, and of what it would mean of discouragement to them if she were taken, and my heart held on for her. At last the carts appeared in sight. It was the windy season, and six carts had been overturned on the road, so they had travelled slowly. Then a wheel came off one of their carts and an accident was narrowly averted. This had caused the delay. The baby about whom I had feared had recovered in time to be sent on. She was soon quite well, and has continued well from that day to this. The Welcome

How familiar the road between Dohnavur and Neyoor became to us, as the months passed and frequent journeys were made with little new babies! Sometimes those journeys were very wearisome. There was great heat, or a dust-laden wind filled the bandy to suffocation and blew out the spirit-lamp when we stopped to prepare the babies' food. How glad we used to be when, in the early evening, the white gleam of the stretch of water outside Nagercoil appeared in sight! We used to stop and bathe the babies, and feed them under some convenient trees, and then go on to our friends with whom we were to spend the night, trusting that the soothing effect of the bathe and food would not pass off until after our arrival. Those friends, our comrades of the L.M.S., like the Medicals at Neyoor, seemed made of kindness. How often their welcome has rested us after the long day!

Next morning we tried to start early, so as to arrive at Neyoor before the sun shone in fever-threatening strength straight in through the open end of the cart. This plan, however, proved too difficult, so we found it better to travel slowly straight on from Dohnavur to Neyoor. In this way we missed the blazing sun; but we also missed the refreshment of our friends at Nagercoil, and arrived more or less tired out, after a journey which, because of slow progress and frequent stops, was equal in time to one from London to Marseilles. But the welcome at the nursery made up for everything.

How vividly the photograph recalls it! The house opened upon the main street of the village, and there was nearly always a watcher on the look-out for us. Sometimes it was Isaac, our good man-of-all-work, who never failed Ponnamal through the two years he was with us. Then we would hear a call, and Ponnamal (we used to call her the Princess, but dignity gives place to something more human at such moments) would come flying down the path with a face which made words superfluous. Then there was the scramble out of the bandy, and the handing down of babies and exclamations about them; and all the nurses seemed to be kissing us at once and making their amazed babies kiss us, and everything was for one happy moment bewilderingly delightful.

Then there was the run round the cradles in which smaller babies were sleeping, and an eager comparing of notes as to the improvement of each. And if there were no improvement, how well one remembers the smothered sense of disappointment—smothered in public at least, lest the nurses should be discouraged. Then came a cup of tea on the mat in the little front room, where four white hammock-cradles hung, one in each corner; while Ponnamal sat beside me with three babies on her knee and two or three more somewhere near her. The babies used to study me in their wise and serious fashion, and then make careful advances. And so we would make friends.

Ponnamal had always much to tell about the exhaustless kindness of the doctors and their wives and the lady superintendent of the hospital. And the chief Tamil medical Evangelist had been true to his name, which means Blessedness. Once, in much distress of mind, we sent a little babe to the nursery, hardly daring to hope for her. When she arrived, the doctors were both away on tour, and the medical Evangelist was in charge. He attended to her at once, and by God’s grace upon his work was able to relieve the little child, who has prospered ever since. But I must leave unrecorded many acts of helpfulness. In those early days of doubt and difficulty, almost forgotten by us now, we beckoned to our "partners which were in the other ship," and their Master and ours will not forget how they held out willing hands and helped us.

It was not always plain sailing, even at Neyoor. "You are fighting Satan at a point upon which he is very sensitive; he will not leave you long in peace," wrote an experienced friend. On Palm Sunday, 1907, our first little band of young girls, fruit of this special work, confessed Christ in baptism, and we stood by the shining reach of water, and tasted of a joy so pure and thrilling that nothing of earth may be likened to it. A fortnight later we were ordered to the hills, and then the trouble came. The immediate cause was overcrowding. Why did we overcrowd? Could we Refuse?

Friends at home to whom the facts about Temple service were new, were stirred to earnest prayer. Out here fellow-missionaries helped us to save the children. God heard the prayer and blessed the work, and children began to come. Soon our one little room became too full. We had babies in the bungalow and on our verandah, babies everywhere. Then money came to build two more rooms, but they were soon too full. At Neyoor the pressure was worse, for we could only rent two small

houses; and though we put up mat shelters, and the children lived as much as possible in the open air, it was difficult to manage. But how could we refuse the little children? The Temple women were ready to take them if we had refused. Their houses are never too full. There was no other nursery to which they could be sent. Little children who had passed the troublesome infant stage could sometimes find a home elsewhere; but only the Temple houses were open at all times to babies. Could we have written to the friend who had saved a little child: "Hand her back to the Temple. It is the will of our Father that this little one should perish"? Should we have done it? We dare not do it. We prayed that help would be sent to build new nurseries, and we went on and did our best; but it was difficult.

We had just reached the hills in early April, and were forbidden to return, when news reached us of a fatal epidemic of dysentery which had broken out in the Neyoor nursery. Unseasonable rains had fallen and driven the babies indoors; this increased the overcrowding. The doctors were away. Letters telling us about the disaster had been lost—how, we never knew—so that the second which reached us, taking it for granted we had the first, gave no details, only the names of the smitten babes—nineteen of them, and five dead. Then trouble followed trouble. "While he was yet speaking, there came also another." Some evil men who had sought to injure us before, caused us infinite anxiety. And for a time that cannot be counted in days or in weeks it was like living through a nightmare, when everything happens in painful confusion and the sense of oppression is complete. THE NEYOOR NURSERY.

Out of the maelstrom came a letter from Ponnamal. "We are being comforted," she wrote. "You will be longing to come to us, but oh, do not come! If you were here all your strength would be given to fighting this battle with death, and you would have no strength left for prayer. God wanted to have one of us free to pray; and so He has taken you up to the mountain, as He took Moses when the people were fighting down in the plain." This was the true inward meaning of it all, and I knew it. But Ponnamal is far from strong, and I feared for her; and to stay away with the babies ill—it was the very hardest thing I had ever been asked to do. When the trouble passed there were ten in heaven. One, a little child of two, had been saved so wonderfully from Temple dedication that we had looked forward to a future of special blessing for her; and another was a very lovely babe, dear to the missionary who, after much toil and many disappointments, had been comforted by saving her. Each of the ten had cost someone much. But this is an earthly point of view. They had cost Him most who had taken them, and he is only an owner in name who has no right to do as he will with his own. The other side, the purely human side, pressed heavily just then. The doctors had most kindly at once ordered a mission room, vacated at that season, to be lent to the nursery, and another little house was taken for the month. How Ponnamal kept all four houses going in an orderly fashion, how she kept her nurses together through that time of almost panic, and how she herself, frail and delicate as she is, kept up till all was over, we cannot understand from any point of view but the Divine. She only broke down once. It was when her dearest child, our merry, beautiful little Heart’s Joy, who, having more strength than most, had battled longer and almost recovered, suddenly sank. The visible cause was that a special nutrient, which, being costly, we stocked in small quantities, ran short, and the fresh supply reached the nursery just too late. "If only it had come yesterday!" moaned Ponnamal, and we with her when we heard of the series of contretemps which had delayed its arrival. The torture of second causes is as the blackness of darkness, but the Lord gave deliverance from it; for just as she had to part with all that was left her

of our little Heart’s Joy, a letter came from Dr. Davidson which was God’s own blessed comfort to a heart almost broken. She never refers to that letter without the quick tears starting. "I could let my little treasure go after I read that letter. It strengthened me."

"The Lord sat as King at the Flood"

While all this was going on in Neyoor, Chellalu, then just two years old, was very ill in Dohnavur. Mr. and Mrs. Walker were still there, and they nursed her night and day; but at last a letter came, evidently meant to prepare me for fresh sorrow. "Every little lamb belongs to the Good Shepherd, not to us," the letter said, and told of a temperature 106° and rising. The child, all spirit and frolic, had little reserve strength, and there was not much cause for hope. But we were spared this parting. Chellalu is with us still. The sky was clearing again and we were beginning to breathe freely, when the worst that had ever touched us in all our years of work came suddenly upon us. How small things that affect the body appear when the point of attack wheels round to the soul! The death of all the babies seemed as nothing compared with the falling away of one soul. But God is the God of the waves and the billows, and they are still His when they come over us; and again and again we have proved that the overwhelming thing does not overwhelm. Once more by His interposition deliverance came. We were cast down, but not destroyed. A time of calm succeeded this storm. Money came to build nurseries at Dohnavur, and buy more of the special nutrients we so much required. The Neyoor remnant picked up, and the nurses took heart again. I went out to them as soon as I could after our return from the hills, and found those who were left well and strong. "They shall see His face" had been the text in Daily Light, the evening the news reached me of the little procession heavenwards. I looked at the ten names written in the margin of my book; and, recalling the story of each, could be glad they have seen the face of the One who loves them best. Lower down on the page come the words, "We shall be satisfied." We thought of our babies satisfied so soon; and then we knelt together and said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemeth good in Thy sight."

Pretty pictures all in colours and bright sunshine tempt one to linger over that visit. I can see the white hammocks slung from the trees in the nursery compound, and happy baby-faces looking out of them. And another shows me one who had been like a sister to Ponnamal, lightening her load whenever she could; sitting with two dear babies in her arms, and another clinging round her neck. "She comes and helps us often in the mornings when we are very busy," said Ponnamal about the doctor’s wife, as I noticed the babies’ affection for her and her sweet, kind ways with them. "Sometimes when I am feeling down and home-sick, she comes in like this and plays with the babies, and cheers us all up." The Indian woman is very home-loving. Only devotion to the children could have kept the nurses and Ponnamal so long in exile for their sake; and there were times when even Ponnamal’s brave heart sank. Then these love-touches helped.

Goodbye to Neyoor When the time came for the nursery party to leave Neyoor and return to Dohnavur, after two and a half years in that hospitable mission, we were sorry to part. Days like the days we had passed through test the stuff of which souls are made, and they prove what we call friendship. After the fire has spent itself, the fine gold shines out purified, and there is something solemn in its light. We had grown close to our friends in Neyoor; but the cloud had moved, so far as we could read the sign, and it seemed right to return. The missionaries were away when the day came, but the Christians surrounded Ponnamal with tokens of goodwill. "The

nursery has been like a little light in our midst," they said; and this word cheered her more than all other words. And so farewelled, they arrived home, all glad and warm with the glow that comes when hearts meet each other and each finds the other kind.

1.08.17. Book 8: 17. In the compound and near it

CHAPTER XVII In the Compound and Near it THE OLD NURSERY. THE "ROOM OF JOY."

"NOW I know why God put you in Dohnavur when He wanted this work done. He hid you from the eyes of the world for the little children’s sake. He knew this work could never have been done by the road-side, so He hid you." The speaker was a Christian friend from Palamcottah, an Indian lawyer who, for the first time, had come out to see us. He had found our approaches appalling, and had wondered at first why we lived in such an out-of-the-way place, three or four miles from the nearest road, and twenty-four from civilisation. When he saw the children he understood. Later, he helped us in an attempt to save two little ones in danger, and insisted not only upon paying his own and our worker’s expenses, but in sending us a gift for the nurseries. With the gift came a letter full of loving, Indian sympathy; and again he added as before: "The Lord hid you in that quiet place for the little children’s sake." Sometimes when the inconveniences of jungle life press upon us, we remember our friend’s words: "This work could never have been done by the road-side, so He hid you."

We have children with us who would not have been safe for a day had we lived near a large town or near a railway. The stretch of open country between us and Palamcottah (the Church Missionary Society centre of the Tinnevelly district), to cover which, by bullock-cart, takes as long as to travel from London to Brussels, is not considered very safe for solitary Indian travellers, as the robber clan frequent it, and this is an added protection for the children. Several times, to our knowledge, unwelcome visitors have been deterred from making a raid upon us, by the rumour of the robbers on the road. We are also most mercifully quite out of the beat of the ordinary exploiter of missions; few except the really keen care for such a journey; so that we get on with our work uninterrupted by anything but the occasional arrival of welcome friends and comrades. These, when they visit us for the first time, are usually much astonished to find something almost civilised out in the wilds, and they walk round with an air of surprise, and quite inspiring appreciation, being kindly pleased with little, because they had looked for less. THE COURTYARD. The compound in which the nurseries are built is a field, bounded on three sides by fields, and on the fourth by the bungalow compound. The Western Ghauts with their foothills make it a beautiful place.

Coming-days The buildings are not beautiful. With us, as elsewhere, doubtless, even the break of a gable in the straight, barn-like roof makes a difference in the estimate, and we have never had a margin for luxuries. But the walls are coloured a soft terra-cotta, the roofs are a dull red; while the porches (hidden by the palm trunks in the photograph) are a mass of greenery and bloom; and the garden at the moment of writing is rejoicing in over a hundred lilies, brilliant yellow and flame colour, each head with its many flowers rising separate and radiant in the sunshine. Then we have oleanders, crimson and pink and white, and little young hibiscus trees, crimson and rose and cream. The arches in the new nursery garden are covered with the lilac of morning-glory; and the Prayer-room in the middle of the garden is a mass of violet passion-flower, the pretty pink antigone, and starry jessamine. The very hedges at this season are out in yellow flower, and a

trellis round the nursery kitchen is a delight of colour; so though our buildings are simple, we think the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places. The first picture shows the old nursery, used now for the kindergarten. It opens off the courtyard shown in the second photo. This courtyard serves as an open-air room, a bright little place which is filled with merrier children than the sober photograph shows. Tamils old and young move when they laugh or even smile; in fact they wriggle. Being still, with them, meant being seriously subdued; and so, where time-exposures were required, we had to choose between solemn photos, or no photos at all.

Opening off the courtyard on the opposite side to the kindergarten is a room used as a store-room and Bible-class room combined. It was so very uncomfortable that last Christmas, as a surprise for the children, we divided the room into two halves with a curtain between. Their half is made pretty with pictures and texts, painted in blue on pale brown wood. The children call this part of the room the Tabernacle. The part beyond the curtain is the court of the Gentiles. The Coming-Day Feasts are a feature of Dohnavur life. Now that there are so many feasts to celebrate, we find it more convenient to combine; and the photograph overleaf shows as much as it can of one such happy feast. The children who are being fêted are distinguished from the others by having flowers in their hair. No Indian feast is complete without flowers. Jessamine is the favourite, but the prettiest wreaths are made of pink oleander; and sometimes a girl will surprise us with a new and lovely combination, as of brown flowering grasses and yellow Tecoma bells. A COMING-DAY FEAST.

Opposite the kindergarten room is the first of the two new nurseries—the lively Parrot-house. This nursery, really the Taraha (Star, called after its English giver, whose name means "star") is the abode of the middle-aged babies, aged between two years and four. Most of these attend the kindergarten, and are very proud of the fact. The Prémalia nursery (Abode of Love), given by two friends in memory of a mother translated, lies beyond the Taraha. Here the tiny infants live, and we call it the Menagerie. This nursery, like the other, looks out on the glorious mountains. If beautiful things can make babies good, ours should be very good. On the eastern side of the field we have lately built two small sick-rooms, used oftener as overflow nurseries. These little rooms have names meaning "peace" and "tranquillity"; and those of us who have lived in them with our babies, sick or well, find the names appropriate. In the foreground there is a garden, in the background the mountain; and to give purpose to it all, the foreground is full of life. A new nursery now being built is a welcome gift from Australia; and a new field with a noble tree, in whose shade a hundred children could play, is the gift of a friend who stayed with us for one bright week last year.

All this is a later development, unthought of when our artist friend was with us. We have often wished for him since the nurseries filled. When he was with us our choice of subject was very limited: now, wherever we look we see pictures, which to be properly caught ask for colour photography. The story of these buildings is the story of the Ravens, so old and yet so new. When first the work began, we had only one mud-floored room for nursery, kitchen, bedroom, and everything else that was needed. We hardly knew ourselves whereunto things would grow, and feared to run before the Lord by even a prayer for buildings. And yet we could not go on as we were. The birds were soon too many for the nest, and we needed more nests. No one knew of our need; for visitors at that time were few at Dohnavur, and we told no one. But money began to come. We ventured on a single room without a verandah or even foundations—built of sun-dried bricks as inexpensively as possible. But it was a palace to us. While we were building it, more little

children came. We felt we should need more room, but had not more money; so we told the builders to wait for a day while we gave ourselves to prayer about the matter. Was the work going to grow much more? We were fearful of making mistakes. Were we right to incur fresh responsibility?—for buildings need to be kept in condition, and the cheaper they are the more care they need. No one at home was responsible for us. No one had authorised this new work. It would not be fair to saddle those on whom the burden might eventually fall with responsibilities for which they were not responsible. And yet surely the work of saving these little children had been given to us to do? Someone was responsible. Surely, unless we were utterly wrong and had mistaken the Shepherd's Voice, surely He was responsible! He could not mean us to search for the lambs for whom only the wolves had been searching, and then leave them out in the open, found but unfolded, or packed so close in the little fold that they could not grow as little lambs should? The Registered Letter

We rolled the burden off that day as to the ultimate responsibility, and we asked definitely for all that was needed to build another room.

Three days later a registered letter came from a bank in Madras. It contained an anonymous gift of one hundred rupees, and was marked, "For a new nursery." The date showed that it had been posted in Madras on the day of our waiting upon God for guidance as to His wishes. A few days later, the same amount, with the same direction as to its use, was sent to us from the same bank. The giver, as we knew long afterwards, was a fellow-missionary in Tinnevelly, whose order to send these sums to us was given before even we ourselves had fully understood the meaning of the leading. The second room was built on to the first, and the children called it the Room of Joy. THE RED LAKE.

Water Palms, with Mountains in the background.

There are no secrets in India. The Hindu masons were amazed at what they at once recognised as the hand of the Lord upon the work, and they spread the story everywhere. Later, when they built the nursery where poor little Mala stood and mourned, they understood why they had to stop before the verandah was built. Only enough was in hand to build the bare room; but to their eyes, as to ours, a verandah was much needed, and they were content to wait till what was required for one came. In this land of blazing sunshine and drenching monsoon a house without a verandah is hardly habitable, and a small square room without one has a Manx-cat appearance.

"These are Thy wonders, Lord" The story of the rooms has been repeated in the story of the work ever since. "Do not thank us. It is only a belated tenth," wrote a fellow-missionary not long ago, as she sent a gift for the nurseries. Belated tenths have reached us sometimes when they have been like visible ravens flying straight from the blue above. All the long journeys in search of the children, all the expenses connected with their salvation, all that has been required to provide nurses and food (including the special nourishment without which the more delicate could not live at all), all that is now being needed for their education—all has come and is coming as the ravens came to Elijah. The work has been a revelation of how many hearts are sensitive and obedient to the touch of the Spirit; for sometimes help has reached us in such a way and in such form that we could not but stand and worship, awestruck by the token of the nearness of our God. There is many a spot marked in garden or in field or in the busy nursery or our own quiet room, where, with the open letter in our hand—the letter of relief from a pressure unknown even to the nearest

fellow-worker—we have knelt in spirit with Jacob and said: "Surely the Lord is in this place!" and almost added, so dense are we in unilluminated moments, "and I knew it not."

Framed between red roofs and foliage, there are far blue glimpses of mountains shown in this lakeside photograph. We do not see the water from the compound. It lies on the other side of the boundary fields and hedges; but we see the mountains with perfect distinctness of outline, scarped with bare crags, which in the early morning are sometimes pink, and in the evening, purple. But the time to see the mountains in their glory is when the south-west monsoon is flinging its masses of cloud across to us. Then the mountains, waking from the lazy sleep of the long, hot months, catch the clouds on their pointed fangs, toss them back and harry them, wrap themselves up in robes of them, and go to sleep again. The road that skirts the Red Lake leads through two ancient Hindu towns, from both of which we have children saved, in each case as by a miracle. In the first of these old towns there is a Temple surrounded by a mighty wall.

There are two large gates and one small side door in the wall; and, passing in through the small side door, one sees another wall almost as strong as the first, and realises something of the power that built it. The Temple is in the centre of the large enclosure. It is a single tower opening off the inner court. In the outer court a pillared hall is used as stable for the Temple elephant, and two camels lounge in the roughly kept garden in front. This Temple, with its double walls, its massive, splendidly-carved doors and expensive animal life, is somewhat of a surprise to the visitor, who hardly expects to see so much in a little old country town on the borders of the wilds. But Hinduism has not lost hold of this old remote India yet. There are some who think that the country town is the place to see it in strength. AT THE DOOR OF THE TEMPLE.

It was early in August, three years ago, that we heard of a baby girl in that town, devoted from birth to the god. We set wheels in motion, and waited. A month passed and nothing was done. We could not go ourselves and attempt to persuade the mother to change the vow she had made, as any movement on our part would only have riveted the links that fettered the child to the god. We had to be quiet and wait. At last, one evening in September, a Hindu arrived in the town with whom our friends who were on the watch had intimate connection. He, too, knew about the child; and he knew a way unknown to our friends by which the mother might be influenced, and he consented to try. His arrival just at that juncture appeared to us, who were waiting in daily expectation of an answer of deliverance, as the evident beginning of that answer; thus our faith was quickened and we waited in keen hope. Two days later, after dark, there was a rush from the nursery to the bungalow. "The baby has come!" Another moment, and we were in the nursery. A woman—one of our friends—was standing with what looked like a parcel wrapped in a cloth hidden under her arm. Even then, though all was safe, she was trembling; and outside, two men, her relations, stood on guard. She opened the white cloth, and inside was the baby. Her Choice The men assured us that all was right. The mother had been convinced of the wrongness of dedicating the little babe, and would give us no trouble. But a day or two later, she came and demanded it back. She could not stand the derision of her friends, who told her she had sinned far more in giving her child to those who would break its caste than she ever could have done had she given it to the Temple. We pacified her with difficulty, and were thankful when the little thing was safe in the Neyoor nursery. For in those days, before we learned how best to protect our children, we were often glad to have some place even more out of reach than Dohnavur. The second of these old towns is famous for its rock, and its Temple built into the rock. Looking down from above one can see inside the

courtyard as into an open well. Connected with this Temple, some years ago, there was a beautiful young Temple woman, who had been given as a child—as all Temple women must be—to the service of the gods. She had no choice as regarded herself—probably the idea of choice never entered her mind—but for her babe she determined to choose; and yet she knew of no way of deliverance. But there was a way of deliverance, and if it had only been for this one child's sake, and for the sake of the relief it must have been to that fear-haunted mother, we are glad with a gladness too deep for words that the nursery was here. For the mother heard of it. There were lions in the path. She quietly avoided them, and through others who were willing to help she sent her child to us. She herself would not come. She waited a mile or so from the bungalow till the matter was concluded, then returned to her home alone. A week later she appeared suddenly at the bungalow. It was only to make sure the little one was safe and well, and in order to sign a paper saying she was wholly given to us. This done she disappeared again, refusing speech with anyone, and for months we heard nothing of her. Then cholera swept our countryside, and we heard she had taken it and died. We leave her to God her Creator, who alone knows all the story of her life: we only know enough to make us very silent. And through the quiet we hear as it were a voice that chants a fragment from an old hymn: "We believe that THOU shalt come to be our Judge."

1.08.18. Book 8: 18. From the temple of the rock

CHAPTER XVIII From the Temple of the Rock

ANOTHER little girl who came from that same Temple of the Rock has a story very different from the other, and far more typical.

It was on a blazing day in June, when the very air, tired of being hot, leaned heavily upon us, and we felt unequal to contest, that a cough outside my open door announced a visitor. "Come in!" Another cough, and I looked out and saw a shuffling form disappear round the corner of the house. I called again, and the figure turned. It was a man who had helped us before, but about whose bonâ-fides we had doubts; so we asked without much hopefulness what he had to tell us. He said he had reason to believe a certain Temple woman known to him had a child she meant to dedicate to the god of a Temple a day's journey distant. Then he paused. "Do you know where she is now?" "She is on her way to the Temple." "It would be well if she came here instead." "If that is the Animal's desire it may be possible to bring her." "Has she gone far? Could you overtake her?" "She is waiting outside your gate." At such a moment it is wise to show no surprise and no anxiety. All the burning eagerness must be covered up with coolness. But in the hour that intervened before the woman "at the gate" could be persuaded to come further, we quieted ourselves in the Lord our God and held on for the little child. At last the shuffling step and the sound of voices told us they had come—two women, the man, and a child. The child was a baby of something under two, a sad-looking little thing, with great, dark, pathetic eyes looking out from under limp brown curls. She was very pale and fragile; and when the woman who carried her set her down upon the floor and propped her against the wall, she leaned against it listlessly, with her little chin in her tiny hand, in a sorrowful, grown-up fashion. I longed to take her and nestle her comfortably; but, of course, took no notice of her. Any sign of pity or sympathy would have been misunderstood by the women. All through the interminable talk upon which her fate depended, that child sat wearily patient, making no demands upon anyone; only the little head drooped, and the mouth grew pitiful in its complete despondency. The ways of the East are devious. The fact that the child had been brought to us did not indicate a decision to give her to us instead of to the Temple. The woman and the man who had persuaded them to come had much to say to one another, and there was much we had to explain. A child given to Temple service is not in all cases entirely cut off from her people. If the Temple woman's hold on her is sure, her relations are sometimes allowed to visit her; so far as friendly intercourse goes she is not lost to them. But with us things are different. For the child's own sake we have to refuse all intercourse whatever. Once given to us, she is lost to them as if they had never had her. We adopt the little one altogether or not at all.

Till the Battle is Won

It is a delicate thing to explain all this so clearly that there can be no misunderstanding about it, without so infuriating the relations that they will have nothing more to do with us. Naturally their view-point is entirely different from ours, and they cannot appreciate our reasons. At such a time we lean upon the Invisible, and count upon that supernatural help which alone is sufficient for us;

we count also upon the prayers of those who know what it is to pray through all opposing forces, till the battle is won by faith which is the victory.

It was strange to watch the women as the talk went on. The woman within them had died, there was nothing of it left to which we could appeal; everything about them was perverted, unnatural. I looked at the insensitive faces and then at the sensitive face of the child, and entered deeper than ever into the mercifulness of God's denunciations of sin.

Once towards the close of what had been a time of some tension, the leader of the two women suddenly sprang up, snatched at the tired baby, and flung out of the room with her. She had been gradually hardening; and I had felt rather than seen the shutting down of the prison-house gates upon that little soul, and had, as a last resource, appealed to the sense, not wholly atrophied, the sense that recognises the supernatural. God is, I told them briefly; God takes cognisance of what we are and do: God will repay: some time, somewhere, God will punish sin. The arrow struck through to the mark. Startled, indignant, overwhelmed by the sweep of an awful conviction, with a passionate cry she rushed away; and we lived through one breathless moment, but the next saw the child dropped into our arms, safe at last.

Facts about any matter of importance are usually other than at first stated; but we have reason to believe that in this instance our shuffling friend spoke the truth. The women were really on their way to the Temple when he waylaid them. The wonder was that they allowed themselves to be persuaded by him to come to us. But if nothing happened except what we might naturally expect would happen in this work, we might as well give it up at once. If we did not expect our Jericho walls to fall down flat, it would be foolish indeed to continue marching round them.

It was a relief when the women left the compound, after signing a paper committing the child to us. There is defilement in the mere thought of evil, but such close contact with it is a thing by itself. The sense of contamination lasted for days; and yet would that we could go through it every day if the result might be the same! For the child woke up to a new life, and became what a child should be. At first it was very pitiful. She would sit hour after hour as she had sat through that first hour, with her chin in hand, her eyes cast down, and the little mouth pathetic. We found that, in accordance with a custom prevailing in the coterie of Temple women belonging to the Temple of the Rock, she had been lent by her mother to another woman when she was an infant, the other lending her baby in exchange. This exchange had worked sadly; for the little one had asked for something which had not been given her, and her two years had left her starved of love and experienced in loneliness. But when she came to us everything changed; for love and happiness took her hands and led her back to baby ways, and taught her how to laugh and play: and now there is nothing left to remind us of those two first years but a certain droop of the little mouth when she feels for the moment desolate, or wants some extra petting.

1.08.19. Book 8: 19. Yosépu

CHAPTER XIX

Yosépu THE WATER CARRIERS. NO description of the compound would be complete without mention of Yosépu, friend of the babies. This photograph shows the Indian equivalent of pumps and water-pipes. We have neither; so all the water required for a family of about a hundred has to be drawn from the well and carried to the kitchens and nurseries. The elder girls, who would otherwise help with the work, according to South Indian custom, are already fully employed with the babies. So at present the men do it all. They also buy the grain and other food-stuffs, look after the cows and vegetable garden—a necessity for those who dwell far from markets—and in all other possible masculine ways are of service to the family.

Chief of these men is Yosépu, whose seamed and wrinkled and most expressive face I wish we had photographed, instead of this not very interesting string of solemnities.

Yosépu is not like a man, he is more like a dear dog. He has the ways of our dog-friends, their patience and fidelity, their gratefulness for pats.

He came to us in a wrecked condition, thin and weak and rather queer. He had been beaten by his Hindu brother for becoming a Christian, and it had been too much for him. The first time we saw him, a few minutes after his arrival, he was standing leaning against a post with folded hands and upturned eyes and a general expression of resignation which went to our hearts. We found afterwards he was not feeling resigned so much as hungry, and he was better after food. For a week he slept, ate, and meditated. Sometimes he would hover round us, if such a verb is admissible for his seriousness of gait. He would wait till we noticed him, then sigh and extend his hand. He wanted us to feel his pulse—both pulses. This ceremony always refreshed him, and he would return to his corner of the verandah and meditate till his next meal came.

Sometimes, however, more attention was required. He would linger after his pulses were felt, and we knew he was not satisfied. One day a happy thought struck us. The Tamil loves scent. The very babies sniff our hands if we happen to be using scented soap, and tell each other rapturously what they think about that "chope." Scent is the one thing they cannot resist. A tin of sweets on our table may be untouched for days, few babies being wicked enough to venture upon it in our absence; but a bottle of scent is irresistible, and scented "chope" on our washing-stands has a way of growing thin. The baby will emerge from our bathrooms rubbing suspiciously clean hands, and in her innocence will invite us to smell them. Then we know why our "chope" disappears. So now that Yosépu needed something to lift him over the trials of life, we remembered the gift of a good Scottish friend, and tried the effect of eau-de-Cologne. It worked most wonderfully. Yosépu held out his two hands joined close lest a single drop should spill, and then he stood and sniffed. It would have made a perfect advertisement—the big brown man with his hands folded over his nose, and an expression of absolute bliss upon every visible feature. Now, when Yosépu is down-hearted, we always try eau-de-Cologne.

Blessed be Drudgery His first move towards being of use was when some of our children had small-pox and were put up in a half-finished room which was being built. "It has walls and it has a roof, therefore it is suitable," was Yosépu's opinion; and he offered to nurse the children. One evening we heard a terrible noise; it was like three cracked violins gone mad, all playing different tunes at the same time. It was only Yosépu singing hymns to the children. "For spiritual instruction is a thing to be desired, and there is nothing so edifying as music."

After this he announced his intention of becoming a water-carrier. "Water is a pure thing and a necessity. The young children demand much water if their bodies are to be"—here followed Scriptural quotations meant in deepest reverence. "I will be responsible for the baths of all the babes." And from that time Yosépu has been responsible. Solemnly from dawn to dusk, with breathing spaces for meals and meditation, he stalks across from nurseries to well and from well to nurseries. He is a man of few smiles; but he is the cause of many, and we all feel grateful to Yosépu for his goodness to us. Often on melancholy days he comes and comforts us.

It was so one anxious day before we went to the hills, when we were trying to plan for the safety of our family. We can only take a limited number of converts with us, and no babies; the difficulty is then which to take, which to hide, and which to leave in the nurseries. We were in the midst of this perplexity when Yosépu arrived. He stood in silence, and then sighed, as his cheerful custom is. We made the usual inquiries as to his health, physical and spiritual. Both soul and body (his invariable order, never body and soul) were well, he said; his pulse did not need to be felt to-day: no, there was something weightier upon his mind. There are times when it is like extracting a tooth to get a straight answer from Yosépu, for he resents directness in speech; he thinks it barbarous. At last it came. "Aiyo! Aiyo!" (Alas! Alas!) "My sun has set; but who am I, that I should complain or assault the decrees of Providence? But Amma! remember the word of truth: 'Then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.'" And he slowly unwound his wisp of a turban, held it in his folded hands, and shook down his lanky, jet-black locks with a pathos that was almost sublime. THE BELOVED TINGALU.

It took time to pierce to the meaning of it: the children were being scattered—the reason must be that we felt the bath-water carrying too much for his powers through the hot weeks. It was not so! He was strong to draw and to bear. The babies should never be deprived of their baths! But to-day as he went to the well he had heard what broke his heart; and he laid his hand upon the injured organ, and sighed with a sigh that assured us his lungs at least were sound. "Tingalu is to go away! The apple of my eye! that golden child who smiles upon me, and says, 'Oh, elder brother, good morning!' You are not going to leave her with me! Therefore spake I the word of truth concerning my grey hairs." Then quoting the text again, he turned and walked away.

Once the beloved Tingalu was slightly indisposed. She has not often the privilege of being ill, and so, when the opportunity offers, she does the invalid thoroughly; it would be a pity, Tingalu thinks, to be anything but correct. But Yosépu was much concerned. He appeared in the early morning with his usual cough and sigh. "Amma! Tingalu is ill!" "She will soon be better, Yosépu; she is having medicine." "What sort of medicine, Amma?" and Yosépu mentioned the kind he thought suitable. "That is exactly what she has had; you will see her playing about to-morrow." "But no smile is on her face to-day; I fear for the babe." (Tingalu never smiles when ill. Invalids should not smile.) Yosépu suggested another medicine to supplement the first, and departed.

I will pay for it

Next morning he came again, anxious and cast down in countenance. I had to keep him waiting; and when I came out, he was standing beside my verandah steps, head on one side, eyes shut, hands folded as if in prayer. "Well, Yosépu, what is it?" "Amma! the light of your eyes revives me!" "Well, tell me the trouble." "All yesterday I saw you not; it was a starless night to me!" This is merely the preface. "But, Yosépu, what is wrong?" "Tingalu, that golden child with a voice like a bird, she lies on her mat. I am concerned about the babe," (Tingalu, turned four, is as hardy as a gipsy), "I fear for her delicate interior. Those ignorant children" (the convert nurses would have been pleased if they had heard him) "know nothing at all. It may be they will feed her with curry and rice this morning. That would be dangerous. Amma! Let her have bread and milk, and I will pay for it!"

Yosépu came a few days ago with a request for a doll. "Who for?" "For myself." "But are you going to play with it?" Yosépu acknowledged he was, and he wished it to have genuine hair, a pink silk frock, and eyes that would open and shut. We had not anything so elaborate to give him, and he had to be contented with a black china head and painted eyes; but he was pleased, and took it away carefully rolled up in his turban, which serves conveniently for head-gear, towel, scarf, and duster. When and where he plays with the doll no one knows, but he assures us he does; and we have mentally reserved the first pink silk, with eyes that will open and shut, that a benevolent public sends to us, for Yosépu. . . . The words were hardly written when a shadow fell across the paper, and the unconscious subject of this chapter remarked as I looked up: "1 Corinthians 7:31." "Do you want anything, Yosépu?" "Amma! 1 Corinthians 7:31." "Well, Yosépu?" "As it is written in that chapter, and that verse: 'The fashion of this world passeth away.' Amma, if within the next two months a visitor comes to Dohnavur carrying a picture-catching box, I desire that you arrange for the catching of my picture. This, Amma, is my desire." The Western mind is very dense; and for a moment I could not see the connection between the text and the photograph. Yosépu is never impatient. He squatted down beside me, dropped his turban round his neck, held his left foot with his left hand, and emphasised his explanation with his right.

"Amma, the wise know that life is uncertain. I am a frail mortal. You, who are as mother and as father to this unworthy worm, would feel an emptiness within you if I were to depart." "But, Yosépu, I hope you are not going to depart." This was exactly what Yosépu had anticipated. He smiled, then he sighed. "Amma! did I not say it before? 1 Corinthians 7:31 : 'The fashion of this world passeth away.' Therefore I said, Let me have my picture caught, so that when I depart you may hang it on your wall and still remember me."

Within me pulled the Strings of Love

Yosépu's latest freak has been to take a holiday. "My internal arrangements are disturbed; composure of mind will only be obtained by a month's respite from secularities." Yosépu had once announced his intention of offering himself to the National Missionary Society, and we thought he now referred to becoming an ascetic for a month and wandering round the country, begging-bowl in hand; for he solemnly declared as he stroked his bony frame: "The Lord will provide." But his intention was a real holiday. He would go and see the brother who had beaten him, and forgive him. We suggested the brother might beat him again. He smiled at our want of faith, and went for his holiday. A month was the time agreed upon, but within three days he was back. He could not

stay away, he explained, with a shame-faced air of affection. "Within me pulled the strings of love; pulled, yea, pulled till I returned." Faithful, quaint, and wholly original Yosépu! He calls himself our servant, but we think of him as our friend.

1.08.20. Book 8: 20. The Menagerie

CHAPTER XX The Menagerie Fate which foresaw How frivolous a baby man would be—

TWO VIEWS OF LIFE. THE event of the week, from a Tamil point of view, is the midday Sunday service; so we take care of the nurseries during that hour, and send all grown-up life to church. In the Prémalia nursery the babies range from a few days old to eighteen months, and sometimes two years. There is a baby for every mood, as one beloved of the babies says; and the babies seem to know it. We have a lively time there on Sundays; for by noon the morning sleep is over, and nineteen or twenty babies are waking up one after the other or all together. And most of them want something, and want it at once.

These babies are of various dispositions and colour—nut-brown, biscuit, and buff; and there are two who, taken together, suggest chocolate-cream. Chocolate is a dear child, very good-tempered and easy to manage. Cream is a scamp. We see in her another Chellalu, and watch with mingled feelings her vigorous development.

Chocolate has another name. It is Beetle. This does not sound appreciative, but Beetle is beloved. The name was discovered by her affectionate Piria Sittie, who came upon her one morning lying on her back in the swinging cot, kicking her four limbs in the air in the agitated manner of that insect unexpectedly upset. But no beetle ever smiled as ours does.

Cream, whose real name is Nundinie, oftener called Dimples, because she dimples so when she laughs, is a baby of character. She early discovered her way to the bungalow, and scorning assistance or superintendence found her way over as soon as she could walk. Afternoon tea is never a sombre meal, for the middle-aged babies attend it in relays of four or five; and Dimples and her special chum, Lulla, like to arrive in good time for the full enjoyment of the function. Dimples sits down properly in a high chair close beside her Attai, who, according to her view of matters, was created to help her to sugar. Lulla, so as to be even nearer that exhaustless delight, insists upon her Attai’s knee; and tapping her face with her very small fingers, immediately points to the sugar bowl.

Diversions

These preliminaries over, Dimples sets herself to pay for her seat. She smiles upon her Attai first, then upon all the company. If the Iyer is present, she notices him kindly: there is nothing in all nature so patronising as a baby. If in the mood, she will imitate her friends like her predecessor Scamp No. 1; or folding her fat arms will regard us all with a quizzical expression more comical than play. Her latest invention is drill. She stands straight up in her chair, and goes through certain actions intended to represent as much as she knows of that interesting exercise. We are kept anxious lest she should overbalance; but she is a wary babe, and always suddenly sits down when she gets to the edge of a tumble. Sometimes, however, when these diversions are in progress, we have wished that the family could see how very much more entertaining she is in her own nursery. There, from the beginning of the day till the sad moment when it ends, she seems to be engaged

in entertaining somebody. Sometimes it is one of the Accals, those good elder sisters to whom the babies owe so much. Dimples thinks she looks tired. Tired people must be cheered, so Dimples devotes herself to her. Sometimes it is another baby who is dull. Dull babies are anomalies. Dimples feels responsible till the dull baby revives. Or it is just her own happy little self who is being entertained. If ever a baby enjoyed a game for its own sweet sake, it is Dimples. But one thing she does not enjoy, and that is being put to bed at night. Our babies are anointed with oil, according to the custom of the East, before being put to sleep; but the moment Dimples sees the oil-bottle in her nurse's hand, she knows her fate is sealed and protests with all her might. Once she contrived to seize the bottle, pull out the cork, and spill the oil before she was discovered. She seemed to argue that as she was invariably oiled before being put to bed, the best way to avoid ever being put to bed would be to get rid of the oil. Another evening she succeeded in diverting her nurse into a long search for the cork, thereby delaying the fatal last moment; it was finally found in her mouth. When, in spite of all efforts to wriggle out of reach, she is captured, anointed, and put in her hammock, Dimples knows she must not get out; but her wails are so lamentable that it is difficult to restrain ourselves from throwing discipline to the winds, and if by any chance we do, her smiles are simply ravishing. But we hear about it afterwards.

If Dimples is asleep when we take charge of the nursery, we find things fairly quiet and almost flat. But she usually wakens early, and always in a good temper. It is instructive to see the way she scrambles out of her hammock before she is quite awake, and her sleepy stagger across the room is often interrupted by a tumble. Dimples does not mind tumbles. If her curly head has been rather badly knocked, she looks reproachfully at the floor, rubs her head, and gets up again. By the time she reaches us she is wide awake and most engaging. In C. F. Holder's Life of Agassiz we are told that the great scientist "could not bear with superficial study: a man should give his whole life to the object he had undertaken to investigate. He felt that desultory, isolated, spasmodic working avails nothing, but curses with narrowness and mediocrity." This is exactly the view of one of our babies, already introduced, the little wise Lulla, who always knows her own mind and sticks to her intentions, unbeguiled by any blandishments. This baby is a tiny thing, with a round, small head, covered with soft, small curls; and this head is very full of thoughts. Her face, which she rarely shows to a stranger, is like a doll in its delicate daintiness; but the mouth is very resolute, and the eyes very grave. Her hands and feet are sea-shell things of a pretty pinky brown, and her ways are the ways of a sea-anemone in a pool among the rocks.

Lulla, because of her anemone ways, is sometimes unkindly called "Huffs." She does not understand that there are days when those who love her most have little time to give to her. Lulla naturally argues that where there is a will there is a way, and desultory, isolated, spasmodic affection is worth little; so next time her friend appears, she explains all this to her by means of a single gesture: she draws her tentacles in.

Agassiz But it is when Lulla has undertaken to investigate a tin of sweets that she most suggests Agassiz. The tin has a lid which fits tightly, and Lulla's fingers are very small and not very strong. The tin, moreover, is on the window-sill just out of reach, though she stands on tip-toe and stretches a little eager hand as far as it will go. Then it is you see persistence. Lulla finds another baby, leads her to the window and points up to the tin. The other baby tries. They both try together; if this fails, Lulla finds a taller one, and at last successful, sits down with the tin held tightly in both hands, and turns it over and shakes it. This process seems to inspire fresh hope and energy; for

she sets to work round the lid, which is one of the fitting-in sort, and carefully presses and pulls. Naturally this does nothing, and she shakes the tin again. The joyful sound of rattling sweets stimulates to fresh attempts upon the lid. She tugs and pulls, and thumps the refractory thing on the floor. By this time the other babies, attracted by the hopeful rattle, have gathered round and are watching operations; some offer to help, but all such offers are declined. This oyster is Lulla's. She has undertaken to force it. Agassiz and his fishes are on her side. She will not give it up. But she is not getting on; and she sits still for a moment, knitting her brow, and frowning a little puzzled frown at the refractory tin.

Suddenly her forehead smooths, the anxious brown eyes smile, Lulla has thought a new good thought. The babies struggle up and offer to help Lulla up, but she shakes her head. She seems to feel if she herself unaided, of her own free will, hands her problem over to her Ammal or her Sittie, only so she may achieve her purpose without loss of self-respect.

Lulla's beloved nurse is a motherly woman, older than most of our workers. Her name is Annamai. When the nurses return from church, each makes straight for her baby; and the babies always respond with a cordial and pretty affection. But Lulla welcoming Annamai is something more than pretty. The big white-robed figure no sooner appears in the garden than the tiny Lulla is all a-quiver with excitement. But it is a quiet excitement; and if you take any notice, the tentacles suddenly draw in, and the little face is as wax. If no one seems to notice, then Lulla lets herself go. She all but dances in her eagerness, while Annamai is slowly sailing up the walk; and when she reaches the verandah, Lulla can wait no longer; one spring and she is in her arms, nestling, cuddling, burying her curls in her neck; then looking up confidentially, little Lulla begins to talk; everything we have done and said is being whispered into Annamai's ear. It does not matter that Lulla cannot yet speak any language known to men; she can make Annamai understand, and that is all she cares. Once we remember watching her, as she took the remnant of a sweet we had given her, out of her mouth and poked it into Annamai's. Could love do more?

Dimples and Lulla are quite inseparable. Lulla is to Dimples what Tara is to Evu. She immensely admires her vigorous little junior, and tries to copy her whenever possible. One delicious game seems to have been suggested by the arches in the garden. Dimples and Lulla stand on all fours close together. Then they lean over till their heads touch the ground, and look through the arch. If you are on the babies' level (that is on the floor), you will enjoy this game.

Another Sunday morning entertainment is kissing. Dimples advances upon Lulla. Lulla falls upon Dimples. Then Dimples hugs Lulla, nearly chokes her, almost certainly overturns her. The two roll over and over like kittens. Dimples seizes Lulla by her curls and vehemently kisses face, neck, and anything else she can get at; and then backs off, propelling herself on two feet and one hand, in which position she looks like a puppy on three paws. Lulla smooths her ruffled curls and person generally, regards Dimples with gravity, and, if in an affectionate humour herself, leads the attack upon Dimples, and the programme is repeated. But the joy of the hour is to spin in the hammocks. These contrivances being hung from the roof swing freely, and the special excitement is to hold on with both hands, and run round so that the hammock twists into a knot and spins when released, with the baby inside it, in a giddy waltz till the coil untwists itself. This looks dangerous, and when the game was first invented we rather demurred. But we are wiser now, and we let them spin. Lulla especially enjoys this madness. It is startling to see the tiny thing whirl like a reckless young

teetotum. But if you weakly interfere, Lulla thinks you want to learn the art, and goes at it with even madder zest, till her very curls are dizzy.

"Daren’t laugh and wouldn’t cry

Dimples and Lulla in disgrace are a piteous spectacle. Dimples opens her mouth till it is almost square, and the most plaintive wail proceeds from it for about a minute and a half. Then she stops, looks sadly on the world, surprised and hurt at its unkindness to her, and then suddenly she discovers something interesting to do; and hastily rubbing her knuckles into her eyes to clear them as quickly as maybe of tears, she scrambles on to her feet, and forgets her injuries. Once she had been very naughty, and had to be smacked. It is never easy to smack Dimples, and fortunately she seldom requires it; but hard things have to be done, so that morning the fat little hands, to their surprise, knew the feel of chastening pats. "She daren’t laugh, and she wouldn’t cry"; this description, her Piria Sittie’s, is the best I can offer of that baby’s attitude. The thing could not possibly be a joke, but if meant otherwise, it was an indignity far past tears.

Lulla is quite different. She drops on the floor, if admonished, as if her limbs had suddenly become paralysed, and takes absolutely no notice of the offending disciplinarian. She simply ignores her, and gazes mutely beyond her. The offence is not one for explanation, and if invited to repent, her aloofness of demeanour is perfectly withering. But take her up in your arms, and she buries her curls in your neck, and coos her apologies (or is it forgiveness?) in your ear, and loves you all the better for the momentary breach. Our babies are often parables. Lulla stands for the Single Eye. How often we have watched her and learned the lesson from her! She sees someone to whom she wants to go at what must seem to her an immense distance. And the distance is filled with obstacles, some of them quite enormous. But Lulla never stops to consider possibilities. Difficulties are simply things to be climbed over. She looks at the goal and makes straight for it. Her only care is to reach it. Sometimes at afternoon tea, when she is sitting on someone’s lap, facing an empty, uninteresting plate, she sees another plate three chairs distant, and upon that plate there is a biscuit or some other sweet attraction. Upon such occasions Lulla all but plunges into space between the chairs, in her singleness of purpose. Having reached the lap nearest that plate, she turns and smiles at her late entertainer just to make sure she is not offended. But even if she knew she would be, Lulla would not hesitate. Curly head foremost, eyes on the goal: that is Lulla.

Mixed pickles

We have a custom at Dohnavur which perplexes the sober-minded. We call most of our possessions by names other than their own. These names are entirely private. We have to keep to this rule of privacy, otherwise we get shocks. "O Lord, look upon our beloved Puppy, and make her tooth come through; and bless Alice (in Wonderland), whose inside has gone wrong," was the petition offered in all seriousness, which finally moved us to prudence. We do not feel responsible for these names, for they come of themselves, and we see them when they come. That is all we have to do with them. Besides the Beetle and the Sea-anemone we have a dear Cockatoo, who screws her nose and her whole face up into a delightful pucker when she either laughs or cries, and then suddenly unscrews it in the middle of either emotion and looks entirely demure. This is the little Vimala, who, under God, owes her life to her Piria Sittie’s splendid nursing. This baby has always got a private little secret of joy hidden away somewhere inside. We surprise her sometimes, sitting alone on the floor talking to herself about it; and then she tells us bits of it—as

much as she thinks we can understand. But most of it is still hidden away, her own private little secret. And there is an Owlet, a Coney, a Froglet, and a Cheshire Cat, a Teddy-bear, a Spider, a Ratlet, and a Rosebud. We are aware that this list is rather mixed; but to be too critical would end in being nothing, so we are a Menagerie. The Rosebud is like her name, small and sweet. When she wants to kiss her friends, which is whenever she sees them, her mouth is like the pink point of a moss-rose bud just coming through the moss. George Macdonald, perfect interpreter of babies, must have had our Preethie's double in his mind when he wrote:—

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?

Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

How did you come to us, you dear?

God thought of you, and so I am here. The Owlet is twin to that quaint little bird, so its name flew to her and stayed. This babe has round eyes with long curling lashes. When she is good, these round eyes beam, and every one forgets that anything so fascinating can ever be other than good. When she is naughty the case is exactly reversed. This baby's proper name is Lullitha, which means Playfulness, and illustrates a side of her character undiscovered by the visitor who only sees the Owlet sitting on her perch with serious, watchful, unblinking eyes, regarding the intruder. But most babies are complex characters, and are not known in an hour. The Teddy-bear is a fine child with perfect lungs, a benevolent smile, and an appetite. Her ruling passion at present is devotion to her food. She feels unjustly treated because we do not see our way to feed her lavishly at her own five meal-times and also at the meal-times of all the other babies in the nursery.

Teddy On Sunday morning, when we are in charge, we hear her views upon this subject expressed in a manner wholly her own. She has just drained her own bottle, and is indignantly explaining that it is not nearly enough, when another bottle arrives for another baby, and this is too much for Teddy's equanimity. We all know how hard it is to keep up under the shock of adversity. Teddy does not attempt to keep up; she invariably topples over. But the way she does this is instructive. She sits stiff and straight for one brief moment, her milky mouth wide open, her hands outstretched in despairing appeal; then she clasps her head with her hands in a tragic fashion, absurd in a very fat infant, sways backwards and forwards two or three times till the desperate rock ends suddenly, as the poor Teddy-bear overbalances and bursts with a mighty burst. But the storm is too furious to last, and she soon subsides with a gusty sob and a short snort.

Poor little injured Teddy-bear! If it were not for her splendid health we might believe her oft-repeated tale of private starvation. "They only feed me when you are here to see! Other times they give me nothing at all!" She tells us this frequently in her own particular language, but the sturdy limbs belie it. This babe in matters of affection and mischief is as strenuous and original as she is about the one supreme affair pertaining to her elastic receptacle—to quote a Tamil friend's polite reference to the cavity within us—and many more edifying scenes might have been shown from her eventful life. But undoubtedly the predominating note at the present hour is her insatiable hunger, and when her name is mentioned in the nursery there is a smile and a new tale about her amazing appetite.

1.08.21. Book 8: 21. More animals

CHAPTER XXI

More Animals MORE ANIMALS: DEPRESSED.

Nurses: Karuna to left (the Duckling of "Things as They Are"); and Annamai, to right, Lulla's beloved. IN full contrast to Teddy-bear is that floppy child, the Coney. In Hart's Animals of the Bible, there is a picture of this baby, only the fore-paws should be raised in piteous appeal to be taken up. The Coney is really a pretty child with pathetic eyes and a grateful smile; but she was long in learning to walk, and felt aggrieved when we remonstrated. Her feet, she considered, were created to be ornamental rather than useful, and no amount of coaxing backed up with massage could persuade her otherwise. So she was left behind in the march; and when her contemporaries departed for the middle-aged babies' nursery, she stayed behind with the infants. And the infants had no pity. They regarded her as a sort of hassock, large and soft and good to jump on. More than once we have come into the nursery and found the big, meek child of three kneeling resignedly under a window upon which an adventurous eighteen-months wished to climb; and often we have found her prostrate and patient under the dancing feet of Dimples.

However, the Coney can walk now. This triumph was effected with the help of an Indianised go-cart, which did what all our persuasions had entirely failed to do. But the process was not pleasant. The poor Coney would stand mournfully holding the handle of her instrument of torture, longing with a yearning unspeakable to sit down and give it up for ever. Someone would pass, and hope would rise in her heart. She would be carried now, carried out of sight of that detested go-cart. But no, the callous-hearted only urged her to proceed. She would howl then with a howl that told of bitter disappointment. Sometimes she would sit down flat and regard the thing with a blighting glance, the hatred of a gentle nature roused to unwonted vehemence. Always her wails accompanied the rumbling of its wheels.

"The Conies are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks." One day in deep depression of spirits the Coney arrived at the kindergarten. She sat down before the threshold, which is three inches high, and climbed carefully over it. She found herself in a new world, where babies were doing wonderful things and enjoying all they did. The Coney decided to join a class, and was offered beads to thread. Life with beautiful beads to thread became worth living, and it may be in the course of time that the tortoise will overtake the hare. In any case we find much cheer in the conclusion of the verse, for if our Coney builds in the Rock her being rather feeble will not matter very much.

Those who possess that friend of our youth, Alice, as illustrated by Sir John Tenniel, may find the photograph twice reproduced of our fat Cheshire Cat. This baby is remarkable for two things: she smiles and she vanishes. The time to see the vanishing conducted with more celerity than Alice ever saw it, is when the babies' warning call is sounded across the verandah and a visitor appears in the too near horizon. This baby then vanishes round the nearest corner. There is nothing left of

her, not even a smile. In fact, the chief contrast between her and the cat among the foliage is that with our Cat the smile goes first.

"Beetle! Open your mouth!"

Sunday morning, to return to the beginning, is full of possible misadventure. Sometimes the babies seem to agree among themselves that it would be well to be good. Then their admiring Sittie and Ammal have nothing to do but enjoy them. But sometimes it is otherwise. First one baby pulls her sister's hair, and the other retaliates, till the two get entangled in each other's curls. Piria Sittie flies to the rescue, disentangles the combatants and persuades them to make friends. Meanwhile three restless spirits in bodies to match have crept out through the open door (it is too hot if we shut the doors), and we find them comfortably ensconced in forbidden places. The Beetle is a quiet child. She retires to a corner and looks devout. Presently a sound as of scraping draws our attention to her. "Beetle! Open your mouth!" Beetle opens her mouth. It is packed with whitewash off the wall. Then a scared cry rings through the nursery, and all the babies, imagining awful things imminent, tumble one on top of the other in a wild rush into refuge. It is only a large grasshopper which has startled the Cheshire Cat, whose great eyes are always on the look-out for possible causes of panic. The grasshopper is banished to the garden and the Cheshire Cat smiles all over her face. Peace restored, Dimples and the Owlet remember a dead lizard they found in a corner of the verandah, and set off to recover it. These two walk exactly like mechanical toys; and as they strut along hand in hand, or one after the other, they look like something wound up and going, in a Christmas shop window. Presently they return with the lizard. Its tail is loose, and they sit down to pull it off. This is not a nice game, and something else is suggested. Dimple's mouth grows suddenly square; she wants that lizard's tail.

Then a dear little child called Muff (because she ought to be called Huff if the name had not been already appropriated), who has been solemnly munching a watch, decides it is time to demand more individual attention. She objects to the presence of another baby on her Sittie's lap. Why should two babies share one lap? The thing is self-evidently wrong. One lap, one baby, should be the rule in all properly conducted nurseries. Muff broods over this in silence, then slides off the crowded lap and sits down disconsolate, alone. Tears come, big sad tears, as Muff meditates; and it takes time to explain matters and comfort, without giving in to the one-lap-one-baby theory.

TUBBING.

We have several helpful babies. Dimples has been discovered paying required attentions to things smaller than herself; and the Wax Doll pats the Rosebud if she thinks it will reassure her, when (as rarely happens) that pet of the family is left stranded on a mat. But Puck is the most inventive. It was one happy Sunday morning that we came upon her feeding the Ratlet on her own account. The Ratlet was making ungrateful remarks; and we hurried across to her and saw that Puck, under the impression doubtless that any hole would do, was pouring the milk in a steady stream down the poor infant's nose. Puck smiled up peacefully. She was sure we would be pleased with her. But the Ratlet continued eloquent for very many minutes. The Spider and the Cod-fish

Sometimes (but this is an old story now) our difficulties were increased by the Spider's habit of whimpering, which had a depressing effect upon the family. This poor baby was a weak little bag of bones when first she came to us. The bag was made of shrivelled skin of a dusty brown colour.

Her hair was the colour of her skin, and hung about her head like tattered shreds of a spider's web. She sat in a bunch and never smiled. Something about her suggested a spider. Her Tamil name is Chrysanthemum, which by the change of one letter becomes Spider. So we called her Spider. At first we were not anxious about her; for such little children pick up quickly if they are healthy to begin with, as we believed she was. But she did not respond to the good food and care, and only grew thinner and more miserable as the weeks passed, till she looked like the first picture in a series of advertisements of some marvellous patent food, and we wondered if she would ever grow like the fat and flourishing last baby of the series. For two months this state of things continued; she grew more wizened every day; and the uncanny spider-limbs and attitude gave her the air of not being a human baby at all, but a terrible little specimen which ought not to be on view but should be hidden safely away in some private medical place—on a shelf in a bottle of spirits of wine.

We are asked sometimes if such tiny things can suffer other than physically. We have reason to think they can. As all else failed, we took a little girl from school for whom the Spider had an affection, and let her love her all day long; and almost at once there was a change in the sad little face of the Spider. She had been cared for by an old grandfather after her mother's death, and it seemed as if she had fretted for him and needed someone all to herself to make up for what she was missing. This little girl, the Cod-fish by name, was devoted to the Spider. She nestled her and played with her—or attempted to, I should say, for at first the Spider almost resented any attempts to play. "She doesn't know how to smile!" said the Cod-fish disconsolately after a week's petting and loving had resulted only in fewer whimpers, but not as yet in smiles. A few days later she came to us, and announced with much emotion: "She has smiled three times!" Next day the record rose to seven; after that we left off counting. The Spider is fat and bonnie now. Her skin is a clear and creamy brown, and her hair has lost its dustiness; but she still likes to sit crumpled up, and a small alcove in the kitchen is her favourite haven when tired of the world. Seen unexpectedly in there, bunched in a tight knot, her dark, keen little eyes peering out of the light-coloured little face, she still suggests a spider. But it is a cheerful Spider, which makes all the difference.

1.08.22. Book 8: 22. The Parrot House

CHAPTER XXII The Parrot House RED LAKE AND HILL. As seen (without the water) from the Taraha Nursery. THE time to see the Taraha nursery at its best is between late evening and early morning, and again about noon. It is perfectly peaceful then. Thirty mats are spread upon the floor. Thirty babies are strewn upon the mats. All the thirty are asleep. A sleeping baby is good. Thirty babies all good at once is something we cannot promise at any other hour.

Shading your lantern, and walking carefully so as not to tread on more scattered limbs than may be, you wander round the nursery and meditate upon the beautiful ways of childhood. There is something so touching in sleeping innocence, and you are touched. Here two chubby babies are lying locked in each other’s arms. You have to look twice before you see which limbs belong to which. There another is hugging a doll minus its head. Next to her a baby sleeps pillowed on another, and the other does not mind. In the middle of the floor, far from her mat, a sturdy three-year-old sprawls content. You pick her up gently and lay her on her mat. With an expression of determined resolution the baby rolls off again; and if you attempt another remove, an ominous pucker of the forehead warns you to desist. You wonder if the babies are quite as good as they seem. One of the dear, fat, devoted little pair you noticed at first, stirs, disentangles herself from her neighbour, and gives her a slight kick. There is a smothered, sleepy howl, and the kick is returned. "Water!" wails the first fat baby. "Water!" wails the second. You get water, give it, pat both fat babies till they go to sleep, and then cautiously retire. It would be a pity if all the babies were to waken thirsty and kick each other. At the door you turn and look back. Graceful babies, clumsy babies, babies who lie extended like young pokers, babies curled like kittens. All sorts of babies, good, bad, and middling, but all blessedly asleep.

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Thy father guards his sheep, Thy mother shakes the dreamland-tree Down fall the little dreams for thee, Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep! Our Saviour loves His sheep.

He is the Lamb of God on high, Who for our sakes came down to die.

Sleep, baby, sleep! The pretty German lullaby rises unbidden, and is pushed away by the quick, sad thoughts that will not listen to it. For under all the laughter and nursery frolic and happiness, we cannot but remember why these little ones are here. Round about the compound in a great triangle there are three Temple towers. They are out of sight though near us, but we cannot forget they are there. They stand for that which deprives these children of their birthright. Oh for the day when those Temple towers will fall and the reign of righteousness begin! There was a time when it seemed impossible to desire that the fire should be allowed to touch the stately and beautiful things of the world. Now there is something that satisfies as nothing else could in the vision of that purifying fire; and the promise that stands out like a light in the darkness is that which tells that the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom, all things that

offend.

Higher Critics In the tiny babies' nursery many a crooning Indian lullaby is sung to the babies in their swinging white cradles; but in the Taraha nursery we sing sweet old hymns, in Tamil and English, and then all sensible people are supposed to go to sleep. But one evening after the singing, two little tots settled down for a talk. Said one lying comfortably on her back with her two hands clasped behind her head: "Who takes care of us at night when we all go to sleep?" Said the other in a mixture of Tamil and English: "Jesus-tender-Shepherd takes care of us—Jesus-loves-me-this-I-know." The first baby rolled over upon her small sister with a crow of derision. "It is not! It is Accal! I woke one night and saw her!" The other baby insisted she was making a mistake. "Accal sleeps, all people sleep; they lie down like us and go to sleep. Only Jesus stays awake, and never, never goes to sleep." "Never, never?" questioned the first, and was quiet for a minute considering the matter; then with a sceptical little laugh, "Did you ever wake up and see Him?"

If the babies were always in a state of calm repose, the Taraha's pet name, Parrot-house, would be inappropriate: but for nearly ten hours of the day they are awake and talkative. Talk, however, is a mild word by which to describe their powers of conversation. Sometimes we wonder if they never tire of chattering, and then we remember they have only lately learned to talk. They have not had time to tire.

CHILDREN WADING

Once we listened, hoping that the trailing clouds of glory so recently departed had left some trace of illumination in this their first expression in earth's language of their feelings and emotions. But we found them very mundane. Most of the conversation concerned their "saman," a comprehensive Indian word used by people with limited vocabularies to express all manner of things to play with. Their "saman" was various. Dolls, of course, and the remnants of dolls; tins and the lids thereof; bits of everything which could break; corks, stones, seeds, half cocoa-nut shells; rags of many ages and colours; scraped down morsels of brick; withered flowers and leaves; sticks of all sorts and sizes; English Christmas cards, sometimes with much domestic information on the back; unauthorised sundries from the kindergarten—delivered up with a smile intended to assure you that they were only being kept for Sittie; and pûchies. Pûchies are insects. We have one baby who collects pûchies. "Look!" she said, one morning before prayers, "Deah little five pûchies!" and she opened her hand and five red and black beetles crawled slowly out, to the delight of the devout, who scrambled up from their orderly rows with shrieks of appreciation. But if the babies' conversation was unenlightening, their chosen avocations are not uninteresting. They are always busy about something, and, from their point of view, something important. There are, of course, some among the thirty who are unimaginative and unenterprising. These sit in the sand and play. Others have more to do. Life to them is full of the unknown. The unknown is full of possibilities. The great thing is to experiment. Nothing is too insignificant to explore, and all five senses are useful to the thoroughly competent baby.

"Watching a Miracle"

They knew, of course, all the flowers, and the discovery of anything fresh was always followed by a scene which suggested a colony of small and active ants hauling some large object to their nest;

for the nearest grown-up person was invariably hailed, and pulled, and pushed, and hurried along till the "new flower" was reached. Then, if the object was incautious enough to stoop down to examine it, the ants, ant-wise, would envelope it, climbing, swarming all over it, till there was nothing to be seen but ants.

CHILDREN WADING.

They knew the habits of caterpillars, and especially they had knowledge about the wonderful silver chrysalis which pins itself to the pointed leaves of the oleander. They knew what was packed up inside, and some with wide-open eyes had watched the miracle slowly evolving as the butterfly unpacked itself, and sunned its crumpled velvet wings, till the crumples smoothed, and the wings dried, and the butterfly fluttered away. They knew, too, the less approachable ways of the wild bees, and where they hive, and what happens if they are disturbed; and they knew the private feelings of calves, and which likes to be treated as a brother and which resents such liberties. Crows they knew intimately, and squirrels a little; for infants fallen from their nests have often been taken care of, much against their foolish wills, until old enough to look after themselves. Their namesakes, the parrots, they knew very well; and the dainty little sunbirds that flash from flower to flower like little living jewels in the sunlight; and the clever tailor-bird, which sews its own nest, knotting its thread like a grown-up human being; and the wise leaf-insect that can hardly be found till it moves; and the great, green, frisky grasshopper that seems to invite a chase.

We found they knew, alas, too much about the misuse of everything growing in the field! The tamarind fruit makes condiment, but eaten raw it gives fever; and the babies think we are wrong here, and they are fond of forgetting our rules. Many kinds of grasses are very good to eat; and here again[198] we are mistaken, for we know not the flavour of grasses. Seeds may be useful to plant; but those who think their use ends there, are short-sighted and ignorant people. Upon these and other matters the babies feel we have much to learn.

ESLI AND LITTLE KOHILA.

Taken a year earlier.

One weird joy has been theirs, and they never will forget it. For one whole blissful afternoon they followed the snake-charmer about at a respectful distance; and they cannot understand why we are not anxious they should dance as he danced, and pipe as he piped, round the hopeful holes they discover in the red mud walls.

Other things they had learned to do, not wholly innocent. They must have made friends with the masons who built their new nursery, and persuaded them to do their work in a sympathetic spirit; for they knew the weak points hidden from our eyes, and how pleasant it is to scoop mortar out of cracks between the bricks of the floor. They had learned how most of their toys were made, and how a doll could be most easily dissected, and the particular taste of its inside. They knew, too, the lusciousness of divers sorts of sand—this last, however, being a mixture of crime and disease, and treated as such, is not a popular sin. Finally, to our lasting disgrace, they had learned, after a series of thoughtful experiments, how best to obey a command and yet elude its intention; thus on a wet day, when they were commanded not to go out, their Sittie found them lying full length in a long row on the edge of the verandah, their heads protruding so as to catch the lovely drip from the roof. And all these things they had carefully learned in spite of a certain amount of supervision;

and, being entirely unsuspicious, they will take you into their confidence and let you share the forbidden fruit, if you are so inclined. The Kindness of the Babies

But, after all, perfection of goodness would make us more anxious than even these enormities; we should fear our babies were growing too good—a fear not pressing at present. The Parrot-house only overwhelms when the birds begin to sing. Then indeed all who can, flee far away, for the babies once started are difficult to stop. They are sure you like it as much as they do, and are anxious to oblige you when you visit their world. So they sing with the greatest earnestness, and as they invariably hang on to every available part of you, and punctuate their melodies with kisses and embraces, escape is not always practicable. The Taraha nursery was our first substantial building. It is built upon foundations raised well off the ground, and has a wide verandah. When first it was opened and the children were invited to take possession, they did so most completely. One quaint little person of barely three, called Kohila, whose small, repressed face in the photograph gives no hint of character, used to stalk up and down the verandah with an air of proprietorship which left no doubt in any mind as to her opinion on the subject. Another (sharing the swinging cot with Kohila in the photo) sat on the top step and smiled encouragingly to visitors. It was nice to be smiled at, but there was something very condescending in the smile. Another stood guard over the plants, which grew in pots much bigger than herself all the way down the verandah. If any presumed to touch them, she would dart out upon them with an indignant chirrup. For days after the great event—the opening of the Taraha—small parties waited on visitors, formed in procession before and behind, and escorted them round, explaining all mysteries, and insisting upon due admiration. Everything had to be interviewed, from teaspoons to pots of fern. This concluded, the guests were politely dismissed, and departed, let us hope, properly penetrated with a sense of the kindness of the babies.

There have always been some who object to visitors. One of these showed her objection, not by crying and running away, as undignified babies do, but by sitting exactly where she was when she first caught sight of the intruder, and[200] staring straight into space with a very stony stare. A sensitive visitor could hardly have had the temerity to pass her, but normal visitors are not sensitive. Sometimes they attempted to make friends. This was too much. One fat arm would be slowly raised till it covered the baby’s eyes, and in this position she would sit like a small petrifaction, till the horror had withdrawn.

PREETHA AWARE OF A FOE.

Tara on the left: the Coney on the right. This baby, Preetha by name, has in most matters a way of her own. One of her little peculiarities is a strong preference for solo music as compared with concert. She listens attentively to others’ performances, then disappears. If followed, she will be found alone in a corner, with her face to the wall and her back to the world; and if she thinks herself unobserved, you will be regaled with a solo. This experience is interesting to the musical. It is never twice alike. Sometimes it is a succession of sounds, like a tune that has lost its way; sometimes, a recognisable version of the chorus lately learned. At other times she delivers her soul in a series of short groans and grunts, beating time with her podgy hands. If she perceives through the back of her head that someone is looking or listening, she stops at once; and no persuasions can ever produce that special rehearsal again. Of late this baby, being now nearly three, has awakened to a sense of life’s responsibilities, and she evidently wishes to prepare to

meet them suitably. Yesterday evening she came to me with an exceedingly serious face, pointed in the direction of the kindergarten room, and then tapping herself, remarked: "Amma! I kindergarten." No more was said; but we know we shall soon see her solemnly waddling into the schoolroom, and we wonder what will happen. Will she continue to insist upon a corner to herself?

1.08.23. Book 8: 23. The Bear Garden

CHAPTER XXIII The Bear Garden JULLANIE AMONG THE GRASSES.

"THE fruit of the lotus—a capsule—ripens below the surface of the water. When the seeds are ripe and leave the berry, a small bubble of air attached to them brings them to the surface, and the seeds are carried wherever the wind and waves take them until the bubble bursts; when the seed, being heavier than water, sinks to the bottom, and then begins to grow to form a new plant, which may be at some distance from the parent one. In this simple way the lotus plant is enabled to spread." So says our botany book; and the thought of the lotus seed in its little air-boat floating away over the water to be sown, perhaps, far from the parent plant, is full of suggestion, and leads us straight to the Bear-garden. A lotus-pool, a bear-garden—the connection is not obvious. Alice in her wanderings never wandered into bewilderment more profound than such a mixture of ideas. But this is the way we get to it: We have called these little children Lotus-buds—for such they are in their youngness and innocence; and the underlying thought runs deeper, as those who have read the first chapter know—but the Lotus-buds must grow into flowers and must be sown as living seeds, perhaps far away from the happy place they knew when they were[204] buds. The little air-boat will come for them. The breath of the Spirit that bloweth where it listeth will carry them where it will, and we want them to be ready to be sown wherever the pools of the world are barren of lotus flowers. And this brings us straight to the newest of our beginnings in Dohnavur—the Kindergarten. An ideal kindergarten is a place where the teachers train the scholars, and we hope to have that in time; at present the case is opposite, and that is why it has its name, the name that conflicts with the lotus-pool—the Bear-garden. In this peaceful room Classes B, C, and D have taken their young teachers in hand—Rukma, Preena, and Sanda. Of these Rukma (Radiance) has the clearest ideas about discipline; Preena (the Elf) knows best how to coax; and Sanda, excellent Mouse that she is, has the gift of patience. These three (who after all are only school-girls, continuing their own education with their Préma Sittie) are attempting to instruct the babies on the lines of organised play; but the babies feel they have much to teach their teachers, and this is how they do it:—

Préma Sittie goes into the room when the kindergarten is in progress, and from three classes at once babies come springing towards her with squeals of joy, and they clasp her knees and look up with eyes full of affection and confidence in their welcome. "Go back to your place!" she says, and tries to look severe; with a chuckle the children obey, and she looks round and takes notes.

Chellalu is lying full-length on the bench, with a look of supreme content on her face, and her two feet against the wall. Pyârie has turned her back to the picture that is being shown, and is tying a handkerchief round her head. Ruhinie, an India-rubber-ball sort of baby, has suddenly bounced up from her seat, and is starting a chorus, of which she is fond, at the top of her not very gentle voice; and Komala, a perfect sprite, is tickling the child who sits next to her. "Sittie!" exclaims the distracted teacher, "they won’t learn anything!" Or if she happens to be the Mouse, she is calmly engaged with the one good child in her class.

Babel The next group is stringing beads on pieces of wire. "Look, look!" and an eager babe holds out her wire for admiration, and probably spills her beads in her effort to secure attention. If she does, there is a general scramble, beads rolling loose on the floor being quite irresistible. One wicked baby sits by herself and strings her beads on her curls. A few minutes later it is mat-plaiting; and the agile little fingers are diligently weaving pieces of blue and yellow material, bits over from their elder sisters' garments, beautifully unconscious that they are supposed to be working the colours alternately. Sometimes in the gayest way they exclaim: "Sittie! It's wrong! it's wrong!" Occasionally there is a howl from a child who has been pinched by another, or whose neighbour has helped herself to her beads. Sittie crosses the room hurriedly. "What's the matter?" With tears rolling down her cheeks the victim points to her oppressor. "May you do that?" is the invariable English question. It is answered by a shake of the head, the tiniest baby understanding that particular remark. The injured baby smiles. A reproof, or at worst a pat on the fat arm next to hers, satisfies her sense of justice, and she is content. When an English lesson begins, those afflicted with delicate nerves are happier elsewhere. One class has a toy farmyard, another a set of tea-things, the third a doll which every member of the class is aching to embrace. The teachers and children alike are inclined to talk with emphasis; and if you stand between the three classes you hear queer answers to queerer questions, and wonder if the babies at Babel were anything like so bewildering. But this vision of the kindergarten is hardly a fortnight old; for Classes B, C, and D are of recent development, and are made up of some heedless characters, as Chellalu and Pyârie, who could not keep up with class A, and a few more young things from the nursery who were wilder than wild rabbits from the wood when we began. Also it should be stated that from the babies' point of view white people are only playthings. "They were very good before you came!" is the unflattering remark frequently addressed to us; and as we discreetly retire, the babies do seem to become suddenly beautifully docile. But even so they might be better, as an unconscious comedy over-seen this morning proves. I was in the porch outside the door, when Rukma, pointing to a blackboard on which were written sundry words, told Chellalu to show her "cat," and I looked in interested to know if Chellalu really knew anything of reading. Chellalu brandished the pointer, then turned to Rukma with a confidential smile, "Cat? Where is it, Accal? Is it at the top or at the bottom?" Rukma, who has a keen sense of the comic, seemed to find it difficult to look as she felt she ought. Chellalu caught the twinkle in her eye, and throwing herself heartily into the spirit of the game, which was evidently intended to be a kindergarten version of Hunt the Mouse through the Wood, she searched the blackboard for cat. Then to Rukma: "Accal! dear Accal! Tell me, and I'll tell you!"

There is nothing that helps us so much to be good as to be believed in and thought better than we are; and the converse is true, so we do not want to be always suspecting Chellalu of sin; but this last was entirely too artless, and this was apparently Rukma's view, for she sent Chellalu back to her seat and called up another baby, who, fairly radiating virtue, immediately found the cat.

Compassions of the Wise The next room—which Class A (the first to be formed) has to itself—is a haven of peace after the Bear-garden. It is a pleasant room like the other, pretty with pictures and with flowers. And the little bright faces make it a happy place, for this class, though serious-minded, is exceedingly cheerful. There is the demure little Tingalu, the good child of the kindergarten, its hope and stay in troublous hours, and the quaint little trio, Jeya, Jullanie, and Sella—this last is called Cock-robin by the family, for she has eyes and manners which remind us

of the bird, and she hardly ever walks, she hops. Mala and Bala are in the class, and a lively scamp called Puvai. The kindergarten is worked in English, helped out with Tamil when occasion requires. This plan, adopted for reasons pertaining to the future of the children, is resulting in something so comical that we shall be sorry when the first six months are over and the babies grow correct. At present they talk with delightful abandon impossible to reproduce, but very entertaining to those who know both languages. They tack Tamil terminations to English verbs, and English nouns make subjects for Tamil predicates. They turn their sentences upside down and inside out, and any way in fact which occurs to them at the moment, only insisting upon one thing: you must be made to understand. They apply everything they learn as immediately as possible, and woe to the unwary flounderer in the realm of natural science who offers an explanation of any phenomena of nature other than that taught in the kindergarten. The learned baby regards you with a tender sort of pity. Poor thing, you are very ignorant; but you will know better in time—if only you will come to the kindergarten, the source of the fountain of knowledge. The ease and the quickness with which a new word is appropriated constantly surprises us. As for example: one morning two babies wandered round the Prayer-room, and, discovering passion-flowers within reach, eagerly begged for them in Tamil. One of the two pushed the other aside and wanted all the flowers. "Greedy! greedy!" I said reprovingly, in English. "Greedy mine!" was the immediate rejoinder, and the little hand was held out with more certainty than ever now that the name of the flower was known. "Greedy my flower! Mine!" But some of the quaintest experiences are when the eloquent baby, determined to express herself in English, falls back upon scraps of kindergarten rhyme and delivers it in all seriousness. On the evening before my birthday I was banished from my room, and the children decorated it exactly as they pleased. When I returned I was implored not to look at anything, as it was not intended to be seen till next morning. Next morning the babies came in procession with their elders, and while I was occupied with them out on the verandah, Chellalu and her friend Naveena, discovering something unusual in my room, escaped from the ranks and went off to examine the mystery. I found them a moment later gazing in astonished joy at the glories there revealed. "Who did it all?" gasped Chellalu, whose intention, let us hope, was perfectly reverent. "God did it all!" The one kindergarten class taught entirely in Tamil is the Scripture lesson, illustrated whenever possible by pictures; and being always taught about sacred things in Tamil, the babies have no doubt about the language in use in Bible days. But sometimes a little mind is puzzled, as an instructive aside revealed a day or two ago. For their teacher had told them in English, not as a Scripture lesson, but just as a story, about Peter and John and the lame man. The picture was before them, and they understood and followed keenly; but one little girl whispered to another, who happened to be the well-informed Cock-robin: "Did Peter and John talk English or Tamil?" "Tamil, of course!" returned Cock-robin, without a moment’s hesitation. The Scripture lessons are usually given by Arulai, whose delight is Bible teaching. "So that as much as lieth in you you will apply yourself wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way," is a word that always comes to mind when one thinks of Arulai and her Bible. She much enjoys taking the babies, believing that the impressions created upon the mind of a little child are practically indelible.

Practical Politics

Sometimes these impressions are expressed in vigorous fashion. Once the subject of the class was the Good Samaritan. The babies were greatly exercised over the scandalous behaviour of the

priest and the Levite. "Punish them! Let them have whippings!" they demanded. Arulai explained further. But one baby got up from her seat and walked solemnly to the picture. "Take care what you are doing!" she remarked impressively in Tamil, shaking her finger at the two retreating backs. "Naughty! naughty!"—this was in English—"take care!"

One of the favourite pictures shows Abraham and Isaac on the way to the mount of sacrifice. This story was told one morning with much reverence and feeling, and the babies were impressed. There were tears in Bala's eyes as she gazed at the picture, but she brushed them away hurriedly and hoped no one had noticed. Only Chellalu appeared perfectly unconcerned. She had business of her own on hand, and the story, it seemed, had not touched her. The babies are searched before they come to school, and all toys, bits of string, old tins, and sundries are removed from their persons. But there are ways of evading inquisitors. Chellalu knows these ways. She now produced a long wisp of red tape from somewhere—she did not tell us where—and proceeded to tie her feet together. This accomplished, she curled herself up on the bench like a caterpillar on a leaf, and to all appearances went to sleep. Why was she not awakened and compelled to behave properly? asks the reader, duly shocked. Perhaps because on that rather special morning the teacher preferred her asleep.

ARULAI AND RUKMA, WITH NAVEENA. The story finished, the children were questioned, and they answered with unwonted gravity. "What did Isaac say to his father as they walked alone together?" An awed little voice had begun the required answer, when Chellalu suddenly uncurled, sat up, and said in clear, decided Tamil: "He said, 'Father! do not kill me!' Yesh! that was what he said." When first the babies heard about Heaven, they all wanted to go at once, and with difficulty were restrained from praying to be taken there immediately. There was one naughty child who, when she was given medicine, invariably announced, "I will not stay in this village: I am going to Heaven! I am going now!" But they soon grew wiser. It was our excitable, merry little Jullanie who summed up all desires with most simplicity: "Lord Jesus, please take me there or anywhere anytime; only wherever I am, please stay there too!" Some of the babies are carnal: "When I go to that village (Heaven), I shall go for a ride on the cherubim's wings. I will make them take me to all sorts of places, just wherever I want to go." The Way to Heaven The latest pronouncement, however, was for the moment the most perplexing. "Come-anda-look-ata-well!" said Chellalu yesterday evening, the sentence in a single long word. The well is being dug in the Menagerie garden and is surrounded by a trellis, beyond which the babies may not pass, unless taken by one of ourselves. As we drew near to the well, Chellalu pointed to it and said: "Amma! That is the way to Heaven!" This speech, which was in Tamil, considerably surprised me, as naturally we think of Heaven above the bright blue sky. The yawning gulf of the unfinished well suggested something different. But Chellalu was positive. "It is the way to Heaven. I may not go there, but you may! Yesh! you may go to Heaven, Amma, but I may not!" She had nothing more to say; and we wondered how she could possibly have arrived at so extraordinary a conclusion, till we remembered that it had been explained to the babies that any baby falling in would probably be drowned and die, and so until it was finished and made safe no baby must go near it. Chellalu had evidently argued that as to die meant going to Heaven, the well must be the way to Heaven; and as only grown-up people might go near it, they, and they alone apparently, were allowed to go to Heaven.

These babies are nothing if not practical. Arulai had been teaching the story of the Unmerciful Servant; and to bring it down to nursery life, supposed the case of a baby who snatched at other babies' toys, and was unfair and selfish. Such a baby, if not reformed, would grow up and be like the Unmerciful Servant. The babies looked upon the back of the offender as shown in the picture. "Bad man! Nasty man!" they said to each other, pointing to him with aversion. And Arulai closed the class with a short prayer that none of the babies might ever be like the Unmerciful Servant. The prayer over, the babies rushed to the table where their toys were put during the Scripture lesson. Pyârie got there first, and, gathering all she could reach, she swept them into her lap and was darting off with them, when a word from Arulai recalled her. For a moment there was a struggle. Then she ran up to Tingalu, the child she had chiefly defrauded, poured all her treasures into her lap, and then sprang into Arulai's arms with the eager question: "Acca! Acca! Am I not a Merciful Servant?"

1.08.24. Book 8: 24. The Accals

CHAPTER XXIV The Accals

"This sacred work demands not lukewarm, selfish, slack souls, but hearts more finely tempered than steel, wills purer and harder than the diamond."—Père Didon.

PONNAMAL, WITH PREETHA ON HER KNEE, AND TARA BESIDE HER. THE Accals, without whom this work in all its various branches could not be undertaken, are a band of Indian sisters (the word Accal means older sister) who live for the service of the children. First among the Accals is Ponnamal (Golden). With the quick affection of the East the children find another word for Gold and call her doubly Golden Sister.

Sometimes we are asked if we ever find an Indian fellow-worker whom we can thoroughly trust. The ungenerous question would make us as indignant as it would if it were asked about our own relations, were it not that we know it is asked in ignorance by those who have never had the opportunity of experiencing, or have missed the happiness of enjoying, true friendship with the people of this land. Those who have known that happiness, know the limitless loyalty and the tender, wonderful love that is lavished on the one who feels so unworthy of it all. If there is distance and want of sympathy between those who are called to be workers together with the great Master, is not something wrong? Simple, effortless intimacy, that closeness of touch which is friendship indeed, is surely possible. But rather we would put it otherwise, and say that without it service together, of the only sort we would care to know, is perfectly impossible.

SELLAMUTTU AND SUSEELA. In our work all along we have had this joy to the full. God in His goodness gave us from the first those who responded at once to the confidence we offered them. In India the ideal of a consecrated life is a life with no reserves—which seeks for nothing, understands nothing, cares for nothing but to be poured forth upon the sacrifice and service. Pierce through the various incrustations which have over-laid this pure ideal, give no heed to the effect of Western influence and example, and you come upon this feeling, however expressed or unexpressed, at the very back of all—the instinct that recognises and responds to the call to sacrifice, and does not understand its absence in the lives of those who profess to follow the Crucified. Who, to whom this ideal is indeed "The Gleam," that draws and ever draws the soul to passionate allegiance, can fail to find in the Indian nature at its truest and finest that kinship of spirit which knits hearts together? "And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul": this tells it all. The spring of heart to heart that we call affinity, the knitting no hand can ever afterward unravel—these experiences have been granted to us all through our work together, and we thank God for it.

Pure Justice

Ponnamal’s work lies chiefly among the convert-nurses and the babies. She has charge of the nurseries and of the food arrangements, so intricate and difficult to the mere lay mind; she trains

her workers to thoroughness and earnestness, and by force of example seems to create an atmosphere of cheerful unselfishness that is very inspiring. How often we have sent a young convert, tempted to self-centredness and depression, to Ponnamal, and seen her return to her ordinary work braced and bright and sensible. We are all faulty and weak at times, and every nursery, like every life, has its occasional lapses; but on the whole it is not too much to say that the nurseries are happy places, and Ponnamal's influence goes through them all like a fresh wind. And this in spite of very poor health. For Ponnamal, who was the leader of our itinerating band, broke down hopelessly, and thought her use in life had passed—till the babies came and brought her back to activity again. And the joy of the Lord, we have often proved, is strength for body as well as soul.

Sellamuttu, who comes next to Ponnamal, is the "Pearl" of previous records, and she has been a pearl to us through all our years together. She is special Accal to the household of children above the baby-age—a healthy, high-spirited crow of most diverse dispositions; and she is loved by one and all with a love which is tempered with great respect, for she is "all pure justice," as a little girl remarked feelingly not long ago, after being rather sharply reproved for exceeding naughtiness: "within my heart wrath burned like a fire; but my mouth could not open to reply, for inside me a voice said, 'It is true, entirely true; Accal is perfectly just.'" This Accal, however, is most tender in her affections, and among the babies she has some particular specials. One of these is the solemn-faced morsel of the photograph, to save whom she travelled, counting by time, as far as from London to Moscow and back; and the baby arrived as happy and well as when the friends at "Moscow" sent her off with prayers and blessings and kindness. But the photograph was a shock. "Aiyo!" she said, quite upset to see her delight so misrepresented, "that is not Suseela! There is no smile, no pleasure in her face!" We comforted her by the assurance that any one who understood babies and their ways would consider the camera responsible for the expression. And at least the baby was obedient. Had she not told her to make a salaam, and had not the little hand gone up in serious salute? A perfectly obedient baby is Sellamuttu's ideal, and she was satisfied. TO THE RIGHT, SUHINIE, AND HER BABY SUNUNDA

Both these sisters came to us at some loss to themselves, for both could have lived at home at ease if they had been so inclined. Ponnamal lost all her little fortune by joining us. She could, perhaps, have recovered it by going to law, but she did not feel it right to do so, and she suffered herself to be defrauded. "How could I teach others to be unworldly if I myself did what to them would appear worldly-minded?" That was all she ever said by way of explanation.

Next to Ponnamal and Sellamuttu come the motherly-hearted Gnanamal and Annamai. They came to us when we were in circumstances of peculiar difficulty. The work was just beginning, and we had not enough trustworthy helpers; so, wearied with disturbed nights, we were almost at the end of our strength. "Send us help!" we prayed, and went on each trying to do the work of three. It was one hot, tiring afternoon, when we longed to forget everything and rest for half an hour, but could not, because there was so much to do, that a bright, capable face appeared at the door of our room, and Annamai, Lulla's beloved, came in and said: "God sent me, and my relative" (naming a mission catechist) "brought me. And so I have come!" And Gnanamal—we were in dire straits, for a dear little babe had suffered at the hands of one who thought first of herself and second of her charge, and the most careful tending was needed if the baby was to survive—it was then Gnanamal came and took charge of the delicate child, and became the comfort and help she

has ever continued to be. When there is serious illness, and night-nursing is required, Gnanamal is always ready to volunteer; though to her, as to most of us in India, night work is not what the flesh would choose. Then in the morning, when we go to relieve her, we find her bright as ever, as if she had slept comfortably all the time. We think this sort of help worth gratitude. Whose Names are in the Book of Life The convert-workers, dear as dear children, but, thank God, dependable as comrades, come next in age to the head Accals. Arulai Tara (known to some as "Star") is what her name suggests, something steadfast, something shining, something burning with a pure devotion which kindles other fires. We cannot imagine our children without their beloved Arulai. Then there is Sundoshie (Joy), to the left next Suhinie in the photo, a young wife for whom poison was prepared three times, and whose escape from death at the hand of husband and mother-in-law was one of those quiet miracles which God is ever working in this land of cruelty in dark places. And Suhinie (Gladness), whose story of deliverance has been told before;[E] and Esli, the gift of a fellow-missionary, a most faithful girl; and others younger, but developing in character and trustworthiness. All these young converts need much care, but the care of genuine converts is very fruitful work; and one interesting part of it is the fitting of each to her niche, or of fitting the niche to her. Discernment of spirit is needed for this, for misfits means waste energy and great discomfort; and energy is too good a thing to waste, and comfort too pleasant a thing to spoil. So those who are responsible for this part of the work would be grateful for the remembrance of any who know how much depends upon it.

Among the recognised "fits" in our family is "the Accal who loves the unlovable babies." This is Suhinie. We tried her once with the Taraha children; but the terrible activity of these young people was altogether too much for the slowly moving machinery of poor Suhinie’s brain, and she was perfectly overwhelmed and very miserable. For Suhinie hates hurry and sudden shocks of any sort, and the babies of maturer years discovered this immediately; and Suhinie, waddling forlornly after the babies, looked like a highly respectable duck in charge of a flock of impertinent robins.

THREE CONVERT WORKERS.

It was quite a misfit, and Suhinie’s worst came to the top, and we speedily moved her back again to the Prémalia nursery. For there you see Suhinie in her true sphere. Give her a poor, puny babe, who will never, if she can help it, let her Accal have an undisturbed hour; give her the most impossible, most troublesome baby in the nursery, and then you will see Suhinie’s best. We discovered this when Ponnamal was in charge of the Neyoor nursery. Ponnamal had one small infant so cross that nobody wanted her. She would cry half the night, a snarly, snappy cry, that would not stop unless she was rocked, and began again as soon as the rocking was stopped. Ponnamal gave her to Suhinie.

"Night after night till two in the morning she would sing to that fractious child"—this was Ponnamal’s story to me when next I went to Neyoor. "She never seemed to tire; hymn after hymn she would sing, on and on and on. I never saw her impatient with it; she just loved it from the first." And a curious thing began to happen: the baby grew like her Accal. This likeness was not caught in the photograph, but is nevertheless so observable that visitors have often asked if the little one were her own child.

Sinners This baby, Sununda by name, is greatly attached to Suhinie. As she is over two years old now, she has been promoted to the Taraha, and being an extremely wilful little person, she

sometimes gets into trouble. One day I was called to remonstrate, and a little "morning glory" was required, and I put her in a corner to think about it. Another sinner had to be dealt with, and when I returned Sununda was nowhere to be found. I searched all over the Taraha and in the garden, and finally found her in the Prémalia cuddled close to Suhinie. "She has told me all about it," said Suhinie, who was nursing another edition of difficult infancy; and she looked down on the curly head with eyes of brooding affection, like a tender turtle-dove upon her nestling. Then the roguish brown eyes smiled up at me with an expression of perfect confidence that I would understand and sympathise with the desire to share the troubles of this strange, sad life with so beloved an Accal. The question of discipline is sometimes rather difficult with so many dispositions, each requiring different dealing. We try, of course, to fit the penalty to the crime, so that the child's sense of justice will work on our side; and in this we always find there is a wonderful unconscious co-operation on the part of the merest baby. But the older children used to be rather a problem. Some had come to us after their wills had become developed and their characters partly formed. Most of them were with us of their own free will, and could have walked off any day, for they knew where they would be welcome. Discipline under these circumstances is not entirely easy. But three years ago something of Revival Power swept through all our family. It was not the Great Revival for which we wait, but it was something most blessed in effect and abiding in result; and ever since then the tone has been higher and the life deeper, so that there is something to which we can appeal confident of a quick response. But children will be scampish; and once their earnestness of desire to be good was put to unexpected and somewhat drastic proof. At that time the mild Esli had charge of the sewing-class, and the class had got into bad ways; carelessness and chattering prevailed, so Esli came in despair to me, and I talked to the erring children. They were sorry, made no excuses, and promised to be different in future. I left them repentant and thoroughly ashamed of themselves, and went to other duties.

SEWING-CLASS IN THE COURTYARD. The Mark

Shortly afterwards Arulai found them in a state of great depression. They told her they had promised to be good at the sewing-class, but were afraid they would forget. Arulai's ideas are usually most original, and she sympathised with the children, but told them there was no need for them ever to forget. They asked eagerly what could be done to help them to remember. They had prayed, but even so had doubts. Was there anything to be done besides praying? Arulai said there was, and she expounded certain verses from the Book of Proverbs. "Sometimes the best way to make a mark upon the mind is to make a mark upon the body," she suggested, and asked the children if they would like this done. The children hesitated. They were aware that Arulai's "marks" were likely to be emphatic, for Arulai never does things by halves. But their devotion to her and belief in her overcame all fears; and being genuinely anxious to reform, they one and all consented. So she sent a small girl off to look for a cane; and presently one was produced, "thin and nice and suitable," as I was afterwards informed. The younger children were invited to take the cane and look at it, and consider well how it would feel. This they did obediently, but still stuck undauntedly to their determination, in fact, were keen to go through with it. Then Arulai explained that when the King said, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying," he must have been thinking of a very little boy who had not the sense to know what was good for him. They had sense. The mark on the body would be waste punishment if it were not received willingly and gratefully; so if any child cried or pulled her hand away, she would stop.

Then the children all stood up and held out their hands—what a moment for a photograph! Arulai's "mark upon the body" was a genuine affair, but the class received it with fortitude and gratitude. When I heard this history, an hour or so after its occurrence, I rather demurred. The children had appeared to be sincerely sorry when I spoke to them, and if so, why proceed to extremities? But Arulai answered with wisdom and much assurance: "They have been talked to before and have been sorry, but they forgot and did it again. This time they will not forget." And neither did they. As long as that class continued, its behaviour was exemplary; and "the mark upon the mind," to judge by their demeanour, remained as fresh as it must have been on that memorable day when the "mark" upon the body effected its creation. The story ought to end here; but most stories have a sequel, and this has two. The first occurred a few weeks later. A little girl, one of the sewing-class, had slipped into the habit of careless disobedience, followed too often by sulks. If we happened to come across her just when the thunder-clouds were gathering, we could usually divert her attention and avert the threatened trouble; but if we did not happen to meet her just at the right moment, she would plunge straight into the most outrageous naughtiness with a sort of purposeful directness that was difficult to deal with. Knowing the child well, we often let her choose her own punishments; and she did this so conscientiously that at last, as she herself mournfully remarked, "they were all used up," and there was nothing left but the most ancient—and perhaps in some cases most efficacious, which, the circumstances being what they were, I was naturally reluctant to try. But the child, trained to be perfectly honest with herself, apparently thought the thing over, and calmly made up her mind to accept the inevitable; for when, anxious she should not misunderstand, I began to explain matters to her, I was met by this somewhat astonishing response: "Yes, Amma, I know. I know you have tried everything else" (she said this almost sympathetically, as if appreciating my dilemma), "and so you have to do it. I do not like it at all, but Arulai Accal says it is no use unless I take it willingly, so Amma, please give me a good caning." (The idiom is the same in Tamil as in English, but there is a stronger word which she now proceeded to use with great deliberation.) "Yes, Amma, a hot caning—with my full mind I am willing. And I will not cry. Or if I do cry" (this was added in a serious, reflecting sort of way), "let not your soul spare for my crying!" The second is less abnormal. Esli, whose placid soul had been sadly stirred at the time of the infliction of the "mark," was so impressed by its salutary effect that she conceived a new respect for the methods of King Solomon. The application of "morning glory" is a privilege reserved, as a rule, for ourselves; but one day, being doubtless hard pressed, Esli produced a stick—a very feeble one—and calling up the leader of all rebels, addressed herself to her. Chellalu, as might have been expected, was taken by surprise; and for one short moment Esli was permitted to follow the ways of the King. But only for a moment: for, suddenly apprehending the gravity of the situation, and realising that such precedent should not pass unchallenged, Chellalu, with a quick wriggle, stood forth free, seized the stick with a joyous shout, snapped it in two, and flourished round the room: then stopping before her afflicted Accal, she solemnly handed her one of the pieces, and with a bound and a scamper like a triumphant puppy, was off to the very end of her world with the other half of that stick.

"Not Lukewarm, Selfish, Slack Souls" When the Elf came to us on March 6, 1901, and we began to know some of the secrets of the Temple, we tried to save several little children, but we failed. The thought of those first children with whom we came into touch, but for whom all our efforts were unavailing, is unforgettable. We see them still, little children—lost. But we partly understand why we had to wait so long; we had not the workers then to help us to take care of them. We had only

some of the older Accals, who could not have done it alone. These convert-girls, who now help us so much, were in Hindu homes; some of them had not even heard of Christ, whose love alone makes this work possible. For India is not England in its view of such work. There is absolutely nothing attractive about it. It is not "honourable work," like preaching and teaching. No money would have drawn these workers to us. Work which has no clear ending, but drifts on into the night if babies are young or troublesome—such work makes demands upon devotion and practical unselfishness which appeal to none but those who are prepared to love with the tireless love of the mother. "I do not want people who come to me under certain reservations. In battle you need soldiers who fear nothing." So wrote the heroic Père Didon; and, though it may sound presumptuous to do so, we say the same. We want as comrades those who come to us without reservations. But such workers have to be prepared, and such preparation takes time. "Tarry ye the Lord’s leisure," is a word that unfolds as we go on.

Yet we find that the work, though so demanding, is full of compensations. The convert in her loneliness is welcomed into a family where little children need her and will soon love her dearly. The uncomforted places in her heart become healed, for the touch of a little child is very healing. If she is willing to forget herself and live for that little child, something new springs up within her; she does not understand it, but those who watch her know that all is well. Sometimes long afterwards she reads her own heart’s story and opens it to us. "I was torn with longing for my home. I dreamed night after night about it, and I used to waken just wild to run back. And yet I knew if I had, it would have been destruction to my soul. And then the baby came, and you put her into my arms, and she grew into my heart, and she took away all that feeling, till I forgot I ever had it." This was the story of one, a young wife, for whom the natural joys of home can never be. But if there is selfishness or slackness or a weak desire to drift along in easiness, taking all and giving nothing, things are otherwise. For such the nurseries hold nothing but noise and interruptions. We ask to be spared from such as these. Or if they come, may they be inspired by the constraining love of Christ and "The Glory of the Usual."

FOOTNOTES:

[E] Overweights of Joy, ch. xxiii. Suhinie left the nursery for a few hours’ rest at noon on February 2, 1910. She fell asleep, to awaken in heaven.

1.08.25. Book 8: 25. The Little Accals

CHAPTER XXV The Little Accals But Thou didst reckon, when at first Thy word our hearts and hands did crave, What it would come to at the worst To save.

Perpetual knockings at Thy door, Tears sullying Thy transparent rooms.

THREE LITTLE ACCALS.

THESE lines come with insistence as I look at the little Accals, who follow in order after the Accals, convert children, most of them, now growing up to helpfulness. If part of the story of one such young girl is told, it may help those to whom such tales are unfamiliar to understand and to care.

December 16, 1903, was spent by three of us in a rest-house on the outskirts of a Hindu town. We were on our way to Dohnavur from Madras, where we had seen Mr. and Mrs. Walker off for England. The two days' journey had left us somewhat weary; and yet we were strong in hope that day, for we knew there was special thought for us on board ship and at home, and something special was being asked as a birthday gift of joy. Arulai (Star) and Preena (the Elf), the two who were with me, were full of expectation. The day had often been marked by that joy of joys, a lost sheep found; and as we looked out at the heathen town with its many people so unconscious of our thoughts about them, we wondered where we should find the one our thoughts had singled from among the crowd, and we went out to look for her.

PREENA AND PREEYA (To left and right) getting ready for a Coming-Day Feast.

Up and down the long white streets we looked for her; on the little narrow verandahs, in the courtyards of the houses, in their dark inner rooms when we were invited within, out again into the sunshine—but we could not find her. That evening I remember, though we did not say so to each other, we felt a little disappointed. We had not met one who even remotely cared for the things we had come to bring. No one had responded. There was not, so far as we knew it, even a little blade to point to, much less a sheaf to lay at His feet. After nightfall a woman came to see us. But she was a Christian, and beyond trying to cheer her to more earnest service among the heathen, there was nothing to be done for her. She left us, she told us afterwards, warmed to hope; and she talked to a child next morning, a little relative of her own, whose heart the Lord opened. For three months we heard nothing; then unexpectedly a letter came. "The child is much in earnest, and she has made up her mind to join your Starry Cluster" (a name given by the people to our band, which at that time was itinerating in the district), "so I purpose sending her at once." The parents, for reasons of their own, agreed to the arrangement, and the little girl came to Dohnavur. It was wonderful to watch her learning. She is not intellectually brilliant, but the soul awakened at once, and there was that tenderness of response which refreshes the heart of the teacher. She seemed to come straight to our Lord Jesus and know Him as her Saviour, child though she was; and soon the longing to win others possessed her, and a younger child, who was her special charge among the nursery children, was influenced so gently and so willingly, that we do not know the time when, led by her little Accal, she too came to the Lover of children.

"Across the Will of Nature" But one day, suddenly, trouble came. The parents appeared in the Dohnavur compound and claimed their daughter; and we had no legal right to refuse her, for she was under age. We shall never forget the hour they came. They had haunted the neighbourhood, as we afterwards heard, and prowled about outside the compound, watching for an opportunity to carry the child off without our knowledge. But she was always with the other children, so that plan failed. When first she heard they had come, she fled to the bungalow. "My parents have come! My father is strong! Oh, hide me! hide me!" she besought us. "I cannot resist him! I cannot!" and she cried and clung to us. But when we went out to meet them, she was perfectly quiet; and no one would have known from her manner as she stood before them, and answered their questions, without a tremble in her voice, how frightened she had been before.

"What is this talk about being a Christian?" the father demanded stormily. "What can an infant know about such matters? Are you wiser than your fathers, that their religion is not good enough for you?" And scathing mockery followed, harder to bear than abuse. "Come! Say salaam to the Missie Ammal, and bring your jewels" (she had taken them off), "and let us go home together." The child stood absolutely still, looking up with brave eyes; and to our astonishment said, as though it were the only thing to be said: "But I am a Christian. I cannot go home."

We had not thought of her saying this. We had, indeed, encouraged her as we had encouraged ourselves, to rest in our God, who is unto us a God of deliverances; but we had not suggested any line of resistance, and were not prepared for the calm refusal which so quietly took it for granted that she had no power to refuse. The father was evidently nonplussed. He knew his little daughter, a timid child, whose translated name, Fawn, seems to express her exactly, and he gazed down upon her in silence for one surprised moment, then burst out in wrath and indignant revilings. "Snake! nurtured in the bosom only to turn and sting! Vile, filthy, disgusting insect, born to disgrace her caste!" And they cursed her as she stood.

Then their mood changed, and they tried pleadings, much more difficult to resist. The father reminded her of his pilgrimage to a famous Temple at her birth: "He had named her before the gods." Her mother touched on tenderer memories, till we could feel the quiver of soul, and feared for the little Fawn. Then they promised her liberty at home. She should read her Bible, pray to the true God, "for all gods are one." I saw Fawn shut her eyes for a moment. What she saw in that moment she told me afterwards: a fire lighted on the floor, a Bible tossed into it, two schoolboy brothers (whose leanings towards Christianity had been discovered) pushed into an inner room, the sound of blows and cries. "And after that my brothers did not want to be Christians any more." Poor little timid Fawn! We hardly wonder as we look at her that she shrank and shut her eyes. I have seen a child of twelve held down by a powerful arm and beaten across the bare shoulders with a cocoa-nut shell fastened to the end of a stick; I have seen her wrists twisted almost to dislocation—seen it, and been unable to help. I think of the child, now our happy Gladness, lover of the unlovable babies; and I for one cannot wonder at the little Fawn’s fear. But aloud she only said: "Forgive me, I cannot go home." Not Peace, but a Sword The father grew impatient. "Get your jewels and let us be gone!" Fawn ran into the house, brought her jewels, and handed them to her father. He counted them over—pretty little chains and bangles, and then he eyed her curiously. A child to give up her jewels like this—he found it unaccountable. And then he began to argue, but Fawn answered him with clearness and simplicity, and he could not perplex her. She knew Whom she believed. At last they rose to go, cursing the day she was born with a curse that sounded

horrible. But their younger daughter, whom they had brought with them, threw herself upon the ground, tearing her hair, beating her breast, shrieking and rolling and flinging the dust about like a mad thing. "I will not go without my sister! I will not go! I will not go!" And she clung to Fawn, and wept and bewailed till we hardly dared to hope the child would be able to withstand her. For a moment the parents stood and waited. We, too, stood in tension of spirit. "They have told her to do it," whispered Fawn, and stood firm. Then the father stooped, snatched up the younger child, and departed, followed by the mother.

All this time two of our number had been waiting upon God in a quiet place out of sight. One of the two went after the parents, hoping for a chance to explain matters to the mother. As she drew near she heard the wife say in an undertone to her husband: "Leave them for to-day. Wait till to-night. You have carried off the younger in your arms against her will. What hinders you doing the same to the elder?" And that night we prayed that the Wall of Fire might be round us, and slept in peace. As a dream when one awaketh, so was the memory of that afternoon when we awoke next morning. And as a dream so the parents passed out of sight, for they left before the dawn. But weeks afterwards we heard what had happened that night. They had lodged in the Hindu village outside our gate. There has never been a Christian there, and the people have never responded in any way. It is a little shut-in place of darkness on the borders of the light. But when the parents proposed a raid upon the bungalow that night they would not rise to it. "No, we have no feud with the bungalow. We will not do it." The nearest white face was a day’s journey distant, and a woman alone, white or brown, does not count for much in Hindu eyes. But the Wall of Fire was around us, and so we were safe.

If the story could stop here, how easy life would be! One fight, one fling to the lions, and then the palm and crown. But it is not so. The perils of reaction are greater for the convert than the first great strain of facing the alternative, "Diana or Christ." Home-sickness comes, wave upon wave, and all but sweeps the soul away; feelings and longings asleep in the child awake in the girl, and draw her and woo her, and blind her too often to all that yielding means. She forgets the under-side of the life she has forsaken; she remembers only the alluring; and all that is natural pleads within her, and will not let her rest. "Across the will of Nature leads on the path of God," is sternly true for the convert in a Hindu or Moslem land. And so we write this unfinished story in faith that some one reading it will remember the young girl-converts as well as the little children. Fawn has been kept steadfast, but she still needs prayer. These last five years have held anxious hours for those who love her, and to us, as to all who have to do with converts. "Perpetual knockings at Thy door, tears sullying Thy transparent rooms," are words that go deep and touch the heart of things.

1.08.26. Book 8: 26. The glory of the usual

CHAPTER XXVI The Glory of the Usual AFTER HER BOTTLE.

"AND all things were done in such excellent methods, and I cannot tell how, but things in the doing of them seemed to cast a smile"—is a beautiful sentence from Bunyan's Holy War, which has been with us ever since we began the Nursery work. Lately we found its complement in a modern book of sermons, The Unlighted Lustre, by G. H. Morrison. "No matter how stirring your life be, it will be a failure if you have never been wakened to the glory of the usual. There is no happiness like the old and common happiness, sunshine and love and duty and the laughter of children. . . . There are no duties that so enrich as dull duties." The ancient voice and the new voice sing to the same sweet tune; and we in our little measure are learning to sing it too. As we have said, India is a land where the secular does not appeal. When we were an Itinerating Band, we had many offers from Christian girls and women to join us, as many in one month as we now have in five years. Sometimes it has seemed to us that we were set to learn and to teach a new and difficult lesson, the sacredness of the commonplace. Day by day we learn to rub out a little more of the clear chalked line that someone has ruled on life's black-board; the Secular and the Spiritual may not be divided now. The enlightening of a dark soul or the lighting of a kitchen fire, it matters not which it is, if only we are obedient to the heavenly vision, and work with a pure intention to the glory of our God.

NORTH LAKE AND HILLS. The nursery kitchen is a pleasant little place. We hardly ever enter it without remembering and appreciating John Bunyan's pretty thought, for there things in the doing of them seem to cast a smile. Ponnamal, who, as we said, superintends the more delicate food-making work, has trained two of her helpers to carefulness; and these two—one a motherly older woman with a most comfortable face, the other the convert, Joy—look up with such a welcome that you feel it good to be there. Scrubbing away at endless pots and pans and milk vessels is a younger convent-girl, who, when she first came to us, disapproved of such exertion. She liked to sit on the floor with her Bible on her lap and a far-away look of content on her face until the dinner-bell rang. Now she scrubs with a sense of responsibility.

All the younger converts have regular teaching, for they have much to learn, and all, older and younger, have daily classes and meetings; above all, it is planned that each has her quiet time undisturbed. But it is early understood that to be happy each must contribute her share to the happiness of the family; and one of the first lessons the young convert has to learn is to honour the "Grey Angel," Drudgery, and not to call her bad names. The Story of a Raven The kitchen has an outlook dear to the Tamil heart. A trellis covered with pink antigone surrounds it, but a window is cut in the trellis so that the kitchen may command the bungalow. "While I stirred the milk I saw everything you did on your verandah," remarked one of the workers lately, in tones of appreciation. The opposite outlook is the mountain shown in the photograph; only instead of water we have the kitchen-garden with its tropical-looking plantains and creeping marrows. "And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny sand," is a line for an Eastern garden when the great marrows ripen

suddenly. The kitchen thus favoured without, is adorned within, according to the taste of its owners, with those very interesting pictures published by the makers of infant foods. "How do you choose them?" we asked one day. "The truest and the prettiest," was the satisfactory answer. Our Dohnavur text, which hangs in every nursery, looks down upon the workers, and, as they put it, "keeps them sweet in heart": "Love never faileth." When first we began to cultivate babies we were very ignorant, and we asked advice of all who seemed competent to give it. The advice was most perplexing. Each mother was sure the food that had suited her baby was the best of all foods, and regarded all others as doubtful, if not bad. One whom we greatly respected told us Indian babies would be sure to get on anyhow, as it was their own land. And one seriously suggested rice-water as a suitable nourishment. Naturally we began with the time-honoured milk and barley-water, and some throve upon it. But we found each baby had to be studied separately. There was no universal (artificial) food. We could write a tractlet on foods, and if we did we would call it "Don't," for the first sentence in it would be, "Don't change the food if you can help it." This tractlet would certainly close with a word of thanks to those kind people, the milk-food manufacturers, who have helped us to build up healthy children; for feelings of personal gratitude come when help of this kind is given. The nursery kitchen is a room full of reminders of help. "I have commanded the ravens," is a word of strength to us. Once we were very low. A little child had died under trying circumstances. One of the milk-sellers, instead of using the vessel sent him, poured his milk into an unclean copper vessel, and it was poisoned. He remembered that it would not be taken unless brought in the proper vessel, so at the last moment he corrected his mistake, but the correction was fatal, for there was no warning. The milk was sterilized as usual and given to the child. She was a healthy baby, and her nurse remembers how she smiled and welcomed her bottle, taking it in her little hands in her happy eagerness. A few hours later she was dead. At such times the heart seems foolishly weak, and things which would not trouble it otherwise have power to make it sore. We were four days' journey from the nursery at the time, and had the added anxiety about the other babies, to whom we feared the poisoned milk might have been given, and we dreaded what the next post might bring. Just at that moment it was suggested, with kindest intentions, that perhaps we were on the wrong track, the work seemed so difficult and wasteful.

It was mail-day. The mail as usual brought a pile of letters, and the top envelope contained a bill for foods ordered from England some weeks before. It came to more than I had expected, in spite of the kindness of several firms in giving a liberal discount; and for a moment the rice-water talk (to give it a name which covers all that type of talk) came back to me with hurt in it: "To what purpose is this waste?" But with it came another word: "Take this child away (away from the terrible Temple) and nurse it for Me." And with the pile of letters before me, and the bill for food in my hand, I asked that enough might be found in those letters to pay it. It did not occur to me at the moment that the prayer was rather illogical. I only knew it would be comforting, and like a little word of peace, if such an assurance might even then come that we were not off the lines.

Because He hath Heard

Letter after letter was empty. Not empty of kindness, but quite empty of cheques. The last envelope looked thin and not at all hopeful. Cheques are usually inside reliable-looking covers. I opened it. There was nothing but a piece of unknown writing. But the writing was to ask if we happened to have a need which a sum named in the letter would meet. This sum exactly covered the bill for the foods. When the cheque eventually reached me it was for more than the letter had

mentioned, and covered all carriage and duty expenses, which were unknown to me at the time the first letter came, and to which of course I had not referred in my reply. Thus almost visibly and audibly has the Lord, from whose hands we received this charge to keep, confirmed His word to us, strengthening us when we were weak, and comforting us when we were sad with that innermost sense of His tenderness which braces while it soothes.

Surely we who know Him thus should love the Lord because He hath heard our voice and our supplication. Every advertisement on the walls of the little nursery kitchen is like an illuminated text with a story hidden away in it:— When Thou dost favour any action, It runs, it flies;

All things concur to give it a perfection. The nursery kitchen, we were amused to discover, has a sphere of influence all its own. Our discovery was on this wise:—

One wet evening we were caught in a downpour as we were crossing from the Taraha nursery to the bungalow, and we took shelter in the kindergarten room, which reverts to the Lola-and-Leela tribe when the kindergarten babies depart. The tribe do not often possess their Sittie and their Ammal both together and all to themselves, now that the juniors are so numerous, and they welcomed us with acclamations. "Finish spreading your mats," we said to them, as they seemed inclined to let our advent interrupt the order of the evening; and we watched them unroll their mats, which hung round the wall in neat rolls swung by cords from the roof, and spread them in rows along the wall. Beside each mat was what looked like a mummy, and beside each mummy was a matchbox and a small bundle of rags.

Presently the mummies were unswathed, and proved to be dolls in more or less good condition. Each was carefully laid upon a morsel of sheet, and covered with another sheet folded over in the neatest fashion. "If we teach them to be particular when they are young, they will be tidy when they are old," we were informed. It was pleasant to hear our own remarks so accurately repeated. The matchboxes were next unpacked; each contained a bit of match, a small pointed shell, a pebble (preferably black), and a couple of minute cockles. "I suppose you don’t know what all these are?" said Lola, affably. "That," pointing to the match, "is a spoon; and this," taking the pointed shell up carefully, "is a bottle. This is the ’rubber,’ of course," and the black pebble was indicated; "and these" (setting the cockle-shells on a piece of white paper on the floor) "are bowls of water, one for the bottle and the other for the rubber." We suggested one bowl of water would hold both bottle and rubber; but Lola’s entirely mischievous eyes looked quite shocked and reproving. "Two bowls are better," was the serious reply; "it is very important to be clean." "What does your child have?" we inquired respectfully. "Barley-water and milk, two-and-a-half ounces every two hours—that’s five tablespoonfuls, you know." "And Leela’s?" "Oh, Leela’s child is delicate. She has to have Benger. Two ounces every two hours; and it has to be a long time digested." "Do all your children have their food every two hours?" Lola looked surprised, and Leela giggled: how very ignorant we seemed to be! "No, only the tiny ones; our babies are very young. After they get older they have more at a time and not so often. That child there," pointing to another mat, "has Condensed, as we haven’t enough cow’s milk for them all. It suits her very well. She has six ounces at a time; once before she goes to sleep, and then none till she wakens in the morning. She’s a very healthy child." "How do you know the time?" we asked, prepared for anything now. "Oh, we have watches. This is mine," and a toy from a Christmas cracker was produced; "Leela’s watch is different" (it was indeed different—a mere figment of the imagination), "but she can look at mine when she

wants to." "Why does your child sleep with Leela's?" (All the other infants had separate sleeping arrangements.) Lola looked shy, and Leela looked shyer. These little matters of affection were not intended for public discussion. The Usual By this time the rain had cleared, so we prepared to depart, and the further entertainments provided for us by the cheerful tribe that evening do not belong to this story. We escaped finally, damp with much laughter in a humid atmosphere. "Come every evening!" shouted the tribe, as at last we disappeared, and we felt much inclined to accept the invitation. The kitchen is a busy place in the morning, and again in the evening, when the fresh milk is carried to it in shining aluminium vessels to be sterilized or otherwise dealt with. But even in the busiest hours there is almost sure to be a baby set in an upturned stool, in which she sits holding on to the front legs in proud consciousness of being able to sit up. Or an older one will be clinging to the garments of the busy workers, or perched beside them on a stool. Once we found Tara and Evu seated on the window-sill. Ponnamal was making foods at the table under the window, and the little bare feet were tucked in between bowls and jugs of milk. "But, indeed, they are quite clean," explained Ponnamal, without waiting for remark from us, for she knew what we were thinking of her table decorations. "We dusted the sand off their little feet before we lifted them up." The babies said nothing, but looked doubtfully up at us, as if not very sure of our intentions. But Ponnamal's eyes were so appealing, and the little buff things in blue with a trellis of pink flowers for background made such a pretty picture, that we had not the heart to spoil it. Then the little faces smiled gratefully upon us, and everybody smiled. The kitchen is a happy place of innocent surprises.

1.08.27. Book 8: 27. The secret Traffic

CHAPTER XXVII The Secret Traffic "Sir, to leave things out of a book because they will not be believed, is meanness."—Dr. Johnson. WHEN first, upon March 7, 1901, we heard from the lips of a little child the story of her life in a Temple house, we were startled and distressed, and penetrated with the conviction that such a story ought to be impossible in a land ruled by a Christian Power. The subject was new to us; we knew nothing of the magnitude of what may be called "The Secret Traffic of India"—a traffic in little children, mere infants oftentimes, for wrong purposes; and we did not appreciate, as we do now, the delicacy and difficulty of the position from a Government point of view, or the quiet might of the forces upon the other side. And though with added knowledge comes an added sense of responsibility, and a fear of all careless appeal to those whose burden is already so heavy, yet with every fresh discovery the conviction deepens that something should be done—and done, if possible, soon—to save at least this generation of children, or some of them, from destruction.

"It is useless to move without a body of evidence at your back," said a friend in the Civil Service to us at the close of a long conversation. "If you can get the children, of course they themselves will furnish the best evidence; but, anyhow, collect facts." And this was the beginning of a Note-book, into which we entered whatever we could learn about the Temple children, and in which we kept letters relating to them. By Temple children throughout this book we mean children dedicated to gods, or in danger of being so dedicated. Dedication to gods implies a form of marriage which makes ordinary marriage impossible. The child is regarded as belonging to the gods. In Southern India, where religious feeling runs strong, and the great Temples are the centres of Hindu influence, this that I have called "The Traffic" is worked upon religious lines; and so in trying to save the children we have to contend with the perverted religious sense. Something of the same kind exists in other parts of India, and the traffic under another name is common in provinces where Temple service as we have it in the South is unknown. Again, in areas where, owing to the action of the native Government, Temple service, as such, is not recognised, so that children in danger of wrong cannot, strictly speaking, be called Temple children, there is yet need of legislation which shall touch all houses where little children are being brought up for the same purpose; so that the subject is immense and involved, and the thought of it suggests a net thrown over millions of square miles of territory, so finely woven as to be almost invisible, but so strong in its mesh that in no place yet has it ever given way. And the net is alive: it can feel and it can hold. But all through this book we have kept to the South—to the area where the evil is distinctly and recognisably religious. Others elsewhere have told their own story; ours, though in touch with theirs (in that its whole motive is to save the little children), is yet different in manner, in that it is avowedly Christian. India is a land where generalisations are deceptive. So we have kept to the South.

We ourselves became only very gradually aware of what was happening about us. As fact after fact came to light, we were forced to certain conclusions which we could not doubt were correct. But at first we were almost alone in these conclusions, because it was impossible to take others

with us in our tedious underground hunt after facts. So the question was often asked: "But do the children really exist?"

"If"

I have said we were almost alone, not quite. Members of the Indian Civil Service, who are much among the people, knew something of the custom of child-dedication, but found themselves unable to touch it. Hindu Reformers, of course, knew; and two or three veteran missionaries had come into contact with it and had grieved over their helplessness to do anything. One of these had written a pamphlet on the subject twenty years before our Nursery work began. He sent it to me with a sorrowful word written across it, "Result? Nil." But we do not often meet our civilian friends, for they are busy, and so are we; and the few missionaries whose inspiring sympathy helped us through those earlier years were in places far from us, and so were all the Reformers. So perhaps it was not wonderful that, beset by doubting letters from home and a certain amount of not unnatural incredulity in India, we sometimes almost wondered if we ourselves were dreaming. "Well, if they do exist, I hope you will be able to find them!"—varied by, "Well, if you do find them, they will be a proof of their own existence!"—were two of the most encouraging remarks of those early days. From the beginning of this work, as stated before, we have tried to collect facts about the traffic and the customs connected with it. Notes were kept of conversations with Hindus and others, and these notes were compared with what evidence we were able to gather from trustworthy sources. These brief notes of various kinds we offer in their simplicity. We have made no attempt to tabulate or put into shape the information thus acquired, believing that the notes of conversations taken down at the time, and the quotations from letters copied as they stand, will do their work more directly than anything more elaborate would. Where there is a difference of detail it is because the customs differ slightly in different places. No names are given, for obvious reasons; but the letters were written by men of standing, living in widely scattered districts in the South. The evidence contained in them was carefully sifted, and in many cases corroborated by personal investigation, before being considered evidence: so that we believe these chapters may be accepted as fact. Dated quotations from the Madras Mail are sufficient to prove that we are not writing ancient history:—

January 2, 1909.—"The following resolution was put from the chair and carried unanimously: 'The Conference (consisting of Hindu Social Reformers) cordially supports the movement started to better the condition of unprotected children in general, and appreciates particularly the agitation started to protect girls and young women from being dedicated to Temples.'"

Mysore May 8, 1909.—"Once more we have an illustration from Mysore of the fact that the Government of a Native State are able to tread boldly on ground which the British Government in India are unable to approach. At various times, in these columns and elsewhere, has the cry raised against the employment of servants of the gods in Hindu Temples been uttered; but, as far as the Government are concerned, it has fallen, if not on deaf ears, on ears stopped to appeals of this kind, which demand action that can be interpreted as a breach of that religious neutrality which is one of the cardinal principles of British rule in India. The agitation against it is not the agitation of the European whose susceptibility is offended at a state of things that he finds hard to reconcile with the reverence and purity of Divine worship; but it is the outcry of the reverent Hindu against one of the corrupt and degrading practices that, in the course of centuries, have crept into his

religion. In this particular instance the Mysore Government cannot be accused of acting hastily. As long ago as February, 1892, they issued a circular order describing the legitimate services to be performed in Temples by Temple women. In 1899, the Muzrai Superintendent, Rai Bahadur A. Sreenivasa Charlu, directed that the Temple women borne on the Nanjangud Temple establishment should not be allowed to perform tafe (or dancing) service in the Temple; but that the allowances payable to them should be continued for their lifetime, and that at their death the vacancies should not be filled up. Against this order the Temple women concerned memorialised H.H. the Maharajah as long ago as 1905, and the order disposing of it has only just been issued. In the course of the latter the Government say:—

"'From the Shastraic authorities quoted by the two Agamiks employed in the Muzrai Secretariat, it is observed that the services to be performed by Temple women form part and parcel of the worship of the god in Hindu Temples, and that singing and dancing in the presence of the deity are also prescribed. It is, however, observed that in the case of Temple women personal purity and rectitude of conduct and a vow of celibacy were considered essential. But the high ideals entertained in ancient days have now degenerated. . . . The Government now observe that whatever may have been the original object of the institution of Temple women in Temples, the state in which these Temple servants are now found fully justifies the action taken by them in excluding the Temple women from every kind of service in sacred institutions like Temples. Further, the absence of the services of these women in certain important Temples in the State has become established for nearly fifteen years past, and the public have become accustomed to the idea of doing without such services.'

"The exclusion of Temple women from Temple services obtains in Mysore in the case of a few large Temples whose Tasdik Pattis have been revised. But the time has come, the Government think, for its general application, and they therefore direct that the policy enunciated in the abstract given above should be extended to all Muzrai Temples in the State. It is to be hoped that the good example thus set will bear fruit elsewhere, where the Temple women evil is more notorious than it was in Temples of Mysore." A copy of the Government document to which this cutting relates lies before me. It is bravely and clearly worded, and its intention is evident. The high-minded Hindu—and there are such, let it not be forgotten—revolts from the degradation and pollution of this travesty of religion, and will abolish it where he can. But let it be remembered that, good as this law is, it does not and it cannot touch the great Secret Traffic itself. That will go on behind the law, and behind the next that is made, and the next, unless measures are devised to ensure its being thoroughly enforced.

Cuttings from newspapers, quotations, evidence—it is not interesting reading, and yet we look to our friends to go through to the end with us. Let us pause for a moment here and remember the purpose of it all; and may the thought of some little, loved child make an atmosphere for these chapters!

1.08.28. Book 8: 28. Blue Book evidence

CHAPTER XXVIII Blue Book Evidence "The precipitous sides of difficult questions."—E. B. B. OUR first evidence consists of abridged extracts from the Census Report for 1901. After explaining the different names by which Temple women are known in different parts of the Madras Presidency, the Report continues: "The servants of the gods, who subsist by dancing and music and the practice of 'the oldest profession in the world,' are partly recruited by admissions and even purchases from other classes. . . . The rise of the Caste and its euphemistic name seem to date from the ninth and tenth centuries, during which much activity prevailed in South India in the matter of building Temples and elaborating the services held in them. . . . The duties then, as now, were to fan the idol with Tibetan ox-tails, to carry the sacred light, and to sing and dance before the god when he is carried in procession. Inscriptions show that in a.d. 1004 the great Temple of the Chola king at Tanjore had attached to it four hundred women of the Temple, who lived in free quarters in the four streets round it, and were allowed tax-free land out of its endowments. Other Temples had similar arrangements. . . . At the present day they form a regular Caste, having its own laws of inheritance, its own customs and rules of etiquette, and its own councils to see that all these are followed, and they hold a position which is perhaps without a parallel in any other country. . . .

"The daughters of the Caste who are brought up to follow the Caste profession are carefully taught dancing and singing, the art of dressing well, ;. . . and their success in keeping up their clientele is largely due to the contrast which they thus present to the ordinary Hindu housewife, whose ideas are bounded by the day's dinners and babies."

Closely allied to this Caste is that formed by the Temple musicians, who with the Temple woman are "now practically the sole repository of Indian music, the system of which is probably one of the oldest in the world." In certain districts the Report states that a custom obtains among certain castes, under which a family which has no sons must dedicate one of its daughters to Temple service. The daughter selected is taken to a Temple and married there to a god, the marriage symbol being put on her as in a real marriage. Henceforth she belongs to the god.

Writing in 1904, a member of the Indian Civil Service says: "I heard of a case of dedication (three girls) at A. at the beginning of this year, but I could not get any evidence. The cases very rarely indeed come up officially, as nearly every Hindu is interested in keeping them dark." We, too, have had the same difficulty, and the evidence we now submit is doubly valuable because of its source. It is very rarely that we have found it possible to get behind the scenes sufficiently to obtain reliable information from those most concerned in this traffic. The head priest of one of our Temples admitted to a friend who was watching for opportunities to get information for us that the "marriage to the god is effected privately by the Temple priest at the Temple woman's house, with the usual marriage-symbol ceremony. To avoid the Penal Code (which forbids the marriage of children to gods) a nominal bridegroom is sometimes brought for the wedding day to become the nominal husband. This Caste is recruited by secret adoption." A Temple woman's son, now living

the ordinary life apart from his clan, explains the very early marriage thus: "If not married, they will not be considered worthy of honour. Before the children reach the age of ten they must be married. . . . They become the property of the Temple priests and worshippers who go to the Temple to chant the sacred songs."

"The Child should be about Eight" A Temple woman herself told a friend of ours: "The child is dressed like a bride, and taken with another girl of the same community, dressed like a boy in the garb of a bridegroom. They both go to the Temple and worship the idol. This ceremony is common, and performed openly in the streets." In a later letter from the same friend further details are given: "The child, who should be about eight or nine years old, goes as if to worship the idol in the Temple. There the marriage symbol is hidden in a garland, and the garland is put over the idol, after which it is taken to the child's home and put round her neck." After this she is considered married to the god. A young Temple woman in a town near Dohnavur told us she had been given to the Temple when she was five years old. Her home was in the north country, but she did not remember it. She had, of course, understood nothing of the meaning of the ceremony of marriage. She only remembered the pretty flowers and general rejoicing and pleasure. Afterwards, when she began to understand, she was not happy, but she gradually got accustomed to it. Her adopted relations were all the friends she had. She was fond of them and they of her. Her "husband" was one of the Temple priests. A Hindu woman known to us left home with her little daughter and wandered about as an ascetic. She went to a famous Temple, where it is the custom for such as desire to become ascetics to enter the life by conforming to certain ceremonies ordained by the priests. She shaved her head, took off her jewels, wore a Saivite necklet of berries, and was known as a devotee. She had little knowledge of the life before she entered it, and only gradually became aware of the character borne by most of her fellow-devotees. When she knew, she fled from them and returned to her own village and the secular life, finding it better than the religious.

How she is Trained In telling us about it she said: "I expected whiteness, I found blackness." She told us that she constantly came into contact with Temple women, none of whom had chosen the life as she and her fellow-ascetics had chosen theirs. "Always the one who is to dance before the gods is given to the life when she is very young. Otherwise she could not be properly trained. Many babies are brought by their parents and given to Temple women for the sake of merit. It is very meritorious to give a child to the gods. Often the parents are poor but of good Caste. Always suitable compensation and a 'joy gift' is given by the Temple women to the parents. It is an understood custom, and ensures that the child is a gift, not a loan. The amount depends upon the age and beauty of the child. If the child is old enough to miss her mother, she is very carefully watched until she has forgotten her. Sometimes she is shut up in the back part of the house, and punished if she runs out into the street. The punishment is severe enough to frighten the child. Sometimes it is branding with a hot iron upon a place which does not show, as under the arm; sometimes nipping with the nail till the skin breaks; sometimes a whipping. After the child is reconciled to her new life, occasionally her people are allowed to come if they wish; and in special circumstances she pays a visit to her old home. But this is rare. If she has been adopted as an infant, she knows nothing of her own relations, but thinks of her adopted mother as her own mother. As soon as she can understand she is taught all evil and trained to think it is good." As to her education, the movements of the dance are taught very early, and the flexible little limbs are rendered more flexible by a system of massage. In all ways the natural grace of the child is

cultivated and developed, but always along lines which lead far away from the freedom and innocence of childhood. As it is important she should learn a great deal of poetry, she is taught to read (and with this object in view she is sometimes sent to the mission school, if there is one near her home). The poetry is almost entirely of a debased character; and so most insidiously, by story and allusion, the child's mind is familiarised with sin; and before she knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the instinct which would have been her guide is tampered with and perverted, till the poor little mind, thus bewildered and deceived, is incapable of choice.

1.08.29. Book 8: 29. "Very Common in those parts"

CHAPTER XXIX "Very Common in those Parts"

"The dark enigma of permitted wrong."—F. R. H. THE mixture of secrecy and openness described by the Temple woman is confirmed by Hindus well acquainted with Temple affairs. "All the Temple women are married to the gods. In former times the marriages were conducted upon a grand scale, but now they are clandestinely performed in the Temple, with the connivance of the priest, and with freedom to deny it if questioned. Some ceremonies are performed in the Temple, the rest at home. Sometimes the marriage symbol is blessed by the priest, and taken home to the child to be worn by her. In all these cases the priest himself has to tie it round her neck. The previous arrangements for the marriage are made by the priests with the guardians of the child who is to be initiated into the order of Temple women.

"The ceremony of tying on the marriage symbol is never in our district performed in public. None but intimate friends know about it. There is a secret understanding between the priests and the Temple women concerned. When the time arrives for the marriage symbol to be tied on, after the usual ceremonies the priest hands over the symbol hidden in a garland of flowers.

"Of course, there is music on the occasion. When outsiders ask what all the noise is about, the people who know do not say the real thing. They say it is a birthday or other festival day. The symbol is tied on when the child is between five and eleven, after which it is considered unholy to perform the marriage ceremony. The symbol is at first hidden from the gaze of the public. Later it is shown publicly, but not while the girl is still young." This tallies exactly with our own experience. More than once an eager child in her simplicity has shown me the marriage symbol, a small gold ornament tied round her neck, or hanging on a fine gold chain; but the Temple woman in whose charge she was has always reproved her sharply, and made her cover it up under her other jewels, or under the folds of her dress. The reason for this secrecy, which, however, is not universal, is, as is inferred in the evidence of the head priest, because it is known to the Temple authorities that what they are doing is illegal; though, as a matter of fact, as will be seen later, prosecutions are rare, and convictions rarer still. The Caste is recruited, as the Blue Book states, by "admissions and even purchases from other classes." On this point a Brahman says: "When the Temple woman has no child, she adopts a girl or girls, and the children become servants of the gods. Sometimes children are found who, on account of a vow made by their parents, become devotees of the gods." Another Brahman, an orthodox Hindu, writes: "In some districts people vow that they will dedicate one of their children to the Temple if they are blessed with a family. Temple women often adopt orphans, to whom they bequeath their possessions. In most cases the orphans are bought."

Convictions are Rare The position of the Temple woman has been a perplexity to many. The Census Report touches the question: "It is one of the many inconsistencies of the Hindu religion, that though their profession is repeatedly vehemently condemned in the Shastras (sacred books), it has always received the countenance of the Church." Their duties are all religious. A

well-informed Hindu correspondent thus enumerates them: "First they are to be one of the twenty-one persons who are in charge of the key of the outer door of the Temple; second, to open the outer door daily; third, to burn camphor, and go round the idol when worship is being performed; fourth, to honour public meetings with their presence; fifth, to mount the car and stand near the god during car-festivals." The orthodox Hindu quoted before remarks on the "high honour," as the Temple child is taught to consider it, the marriage to the god confers upon her.

We have purposely confined ourselves almost entirely to official and Hindu evidence so far, but cannot forbear to add to this last word the confirmatory experience of our own Temple children worker: "When I try to persuade the Hindus to let us have their little ones instead of giving them to the Temples they say: 'But to give them to Temples is honour and glory and merit to us for ever; to give them to you is dishonour and shame and demerit. So why should we give them to you?'"

We have said that convictions are rare. This is because of the great difficulty in obtaining such evidence as is required by the law as it stands at present. One case may be quoted as typical. A few years ago, in one of our country towns, a father gave his child in marriage to the idol "with some pomp," as the report before us says. He was prosecuted, but the prosecution failed, for the priest and the parents united in denying the fact of the marriage; and the evidence for the defence was so skilfully cooked that it was found impossible to prove an offence against the Penal Code.

Once, deeply stirred over the case of a little girl of six who was about to be married to a god as her elder sisters had been a few months previously, we wrote to a magistrate of wide experience and proved sympathy with the work. His letter speaks for itself:—

"I have been waiting some little time before answering your letter, because I wanted time to think over your problem. As far as I can make out, there is no way in the world of preventing a woman marrying her own daughter to the gods at any age; but you can prosecute her if she does. If you could get her into prison for marrying the elder girls, the younger might be safe; but I don't think you can do anything directly for her. She is not being 'unlawfully detained'; and even if she were, all you could do would be to get her returned to her parents and guardians, which would be worse than useless.

"The question is whether you can hope to get a conviction in the other case.

"I don't see how you can. You can say in court that you saw the little girls with their marriage symbol on, and that they said they had been married to the god. The little girls will deny it all, and say they never set eyes on you before. Moreover, I don't think the ordinary Court would be satisfied without some other evidence of the fact of dedication; and considering how everyone would work against you, I think you would find it extraordinarily hard. The local police would be worse than useless." To every man his work: it appears to us that expert knowledge is required, and ample means and leisure, if the expenditure involved is to result in anything worth while; and a careful study of all available information regarding prosecutions, convictions, and, I may add, sentences, has convinced us, at least, of the futility of such attempts from a missionary point of view: for even if convictions were certain, as long as the law hands the child back to its guardians after their unfitness to guard it from the worst that can befall it has been proved, so long do we feel unable to rejoice exceedingly over even the six months' rigorous imprisonment, which in more than one case has been the legal interpretation of the phrase "up to a term of ten years," which is

the penalty attached to this offence in the Indian Penal Code. In this connection it may be well to quote a paragraph from the Indian Social Reformer:—

"The Public Prosecutor at Madras applied for admission of a revision petition against the order of the Sessions Judge, made in the following circumstances:—

Ten years—Six Months

"One, S., a priest, was convicted by the first-class subdivisional magistrate of having performed the ceremony of dedicating a young girl in the Temple of N., and thereby committing an offence punishable under Section 372 of the Penal Code. He accordingly sentenced him to six months' rigorous imprisonment. On appeal, the Sessions Judge reduced the sentence to two months, on the ground that the rite complained against was a very common one in those parts. The Public Prosecutor based his petition on the ground that it had been held in a previous case 'that such a dedication was an offence, and that it was highly desirable that the interests of minors should be properly protected.' This protection, it was submitted, could only be vouchsafed by making offending people understand that they would render themselves liable to heavy punishment. The present sentence would not have a deterrent effect, and he accordingly applied for an enhancement of the same. His lordship admitted the petition, and directed notice to the accused."

It is something to know the six months' sentence was confirmed. But is not the fact that a Sessions Judge should commute such a sentence, on the ground that the offence was "very common," enough to suggest a doubt as to the deterrent effect of even this punishment?

NOTE

During the last few months the Secretary of State for India has addressed official inquiries to the Government of India regarding the dedication of children to Hindu gods, and the measures necessary for the protection of such children.

If the anticipated change in the law is to result in more than a Bill on paper—a blind, behind which things will go on as before only more out of sight—it is, we believe, needful to ensure:

1st. Protection for all children found to be in moral danger, whether or not they are or may be dedicated to gods.

2nd. That, irrespective of nationality or religion, whoever has worked for and won the deliverance of the child should be allowed to act as guardian to it.

3rd. That such a Bill shall be most thoroughly enforced.

February, 1912. To face p. 268.

1.08.30. Book 8: 30. On the side of the oppressors there was power

CHAPTER XXX On the Side of the Oppressors there was Power

I HAVE been looking over my note-book, in which there are some hundreds of letters, clippings from newspapers, and records of conversations bearing upon the Temple children. It is difficult to know which to choose to complete the picture already outlined in the preceding chapters. A mere case record would be wearisome; and indeed the very word "case" sounds curiously inappropriate when one thinks of the nurseries and their little inhabitants; or looks up to see mischievous eyes watching a chance to stop the uninteresting writing; or feels, suddenly, soft arms round one’s neck, as a baby, strayed from her own domain, climbs unexpectedly up from behind and makes dashes at the typewriter keyboard. Such little living interruptions are too frequent to allow of these chapters being anything but human. The newspaper clippings are usually concerned with public movements, resolutions, petitions, and the like. There is one startling little paragraph from a London paper, dated July 7, 1906; the ignorance of the subject so flippantly dealt with is its only apology. No one could have written so had he understood. The occasion was the memorial addressed to the Governor in Council by workers for the children in the Bombay Presidency:—

"Society must be very select in Poona. There has been a custom there for young ladies to be married to selected gods. You would have thought that to be the bride of a god was a good enough marriage for anyone. But it is not good enough for Poona." It is time that such writing became impossible for any Englishman. In India the feeling of the best men, whether Hindu or Christian, is strongly against the dedication of little children to Temples, and some of the newspapers of the land speak out and say so in unmistakable language. The Indian Times speaks of the little ones being "steeped deep from their childhood" in all that is most wrong. A Hindu, writing in the Epiphany, puts the matter clearly when he says: "Finally, one can hardly conceive of anything more debasing than to dedicate innocent little girls to gods in the name of religion, and then leave them with the Temple priests"; and another writer in the same paper asks a question which those who say that Hinduism is good enough for India might do well to ponder: "If this is not a Hindu practice, how can it take place in a Temple and no priest stop it, though all know? . . . In London religion makes wickedness go away; but in Bombay religion brings wickedness, and Government has to try to make it go away." This immense contrast of fact and of ideal contains our answer to all who would put sin in India on a level with sin in England.

Christian writers naturally, whether in the Christian Patriot of the South or the Bombay Guardian of the West, have no doubt about the existence of the evil or the need for its removal. They, too, connect it distinctly with religion, and recognise its tremendous influence. But we turn from the printed page, and go straight to the houses where the little children live. The witnesses now are missionaries or trusted Indian workers.

"She Belongs to the god"

"There were thirteen little children in the houses connected with the Temple last time I visited them. I saw the little baby—such a dear, fat, laughing little thing. It was impossible to get it, and I see no hope of getting any of the other children."

"When I was visiting in S. a woman came to talk to me with her three little children. Two of them were girls, very pretty, 'fair' little children. 'What work does your husband do?' I asked; and she answered, 'I am married to the god.' Then I knew who she was, and that her children were in danger. I have tried since to get them, but in vain. Everyone says that Temple women never give up their little girls. These two were dedicated at their birth. This is only one instance. We have many Temple women reading with us, and many of the little children attend our schools."

"There are not scores but hundreds of these children in the villages of this district. Here certain families, living ordinary lives in their own villages, dedicate one of their children as a matter of course to the gods. They always choose the prettiest. It is a recognised custom, and no one thinks anything of it. The child so dedicated lives with her parents afterwards as if nothing had happened, only she may not be married in the real way. She belongs to the god and his priests and worshippers."

"The house was very orderly and nice. I sat on the verandah and talked to the women, who were all well educated and so attractive with their pretty dress and jewels. They seemed bright, but, of course, would not show me their real feelings, and I could only hold surface conversation with them."

We are often asked if the Temple houses are inside the walls which surround all the great Temples in this part of the country. They are usually in the streets outside. Most of the Brahman Temples are surrounded by a square of streets, and the houses are in the square or near it. There is nothing to distinguish them from other houses in the street. It is only when you go inside that you feel the difference. An hour on the shady verandah of one of these houses is very revealing. You see the children run up to welcome a tall, fine-looking man, who pats their heads in the kindest way, and as he passes you recognise him. Next time you see him in the glory of his office, you wish you could forget where you saw him last.

Sometimes we are asked who the children are. How do the Temple women get them in the first instance?

We have already answered this question by quotations from the Census Report, and by statements of Hindus well acquainted with the subject. It should be added that often the Temple woman having daughters of her own dedicates them, and as a rule it is only when she has none that she adopts other little ones. A few extracts from letters and notes from conversations are subjoined, as they show how the system of adoption works:—

"We are in trouble over a little girl, the daughter of wealthy parents, who have dedicated her to the gods and refuse to change their mind. The child was ill some time ago, and they vowed then that if she recovered they would dedicate her."

"The poor woman's husband was very ill, and the mother vowed her little girl as an offering if he recovered. He did recover, and so the child has been given."

"It is the custom of the Caste to dedicate the eldest girl of a certain chosen family, and nothing will turn them from it. One child must be given in each generation."

"She is of good caste, but very poor. Her husband died two months before the baby was born, and as it was a girl she was much troubled as to its future, for she knew she would never have enough money to marry it suitably. A Temple woman heard of the baby, and at once offered to adopt it. She persuaded the mother by saying: 'You see, if it is married to the gods, it will never be a widow like you. It will always be well cared for and have honour, and be a sign of good fortune to our people—unlike you!' (It is considered a sign of good omen to see a Temple woman the first thing in the morning; but the sight of a widow at any time is a thing to be avoided.) The poor mother could not resist this, and she has been persuaded."

"Not Wrong because Religious"

"The mother is a poor, delicate widow, with several boys as well as this baby girl. She cannot support them all properly, and her relatives do not seem inclined to help her. The Temple women have heard of her, and they sent a woman to negotiate. The mother knew that we would take the little one rather than that she should be forced to give it up to Temple women; but she said when we talked with her: 'It cannot be wrong to give it to the holy gods! This is our religion; and it may be wrong to you, but it is not wrong to us.' So she refused to give us the baby, and seems inclined to go away with it. It is like that constantly. The thing cannot be wrong because it is religious!"

"I heard of two little orphan girls whose guardian, an uncle, had married again, and did not want to have the marriage expenses of his two little nieces to see to. So at the last great festival he brought the children and dedicated them to the Saivite Temple, and the Temple women heard about it before I did, and at once secured them. I went as soon as I could to see if we could not get them, but she would not listen to us. She said they were her sister's children, and that she had adopted them out of love for her dead sister." A lawyer was consulted as to this case, but it was impossible to trace the uncle or to prove that the children were not related to the Temple woman. Above all, it was impossible to prove that she meant to do anything illegal. So nothing could be done. As a rule the Temple woman receives little beyond bare sustenance from the Temple itself. In some Temples when the little child is formally dedicated, she (or her guardian) receives two pounds, and her funeral expenses are promised. But though there is little stated remuneration, the Temple woman is not poor. Poverty may come. If she breaks the law of her caste, or offends against the etiquette of that caste, she is immediately excommunicated, and then she may become very poor. Or if she has spent her money freely, or not invested it wisely, her old age may be cheerless enough. But we have not found any lack of money among the Sisterhood. No offer of compensation for all expenses connected with a child has ever drawn them to part with her. They offer large sums for little ones who will be useful to them. We have several times known as much as an offer of one hundred rupees made and accepted in cases where the little child (in each case a mere infant) was one of special promise. A letter, which incidentally mentions the easy circumstances in which many are, may be of interest:—

"K. is a little girl in our mission school. Her mother is a favourite Temple woman high up in the profession. She dances while the other women sing, and sometimes she gets as much as three or four hundred rupees for her dancing. She is well educated, can recite the 'Ramayana' (Indian epic), and knows a little English. She spends some time in her own house, but is often away

visiting other Temples. Just now she is away, and little K. is with her. . . . Humanly speaking, she will never let her go." The Pressure Tells The education of the mission school is appreciated because it makes the bright little child still brighter; and we, who know the home life of these children, are glad when they are given one brief opportunity to learn what may help them in the difficult days to come. We have known of some little ones who, influenced by outside teaching, tried to escape the life they began to feel was wrong, but in each case they were overborne, for on the side of the oppressors there was power. I was in a Temple house lately, and noticed the doors—the massive iron-bossed doors are a feature of all well-built Hindu houses of the South. How could a little child shut up in such a room, with its door shut, if need be, to the outside inquisitive world—how could she resist the strength that would force the garland round her neck? She might tear it off if she dared, but the little golden symbol had been hidden under the flowers, and the priest had blessed it; the deed was done—she was married to the god. And only those who have seen the effect of a few weeks of such a life upon a child, who has struggled in vain against it, can understand how cowed she may become, how completely every particle of courage and independence of spirit may be caused to disappear; and how what we had known as a bright, sparkling child, full of the fearless, confiding ways of a child, may become distrustful and constrained, quite incapable of taking a stand on her own account, or of responding to any effort we might be able to make from outside. It is as if the child’s spirit were broken, and those who know what she has gone through cannot wonder if it is. And then comes something we dread more: the life begins to attract. The sense of revolt passes as the will weakens; the persistent, steady pressure tells. And when we see her next, perhaps only three months later, the child has passed the boundary, and belongs to us no more.

1.08.31. Book 8: 31. And there was none to save

CHAPTER XXXI And there was None to Save Thou canst conceive our highest and our lowest Pulses of nobleness and aches of shame.

Frederic W. H. Myers. IN speaking of these matters I have tried to keep far from that which is only sentiment, and have resolutely banished all imagination. I would that the writing could be as cold in tone as the criticism of those who consider everything other than polished ice almost amusing—to judge by the way they handle it, dismissing it with an airy grace and a hurting adjective. Would they be quite so cool, we wonder, if the little wronged girl were their own? But we do not write for such as these. The thought of the cold eyes would freeze the thoughts before they formed. We write for the earnest-hearted, who are not ashamed to confess they care. And yet we write with reserve even though we write for them, because nothing else is possible. And this crushing back of the full tide makes its fulness almost oppressive. It is as though a flame leaped from the page and scorched the brain that searched for words quite commonplace and quiet. The finished product of the Temple system of education is something so distorted that it cannot be described. But it should never be forgotten that the thing from which we recoil did not choose to be fashioned so. It was as wax—a little, tender, innocent child—in the hands of a wicked power when the fashioning process began. Let us deal gently with those who least deserve our blame, and reserve our condemnation for those responsible for the creation of the Temple woman. Is it fair that a helpless child, who has never once been given the choice of any other life, should be held responsible afterwards for living the life to which alone she has been trained? Is it fair to call her by a name which belongs by right to one who is different, in that her life is self-chosen? No word can cut too keenly at the root of this iniquity; but let us deal gently with the mishandled flower. Let hard words be restrained where the woman is concerned. Let it be remembered she is not responsible for being what she is. In a Canadian book of songs there is a powerful little poem about an artist who painted one who was beautiful but not good. He hid all trace of what was; he painted a babe at her breast.

I painted her as she might have been If the Worst had been the Best. And a connoisseur came and looked at the picture. To him it spoke of holiest things; he thought it a Madonna:— So I painted a halo round her hair, And I sold her and took my fee; And she hangs in the church of St. Hilaire, Where you and all may see.

"It Crowns with the Golden Crown"

Sometimes as we have looked at the face of one whose training was not complete we have seen as the artist saw: we have seen her "as she might have been if the worst had been the best." There was no halo round her hair, only its travesty—something that told of crowned and glorified sin; and yet we could catch more than a glimpse of the perfect "might have been." So we say, let blame fall lightly on the one who least deserves it. Perhaps if our ears were not so full of the sounds of the world, we should hear a tenderer judgment pronounced than man’s is likely to be: "Unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing. . . . For there was none to save her." Our work at

Dohnavur is entirely among the little children who are innocent of wrong. We rarely touch these lives which have been stained and spoiled; but we could not forbear to write a word of clear explanation about them, lest any should mistake the matter and confuse things that differ.

We leave the subject with relief. Few who have followed us so far know how much it has cost to lead the way into these polluted places. Not that we would make much of any personal cost; but that we would have it known that nothing save a pressure which could not be resisted could force us to touch pitch. And yet why should we shrink from it when the purpose which compels is the saving of the children? Brave words written by a brave woman come and help us to do it:—

"This I say emphatically, that the evil which we have grappled with to save one of our own dear ones does not sully. It is the evil that we read about in novels and newspapers for our own amusement; it is the evil we weakly give way to in our lives; above all, it is the destroying evil that we have refused so much as to know about in our absorbing care for our own alabaster skin; it is that evil which defiles a woman. But the evil that we have grappled with in a life and death struggle to save a soul for whom Christ died does not sully; it clothes from head to foot with the white robe, it crowns with the golden crown."

There remains only one thing more to show. It was evening in an Indian town at a time of festival. The great pillared courts of the Temple were filled with worshippers and pilgrims from all over the Tamil country and from as far north as Benares. Men who eagerly grasped at anything printed in Sanscrit and knew nothing of our vernacular were scattered in little groups among the crowd, and we had freedom to go to them and give them what we could, and talk to the many others who would listen. Outside the moonlight was shining on the dark pile of the Temple tower, and upon the palms planted along the wall, which rises in its solid strength 30 feet high and encloses the whole Temple precincts. There were very few people out in the moonlight. It was too quiet there for them, too pure in its silvery whiteness. Inside the hall, with its great-doored rooms and recesses, there were earth-lights in abundance, flaring torches, smoking lamps and lanterns. And there was noise—the noise of words and of wailing Indian music. For up near the closed doors which open on the shrine within which the idol sat surrounded by a thousand lights, there was a band of musicians playing upon stringed instruments; sometimes they broke out excitedly and banged their drums and made their conch-shells blare.

Suddenly there was a tumultuous rush of every produceable sound; tom-tom, conch-shell, cymbal, flute, stringed instruments and bells burst into chorus together. The idol was going to be carried out from his innermost shrine behind the lights; and as the great doors moved slowly, the excitement became intense, the thrill of it quivered through all the hall and sent a tremor through the crowd out to the street. But we passed out and away, and turned into a quiet courtyard known to us and talked to the women there. The Harebell Child

There were three, one the grandmother of the house, one her daughter, and another a friend. The grandmother and her daughter were Temple women, the eldest grandchild had been dedicated only a few months before. There were three more children, one Mungie, a lovable child of six, one a pretty three-year-old with a mop of beautiful curls, the youngest a baby just then asleep in its hammock; a little foot dangled out of the hammock, which was hung from a rafter in the verandah roof. We had come to talk to the grandmother and mother about the dear little six-year-old child, and hoped to find their heart. But we seemed to talk to stone, hard as the stone of the Temple

tower that rose above the roofs, black against the purity of the moonlit sky. It was a bitter half-hour. Some hours are like stabs to remember, or like the pitiless pressing down of an iron on living flesh. At last we could bear it no longer, and rose to go. As we left we heard the grandmother turn to her daughter's friend and say: "Though she heap gold on the floor as high as Mungie's neck, I would never let her go to those degraded Christians!"

Once again it was festival in the white light of the full moon, and once again we went to the same old Hindu town; for moonlight nights are times of opportunity, and the cool of evening brings strength for more than can be attempted in the heat of the day. And this time an adopted mother spoke words that ate like acid into steel as we listened. Her adopted child is a slip of a girl, slim and light, with the ways of a shy thing of the woods. She made me think of a harebell growing all by itself in a rocky place, with stubbly grass about and a wide sky overhead. She was small and very sweet, and she slid on to my knee and whispered her lessons in my ear in the softest of little voices. She had gone to school for nearly a year, and liked to tell me all she knew. "Do you go to school now?" I asked her. She hung her head and did not answer. "Don't you go?" I repeated. She just breathed "No," and the little head dropped lower. "Why not?" I whispered as softly. The child hesitated. Some dim apprehension that the reason would not seem good to me troubled her, perhaps, for she would not answer. "Tell the Ammal, silly child!" said her foster-mother, who was standing near. "Tell her you are learning to dance and sing and get ready for the gods!" "I am learning to dance and sing and get ready for the gods," repeated the child obediently, lifting large, clear eyes to my face for a moment as if to read what was written there. A group of men stood near us. I turned to them. "Is it right to give this little child to a life like that?" I asked them then. They smiled a tolerant, kindly smile. "Certainly no one would call it right, but it is our custom," and they passed on. There was no sense of the pity of it:—

Poor little life that toddles half an hour, Crowned with a flower or two, and then an end!

We had come to the town an hour or two earlier, and had seen, walking through the throng round the Temple, two bright young girls in white. No girls of their age, except Temple girls, would have been out at that hour of the evening, and we followed them home. They stopped when they reached the house where little Mungie lived, and then, turning, saw us and salaamed. One of the two was Mungie's elder sister. Little Mungie ran out to meet her sister, and, seeing us, eagerly asked for a book. So we stood in the open moonlight, and the little one tried to spell out the words of a text to show us she had not forgotten all she had learned, even though she, too, had been taken from school, and had to learn pages of poetry and the Temple dances and songs. The girls were jewelled and crowned with flowers, and they looked like flowers themselves; flowers in moonlight have a mystery about them not perceived in common day, but the mystery here was something wholly sorrowful. Everything about the children—they were hardly more than children—showed care and refinement of taste. There was no violent clash of colour; the only vivid colour note was the rich red of a silk underskirt that showed where the clinging folds of the white gold-embroidered sari were draped a little at the side. The effect was very dainty, and the girls' manners were modest and gentle. No one who did not know what the pretty dress meant that night would have dreamed it was but the mesh of a net made of white and gold. But with all their pleasant manners it was evident the two girls looked upon us with a distinct aloofness. They glanced at us much as a brilliant bird of the air might be supposed to regard poultry, fowls of the cooped-up yard. Then they melted into the shadow of an archway behind the moonlit space, and

we went on to another street and came upon little Sellamal, the harebell child; and, sitting down on the verandah which opens off the street, we heard her lessons as we have told, and got into conversation with her adopted mother.

We found her interested in listening to what we had to say about dedicating children to the service of the gods. She was extremely intelligent, and spoke Tamil such as one reads in books set for examination. It was easy to talk with her, for she saw the point of everything at once, and did not need to have truth broken up small and crumbled down and illustrated in half a dozen different ways before it could be understood. But the half-amused smile on the clever face told us how she regarded all we were saying. What was life and death earnestness to us was a game of words to her; a play the more to be enjoyed because, drawn by the sight of two Missie Ammals sitting together on the verandah, quite a little crowd had gathered, and were listening appreciatively.

"Now Listen to my Way"

"That is your way of looking at it; now listen to my way. Each land in all the world has its own customs and religion. Each has that which is best for it. Change, and you invite confusion and much unpleasantness. Also by changing you express your ignorance and pride. Why should the child presume to greater wisdom than its father? And now listen to me! I will show you the matter from our side!" ("Yes, venerable mother, continue!" interposed the crowd encouragingly.) "You seem to feel it a sad thing that little Sellamal should be trained as we are training her. You seem to feel it wrong, and almost, perhaps, disgrace. But if you could see my eldest daughter the centre of a thousand Brahmans and high-caste Hindus! If you could see every eye in that ring fixed upon her, upon her alone! If you could see the absorption—hardly do they dare to breathe lest they should miss a point of her beauty! Ah, you would know, could you see it all, upon whose side the glory lies and upon whose the shame! Compare that moment of exaltation with the grovelling life of your Christians! Low-minded, flesh-devouring, Christians, discerning not the difference between clean and unclean! Bah! And you would have my little Sellamal leave all this for that!"

"But afterwards? What comes afterwards?"

"What know I? What care I? That is a matter for the gods." The child Sellamal listened to this, glancing from face to face with wistful, wondering eyes; and as I looked down upon her she looked up at me, and I looked deep into those eyes—such innocent eyes. Then something seemed to move the child, and she held up her face for a kiss. This is only one Temple town. There are many such in the South. These things are not easy to look at for long. We turn away with burning eyes, and only for the children’s sake could we ever look again. For their sake look again. The World turned Black

It was early evening in a home of rest on the hills. A medical missionary, a woman of wide experience, was talking to a younger woman about the Temple children. She had lived for some time, unknowingly, next door to a Temple house in an Indian city. Night after night she said she was wakened by the cries of children—frightened cries, indignant cries, sometimes sharp cries as of pain. She inquired in the morning, but was always told the children had been punished for some naughtiness. "They were only being beaten." She was not satisfied, and tried to find out more through the police. But she feared the police were bribed to tell nothing, for she found out nothing through them. Later, by means of her medical work, she came full upon the truth. . . . "Why leave

spaces with dotted lines? Why not write the whole fact?" wrote one who did not know what she asked. Once more we repeat it, to write the whole fact is impossible.

It is true this is not universal; in our part of the country it is not general, for the Temple child is considered of too much value to be lightly injured. But it is true beyond a doubt that inhumanity which may not be described is possible at any time in any Temple house.

Out in the garden little groups of missionaries walked together and talked. From a room near came the sound of a hymn. It was peaceful and beautiful everywhere, and the gold of sunset filled the air, and made the garden a glory land of radiant wonderful colour. But for one woman at least the world turned black. Only the thought of the children nerved her to go on.

1.08.32. Book 8: 32. The power behind the work

CHAPTER XXXII The Power behind the Work

"To Him difficulties are as nothing, and improbabilities of less than no account."—Story of the China Inland Mission. THE Power behind the work is the interposition of God in answer to prayer.

Recently—so recently that it would be unwise to go into detail—we were in trouble about a little girl of ten or eleven, who, though not a Temple child, was exposed to imminent danger, and sorely needed deliverance. I happened to be alone at Dohnavur at the time, and did not know what to answer to the child's urgent message: "If I can escape to you" (this meant if she braved capture and its consequences, and fled across the fields alone at night), "can you protect me from my people?" To say "Yes" might have had fatal results. To say "No" seemed too impossible. The circumstances were such that great care was needed to avoid being entangled in legal complications; and as the Collector (Chief Magistrate) for our part of the district happened just then to be in our neighbourhood, I wrote asking for an appointment. Early next morning we met by the roadside. I had been up most of the night, and was tired and anxious; and I shall never forget the comfort that came through the quiet sympathy with which one who was quite a stranger to us all listened to the story, not as if it were a mere missionary trifle, but something worthy his attention. But nothing could be done. It was not a case where we had any ground for appeal to the law; and any attempt upon our part to help the child could only have resulted in more trouble afterwards, for we should certainly have had to give her up if she came to us. As the inevitableness of this conclusion became more and more evident to me, it seemed as if a great strong wall were rising foot by foot between me and that little girl—a wall like the walls that enclose the Temples here, very high, very massive. But even Temple walls have doors, and I could not see any door in this wall. Nothing could bring that child to us but a Power enthroned above the wall, which could stoop and lift her over it. I do not remember what led to the question about what we expected would happen; but I remember that with that wall full in view I could only answer, "The interposition of God." Nothing else, nothing less, could do anything for that child.

Voices Blown on the Winds Her case was complicated, if I may express it so, by the fact that though she knew very little—she had only had a few weeks' teaching and could not read—she had believed all we told her most simply and literally, and witnessed to her own people, whose reply to her had been: "You will see who is stronger, your God or ours! Do you think your Lord Jesus can deliver you from our hand, or prevent us from doing as we choose with you? We shall see!" And the case of an older girl who had been, as those who knew her best believed, drugged and then bent to her people's will, was quoted: "Did your Lord Jesus deliver her? Where is she to-day? And you think He will deliver you!" "But He will not let you hurt me," the child had answered fearlessly, though her strength was weakened even then by thirty hours without food; and, remembering one of the Bible stories she had heard during those weeks, she added, "I am Daniel, and you are the lions"—and she told them how the angel was sent to shut the lions' mouths. But she knew so little after all, and the bravest can be overborne, and she was only a little girl; so our hearts ached for

her as we sent her the message: "You must not try to come to us. We cannot protect you. But Jesus is with you. He will not fail you. He says, 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee.'" That night they shut her up with a demon-possessed woman, that the terror of it might shake her faith in Christ. Next day they hinted that worse would happen soon. Our fear was lest her faith should fail before deliverance came.

Three and a half months of such tension as we have rarely known passed over us. Often during that time, when one thing after another happened contrariwise, as it appeared, and each event as it occurred seemed to add another foot to the wall that still grew higher, help to faith came to us through unexpected sources like voices blown on the winds.

Once it was something Lieut. Shackleton is reported to have said to Reuter's correspondent concerning his expedition to the South Pole: "Over and over again there were times when no mortal leadership could have availed us. It was during those times that we learned that some Power beyond our own guided our footsteps." And the illustrations which followed of Divine interposition were such that one at least who read, took courage; for the God of the great Ice-fields is the God of the Tropics.

Once it was a passage opened by chance in a friend's book—Pastor Agnorum. The subject of the paragraph is the schoolboy's attitude towards games: "Glimpses of his mind are sometimes given us, as on that day at Risingham when you refused to play in your boys' house-match, unless the other house excluded from their team a half-back who was under attainder through a recent row. They declined, and you stood out of it. The hush in the field when your orphaned team, in defiance of the odds, scored and again scored! Their supporters, in chaste awe at the marvel, could hardly shout: it was more like a sob: a judgment had so manifestly defended the right. The cricket professional, a man naturally devout, looked at me with eyes that confessed an interposition, and all came away quiet as a crowd from a cemetery. It was not a game of football we had looked at, it was a Mystery Play: we had been edified, and we hid it in our hearts." And once, on the darkest day of all, it was the brave old family motto, on a letter which came by post: "Dieu défend le droit." It was something to be reminded that, in spite of appearances to the contrary, the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is Governor among the people.

"Eyes that confessed an interposition." The phrase was illuminated for us when God in very truth interposed in such fashion that every one saw it was His Hand, for no other hand could have done it. Then we, too, looked at each other with eyes that confessed an interposition. We had seen that which we should never forget; and until the time comes when it may be more fully told to the glory of our God, we have hid it in our hearts. The reason we have outlined the story is to lead to a word we want to write very earnestly; it is this: Friends who care for the children, and believe this work on their behalf is something God intends should be done, "pray as if on that alone hung the issue of the day." More than we know depends upon our holding on in prayer.

All through those months there was prayer for that child in India and in England. The matter was so urgent that we made it widely known, and some at least of those who heard gave themselves up to prayer; not to the mere easy prayer which costs little and does less, but to that waiting upon God which does not rest till it knows it has obtained access, knows that it has the petition that it desires of Him. This sort of prayer costs.

"I Should utterly have fainted but—" But to us down in the thick of the battle, it was strength to think of that prayer. We were very weary with hope deferred; for it was as if all the human hope in us were torn out of us, and tossed and buffeted every way till there was nothing left of it but an aching place where it had been. God works by means, as we all admit; and so every fresh development in a Court case in which the child was involved, every turn of affairs, where her relatives were concerned (and these turns were frequent), every little movement which seemed to promise something, was eagerly watched in the expectation that in it lay the interposition for which we waited. But it seemed as if our hopes were raised only to be dashed lower than ever, till we were cast upon the bare word of our God. It was given to us then as perhaps never before to penetrate to the innermost spring of consolation contained in those very old words: "I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Oh, tarry thou the Lord’s leisure: be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord." This Divine Interposition has been very inspiring. We feel afresh the force of the question: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" And we ask those whose hearts are with us to pray for more such manifestations of the Power that has not passed with the ages. Lord, teach us to pray! For it has never been with us, "Come, see, and conquer," as if victory were an easy thing and a common. We have known what it is to toil for the salvation of some little life, and we have known the bitterness of defeat. We have had to stand on the shore of a dark and boundless sea, and watch that little white life swept off as by a great black wave. We have watched it drift further and further out on those desolate waters, till suddenly something from underneath caught it and sucked it down. And our very soul has gone out in the cry, "Would God I had died for thee!" and we too have gone "to the chamber over the gate" where we could be alone with our grief and our God—O little child, loved and lost, would God I had died for thee! Should we forget these things? Should we bury them away lest they hurt some sensitive soul? Rather, could we forget them if we would, and dare we hide away the knowledge lest somewhere someone should be hurt? For it is not as if that black wave’s work were a thing of the past: it has gone on for centuries unchecked: it is going on to-day.

Several months have passed since the chapters which precede this were written. We are now, with some of our converts who needed rest and change, in a place under the mountains a day’s journey from Dohnavur. It is one of the holy places of the South; for the northern tributary of the chief river of this district falls over the cliffs at this point in a double leap of one hundred and eighty feet, and the waters are so disposed over a great rounded shoulder of rock that many people can bathe below in a long single file. To this fall thousands of pilgrims come from all parts of India, believing that such bathing is meritorious and cleanses away all sin. And as they are far from their own homes, and in measure out on holiday, we find them more than usually accessible and friendly. This morning I was on my way home after talk with the women, and was turning for a moment to look back upon the beautiful sorrowful scene—the flashing waterfall, the passing crowd of pilgrims, the radiance of sunshine on water, wood, and rock, when a Brahman, fresh from bathing, followed my look, and glancing at the New Testament and bag of Gospels in my hand, smiled indulgently and asked if we seriously thought these books and their teaching would ever materially influence India. "Look at that crowd," and he pointed to the people, his own caste people chiefly. "Have we been influenced?"

Deep Calleth unto Deep

Then he told me the story of the Falls, how ages ago a god, pitying the sins and the sufferings of the people, bathed on the ledge where the waters leap, and thereafter those waters were efficacious to the cleansing of sin from the one who believingly bathes. To the one who believes not, nothing happens beyond the cleansing of his body and its invigoration. "Even to you," he added, in his friendliness, "virtue of a sort is allowed; for do you not experience a certain exhilaration and a buoyancy of spirit and a pleasure beyond anything obtainable elsewhere [which is perfectly true]? This is due to the benevolence of our god, whose merits extend even to you."

He was an educated man; he had studied in a mission school, and afterwards in a Government college. He had read English books, and parts of our Bible were familiar to him. He assured me he found no more difficulty in accepting this legend than we did in accepting the story of our Saviour's incarnation. And then, standing in the Temple porch with its carved stone pillars, almost within touch of the great door that opens behind into the shrine, he led the way into the Higher Hinduism—that mysterious land which lies all around us in India, but is so seldom shown to us. And I listened till in turn he was persuaded to listen, and we read together from the Gospel which transcends in its simplicity the profoundest reach of Hindu thought: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We did not pause till we came to the end of the paragraph. I could see how it appealed, for deep calleth unto deep; but he rose again up and up, and that unknown part of one's being which is more akin to the East than to the West, followed him and understood—when the door behind us creaked, and a sudden blast of turbulent music sprang out upon us, deafening us for a moment, and he said, "It is the morning worship. The priests and the Servants of the gods are worshipping within." It was like a fall from far-away heights to the very floor of things.

Then he told me how in the town three miles distant, the Benares of the South, the service of the gods was conducted with more elaborate ceremonial. "I could arrange for you to see it if you wished." I explained why I could not wish to see it, and asked him about the Servants of the gods, and about the little children. "Certainly there are little children. The Servants of the gods adopt them to continue the succession. How else could it be continued?"

1.08.33. Book 8: 33. If this were all

CHAPTER XXXIII If this were All AN hour earlier three of us had stood together by the pool at the foot of the Falls, and watched the people bathe. At the edge of the rock an old grandmother had dealt valiantly with an indignant baby of two, whom, despite its struggles, she bathed after prolonged preparation of divers anointings, by holding it grimly, kicking and slippery though it was, under what must have seemed to it a terrible hurrying horror. When at last that baby emerged, it was too crushed in spirit to cry.

Beyond this little domestic scene was a group of half-reluctant women, longing and yet fearing to venture under the plunging waters; and beyond them again were the bathers, crowding but never jostling each other, on the narrow ledge upon and over which the Falls descend. Some were standing upright, with bowed heads, under the strong chastisement of the nearer heavier fall; some bent under it, as if overwhelmed with the thundering thud of its waters. Some were further on, where the white furies lash like living whips, and scourge and sting and scurry; and there the pilgrims were hardly visible, for the waters swept over them like a veil, and they looked in their weirdness and muteness like martyr ghosts. Further still some were carefully climbing the steps cut into the cliff, or standing as high as they could go upon an unguarded projection of rock, with eyes shut and folded hands, entirely oblivious apparently to the fact that showers of spray enveloped them, and the deep pool lay below.

I had never seen anything quite like this: it was such a strange commingling of the beautiful and sorrowful. The women—"fair"-skinned Brahman women they chanced to be—were in their usual graceful raiment of silk or cotton, all shades of soft reds, crimson, purple, blue, lightened with yellow and orange, which in the water looked like dull fire. Their golden and silver jewels gleamed in the sunlight, and their long black hair hung round faces like the faces one sees in pictures. The men wore their ordinary white, and the ascetics the salmon-tinted saffron of their profession.

Under the Waterfall

Then, as if to add an ethereal touch to it all, a rainbow spanned the Falls at that moment, and we saw the pilgrims through it or arched by it as they stood, some at either end of the bow where the colours painted the rock and the spray, and some in the space between. The sun struck the forest hanging on the steeps above, and it became a vivid thing in quick delight of greenness. It was something which, once seen, could hardly be forgotten. The triumphant stream of white set deep in the heart of a great horseshoe of rock and woods; the delicate, exquisite pleasure of colour; and the people in their un-self-consciousness, bathing and worshipping just as they wished, with for background rock and spray, and for a halo rainbow. To one who looked with sympathy the picture was a parable. You could not but see visions: you could not but dream dreams.

Then from the quiet heights crept a colony of monkeys, their chatter drowned in the roar of the Falls. On they came, wise and quaint, like the half-heard whispers of old-time jokes. And they bathed in the mimic pools above, as it seemed in imitation of the pilgrims, holding comical little

heads under the light trickles. And below the scene changed as a company of widows came and entered the Falls. They were all Brahmans and all old, and they shivered in their poor scanty garments of coarse white. Most of them were frail with long fasting and penance, and they prayed as they stood in the water or crouched under its weight. Such a one had sat on the stone under the special fall which, as the friend who had taken me observed with more forcefulness than sentiment, "comes down like a sack of potatoes." I had tried to stand it for a minute, but it pelted and pounded me so that less than a minute was enough, and I moved to make room for a Brahman widow who was bathing with me. And then she sat down on the stone, and the waters beat very heavily on the old grey head; but she sat on in her patience, her hands covering her face, and she prayed without one moment's intermission. How little she knew of the other prayer that rose beside hers through the rushing water—it was the first time I at least had ever prayed in a waterfall—"Oh, send forth Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead her!" She struggled up at last and caught my hand; then, steadying herself with an effort, she felt for the iron rod that protects the ledge, and blinded by the driving spray and benumbed by the beat of the water, she stumbled slowly out. But the wistful face had a look of content upon it, and her only concern was to finish the ceremonial out in the sunshine—she had brought her little offerings of a few flowers with her—and so, much as I longed to follow her and tell her of the cleansing of which this was only a type, it could not have been then. Oh, the rest it is at such a time to remember that the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

Below the pool, in the broad bed of the stream and on its banks, all was animation and happy simple life. Here the women were drying their garments, without taking them off, in a clever fashion of their own. There some were washing them in the stream. Children played about as they willed. But in and among the throng, anywhere, everywhere, we saw worshippers, standing or sitting facing the east, alone or in company, chanting names for the deity, or adoring and meditating in silence. Doubtless some were formal enough, but some were certainly sincere; and we felt if this were all there is to know in Hinduism, the time must soon come when a people so prepared would recognise in the Saviour and Lover of their souls, Him for whom they had been seeking so long, "if haply they might feel after Him and find Him." But this is not all there is to know. Back out of sight behind the simple joyousness of life, to which the wholesome waters and the sparkling air and the beauty everywhere so graciously ministered, behind that wonderful wealth of thought as revealed in the Higher Hinduism which is born surely of nothing less than a longing after God—behind all this what do we find? Glory of mountain and waterfall, charm and delight of rainbow in spray; but what lies behind the coloured veil? What symbols are carved into the cliff? Whose name and power do they represent? This book touches one of the hidden things; would that we could forget it! Sometimes, through these days as we sat on the rocks by the waterside, in the unobtrusive fashion of the Indian religious teacher, who makes no noise but waits for those who care to come, we have almost forgotten in the happiness of human touch with the people, the lovable women and children more especially, that anything dark and wicked and sad lay so very near. And then, suddenly as we have told, we have been reminded of it. We may not forgot it if we would. It is true that the thing we mean is disowned by the spiritual few, but to the multitude it is part of their religion. "Of course, Temple women must adopt young children; and they must be carefully trained, or they will not be meet for the service of the gods." So said the Brahman who only a moment before had led me into the mystic land, deep within which he loves to dwell: what does the training mean?

To-morrow, How will it Be? A fortnight ago the friend to whom the child is dear took me to see the little girl described in a letter from an Indian sister as "a little dove in a cage." I did not find that she minded her cage. The bars have been gilded, the golden glitter has dazzled the child. She thinks her cage a pretty place, and she does not beat against its bars as she did in the earlier days of her captivity. As we talked with her we understood the change. When first she was taken from school the woman to whose training her mother has committed her gave her polluting poetry to read and learn, and she shrank from it, and would slip her Bible over the open page and read it instead. But gradually the poetry seemed less impossible; the atmosphere in which those vile stories grew and flourished was all about her; as she breathed it day by day she became accustomed to it; the sense of being stifled passed. The process of mental acclimatisation is not yet completed, the lovely little face is still pure and strangely innocent in its expression; but there is a change, and it breaks the heart of the friend who loves her to see it. "I must learn my poetry. They will be angry if I do not learn it. What can I do?" And again, "Oh, the stories do not mean anything," said with a downward glance, as if the child-conscience still protested. But this was a fortnight ago. It is worse with that little girl to-day; there is less inward revolt; and to-morrow how will it be with her?

1.08.34. Book 8: 34. "To continue the succession"

CHAPTER XXXIV "To Continue the Succession" FOR to-morrow holds no hope for these children so far as our power to save them to-day is concerned. It will be remembered that we felt we could do more for them by working quietly on our own lines than by appealing to the law; but lately, fearing lest we were possibly doing the law an injustice by taking it for granted that it was powerless to help us, we carefully gathered all the evidence we could about three typical children: one a child in moral danger, though not in actual Temple danger; another the adopted child of a Temple woman; the third a Temple woman’s own child: and we submitted this evidence to a keen Indian Christian barrister, and asked for his advice.

L., the first child he deals with, the little "dove in the cage," is in charge of a woman of bad character, by the consent and arrangement of her mother. The mother speaks English as well as an Englishwoman, and her eldest son is studying for his degree in a Government college. Although Temple service is not intended, the proposed life is such that a similar course of training as that to which the Temple child is subjected, is now being carried on. This is the barrister’s reply to my letter:—

"I have carefully perused the statements of the probable witnesses. L.’s mother is not a Temple woman, and the foster-mother also is not a Temple woman. The law of adoption relating to Temple women does not apply to them. The foster-mother, therefore, can have no legal claim to the child. But the mother has absolute control over the bringing-up of the child, and it would not be possible in the present state of the law to do anything for the child now."

S. This is the little one who whispered her texts to me in the moonlight, and whose foster-mother told her to tell me she was being trained for the Service of the gods. She is evidently destined to be a Temple woman. "The first question for consideration is how the old woman is related to her. If she is the adopted mother, or if she could successfully plead adoption of the child, the Civil Courts will be powerless to help. If we can get some reliable evidence that the child has not been adopted" (this is impossible) "we may be able to induce the British Courts to interfere on her behalf and say she shall not be devoted to Temple service until she attains her majority; but it would not be possible to induce the Courts to hand the child over to the Mission."

K., the little girl whose own mother is a Temple woman. She has been taught dancing, which to our mind was conclusive proof of her mother’s intentions. To make sure we asked the question, to which the following is the reply: "No children of [good] Hindu parents are taught dancing. Even the lowest caste woman thinks it beneath her dignity to dance, excepting professional devil-dancers, who are generally old women, mostly widows, of an hysterical temperament. When young children of women of doubtful character are taught dancing, it means they are going to be married to the idol. When children of Temple women are taught dancing the presumption is all the greater. But the difficulty in the case of K. is to get one who has higher claims to guardianship than the mother. In the case of a Temple woman’s child there is no one.

"It is this which makes it impossible for the well-wishers of the children to interfere. . . . The law punishes only the offence committed and not the intent to commit, or even the preparation, unless it amounts to an attempt under the Penal Code."

. . . . .

"We have no Right to Interfere"

Bluebeards are not an institution in England; but if they were, and if one of the order were known to possess a cupboardful of pendent heads, would Englishmen sit quiet while he whetted his butcher's knife quite calmly on his doorstep? Would they say as he sat there in untroubled assurance of safety, feeling the edge of the blade with his thumb, and muttering almost audibly the name of his intended victim, "We have no right to interfere, he is only sharpening his knife; an intent to commit, or even the preparation for crime, is not punishable by law, unless it amounts to an attempt, and he has not 'attempted' yet." Surely, if such intent were not punishable it very soon would be. It would be found possible—who can doubt it?—to frame a new law, or amend the old one, so as to deal with Bluebeards. And a Committee of Vigilance would be appointed to ensure its effectual working. Of course, the simile is absurdly inadequate, and breaks down at several important points, and the circumstances are vastly more difficult in India than they ever could be in England, just because India is India; but will it not at least be admitted that the law meant in kindness to the innocent is fatal to our purpose?—which is to save the children while they are still innocent.

. . . . .

We do not want to ask for anything unreasonable, but it seems to us that the law concerning adoption requires revision. In Mayne's Hindu Law and Usage it is stated that among Temple women it is customary in Madras and Pondicherry and in Western India to adopt girls to follow their adopted mother's profession: and the girls so adopted succeed to their property; no particular ceremonies are necessary, recognition alone being sufficient. In Calcutta and Bombay such adoptions have been held illegal, but in the Madras Presidency they are held to be legal. In a case where the validity of such adoption was questioned, the Madras High Court affirmed it, and it has now, "by a series of decisions, adopted the rule ;. . . which limits the illegality of adoption to cases where they involve the commission of an offence under the Criminal Code." This, as we have said, makes it entirely impossible to save the child through the law before her training is complete; and after it is complete it is too late to save her. Train a child from infancy to look upon a certain line of life as the one and only line for her, make the prospect attractive, and surround her with every possible unholy influence; in short, bend the twig and keep it bent for the greater part of sixteen years, or even only six—is there much room for doubt as to how it will grow? An heir to the property may be required; but with the facts of life before us, can we be content to allow the adoption of a child by a Temple woman to be so legalised that even if it can be proved to a moral certainty that her intention is to "continue the succession," nothing can be done?

What we Want

Then as to the guardianship: again we do not want to ask too much, but surely if it can be shown that no one else has moved to save the child (which argues that no one else has cared much about her salvation) we should not be disqualified for guardianship on the sole ground that we are

not related? In such a case the relatives are the last people with whom she would be safe. An order may go forth from that nebulous and distant Impersonality, the British Government, to the effect that a certain child is not to be dedicated to gods during her minority. But far away in their villages the people smile at a simplicity which can imagine that commands can eventually affect purposes. They may delay the fulfilment of such purpose; but India can afford to wait.

We would have the law so amended, that whoever has been in earnest enough about the matter to try to save the child from destruction, should be given the right to protect her, if in spite of the odds against him he has honestly fought through a case and won.

"Is it not a sad thing," writes the Indian barrister—we quote his words because they seem to us worthy of notice at home—"that a Christian Government is unable to legislate to save the children of Temple women? I am sorry my opinion has made you sad. Giving my opinion as a lawyer, I could not take an optimistic view of the matter. The law as it stands at present is against reform in matters of this kind. Even should a good judge take a strong view of the matter, the High Court will stick to the very letter of the law." So that, as things are, it comes to this: We must stand aside and watch the cup of poison being prepared—so openly prepared that everyone knows for which child it is being mixed. We must stand and wait and do nothing. We must see the little girl led up to the cup and persuaded to taste it. We must watch her gradually growing to like it, for it is flavoured and sweet. We must not beckon to her before she has drunk of it and say, "Come to us and we will tell you what is in that cup, and keep you safely from those who would make you drink it"; for "any attempt to induce the child to come to you, or any assistance given to help her to escape to you, would render you liable to prosecution for kidnapping—a criminal offence under the Penal Code." Any one of us would gladly go to prison if it would save the child; but the trouble is, it would not: for the law could only return her to her lawful guardians from whose hold we unlawfully detached her. We, not they, would be in the wrong; they did nothing unlawful in only preparing the cup. Does someone say that we put the case unfairly—that the law does not forbid us to warn the child, it only forbids us to snatch her away when the cup is merely being offered her? But remember, in our part of India at least, these cups are not given in public. The preparation is public enough, the bare tasting is public too; but the cup in its fulness is given in private, and once given, the poison works with stealthy but startling rapidity. Warn the child before she has drunk of it, and she does not understand you. Warn her after she has drunk, and the poison holds her from heeding.

Besides, to be very practical, what is the use of warning if we may only warn? Suppose our one isolated word weighs with the child against the word of mother or adopted mother, and all who stand for home to her; suppose she says (she would very rarely have the courage for any such proposal, but suppose she does say it): "May I come to you? and will you show me the way, for it is such a long way and I do not know how to find it? I should be so frightened, alone in the night" (the only time escape would be possible), "for I know they would run after me, and they can run faster than I!" What may we say to her? What may I say to the Harebell supposing she asks me this question? She is only six, and there are six long miles over broken country between her home and ours. We could not find it ourselves in the dark. But supposing she dared it all, and an angel were sent to guide her, have we any right to protect her? None whatever. If there are parents, or a parent, they or she have the right of parentage; if an adopted mother, the right of adoption.[F]

We know that the law is framed to protect the good, and the rights of parentage cannot be too carefully guarded; but to one who has not a legal mind, but only sees a little girl in danger of her life, and has to stand with hands tied by a law intended to deal with totally different matters, it seems strange that things should be so. This is not the moment (if ever there is such a moment) to choose, for deliberate lawlessness; but there are times when the temptation is strong to break the law in the hope that, once broken, it may be amended. Only those who have had to go through it know what it is to stand and see that cup of poison being prepared for an unsuspicious child.

Then unto Thee we Turn The last sentence in the barrister's letter begins with "I despair." The sentence is too pungent in its outspoken candour to copy into a book which may come back to India: "I despair": then unto Thee we turn, O Lord our God; for now, Lord, what is our hope? truly our hope is even in Thee: oh, help us against the enemy; for vain is the help of man. Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Will the Lord absent Himself for ever? O God, wherefore art Thou absent from us for so long? Look upon the Covenant, for all the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations. Surely Thou hast seen it, for Thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong. The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire. He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent. He saith in his heart, "God hath forgotten: He hideth His face; He will never see it." Arise, O Lord God, lift up Thine hand! Up, Lord, disappoint him, and cast him down; deliver the children! Show Thy marvellous lovingkindness, Thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in Thee, from such as resist Thy right hand. Thy voice is mighty in operation: the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice. We wait for Thy lovingkindness, O God: be merciful unto the children: O God, be merciful unto the children, for our soul trusteth in Thee, and we call unto the Most High God, even unto the God that shall perform the cause which we have in hand. For Thou hast looked down from Thy sanctuary; out of heaven did the Lord behold the earth, that He might hear the mournings of such as are in captivity, and deliver the children appointed to death. Arise, O God, maintain Thine own cause! Our hope is in Thee, Who helpeth them to right that suffer wrong. The Lord looseth the prisoners. God is unto us a God of deliverances. Power belongeth unto Thee. Our soul hangeth upon Thee: Thou shalt show us wonderful things in Thy righteousness, O God of our salvation, Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth. And all men that see it shall say, This hath God done; for they shall perceive that it is His work. He shall deliver the children's souls from falsehood and wrong; for God is our King of old; the help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself. Sure I am, the Lord will avenge the poor, and maintain the cause of the helpless. Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Oh, put thy trust in God; for I will yet praise Him which is the help of my countenance and my God! Are there any prayers like the old psalms in their intense sincerity? In the times when our heart is wounded within us we turn to these ancient human cries, and we find what we want in them.

Let us pray for the children of this generation being trained now "to continue the succession," whom nothing less than a Divine interposition can save. The hunters on these mountains dig pits to ensnare the poor wild beasts, and they cover them warily with leaves and grass: this sentence about the succession is just such a pit, with words for leaves and grass. Let us pray for miracles to happen where individual children are concerned, that the little feet in their ignorance may be hindered from running across those pits, for the fall is into miry clay, and the sides of the pit are slippery and very steep.

Let us Pray

More and more as we go on, and learn our utter inability to move a single pebble by ourselves, and the mighty power of God to upturn mountains with a touch, we realise how infinitely important it is to know how to pray. There is the restful prayer of committal to which the immediate answer is peace. We could not live without this sort of prayer; we should be crushed and overborne, and give up broken-hearted if it were not for that peace. But the Apostle speaks of another prayer that is wrestle, conflict, "agony." And if these little children are to be delivered and protected after their deliverance, and trained that if the Lord tarry and life’s fierce battle has to be fought—and for them it may be very fierce—all that will be attempted against them shall fall harmless at their feet like arrows turned to feather-down; then some of us must be strong to meet the powers that will combat every inch of the field with us, and some of us must learn deeper things than we know yet about the solemn secret of prevailing prayer.

FOOTNOTES:

[F] To-day (February 16, 1912) as I go through proofs of the second edition, I hear by post of a young girl in a distant city who lately escaped to a missionary, and asked for what he could not give her—protection. She had to return to her own home. In her despair, she drowned herself.

1.08.35. Book 8: 35. What is she misses her chance?

CHAPTER XXXV What if she misses her Chance?

"Who would be planted chooseth not the soil Or here or there, ;. . .

Lord even so I ask one prayer, The which if it be granted It skills not where Thou plantest me, only I would be planted."

T. E. Brown.

TWO pictures of two evenings rise as I write. One is of an English fireside in a country house. The lamps have been lighted, and the curtains drawn. The air is full of the undefined scent of chrysanthemums, and the stronger sweetness of hyacinths comes from a stand in the window. Curled up in a roomy arm-chair by the fire sits a girl with a kitten asleep on her lap. She is reading a missionary book. The other this: a white carved cupola in the centre of a piece of water enclosed by white walls. People are sitting on the walls and pressing close about them in their thousands. A gorgeous barge is floating slowly round the shrine. There is very little moon, but the whole place is alight; sometimes the water is ablaze with ruby and amber; this fades, and a weird blue-green shimmers across the barge, and electric lamps at the corners of the square lend brilliancy to the scene. The barge is covered with crimson trappings, and hundreds of wreaths of white oleander hang curtain-wise round what is within—the god and goddess decked with jewels and smothered in flowers. Round and round the barge is poled, and in the coloured light all that is gaudy and tawdry is toned, and becomes only oriental and impressive; and the white shrine in the centre reflected in the calm coloured water appears in its alternating dimness, and shining more like a fairy creation than common handiwork.

We who were at the festival, three of us laden with packets of marked Gospels, met sometimes as we wandered about unobserved, losing ourselves in the crowd, that we might the more quietly continue that for which we were there; and in one such chance meeting we spoke of the English girl by the fireside, and longed to show her what we saw; and to show it with such earnestness that she would be drawn to inquire where her Master had most need of her. But no earnestness of writing can do much after all. It is true the eye affects the heart, and we would show what we have seen in the hope that even the second-hand sight might do something; but words are clumsy, and cannot discover to another that poignant thing the eye has power to transmit to the heart. And it is well that it is so, for something stronger and more consuming than human emotion can ever be must operate upon the heart if the life is to be moved to purpose. "A moving story" is worth little if it only moves the feelings. How far out of its selfish track does it move the life into ways of sacrifice? That is the question that matters. What if it cost? Did not Calvary cost? Away with the cold, calculating love that talks to itself about cost! God give us a pure passion of love that knows nothing of hesitation and grudging, and measuring, nothing of compromise! What if it seem impossible to face all that surrender may mean? Is there not provision for the impossible? "In the Old Testament we find that in almost every case of people being clothed with the Spirit it was for

things which were impossible to them. To be filled with the Spirit means readiness for Him to take us out of our present sphere and put us anywhere away from our own choice into His choice for us." These words hold a message alike for us as we meet and pass in that Indian crowd, and for the girl by the fireside at home who wants to know her Lord's will that she may do it, and whose heart's prayer is: "May Thy grace, O Lord, make that possible to me which is impossible by nature."

"All the Way"

Let us have done with limitations, let us be simply sincere. How ashamed we shall be by and by of our insincerities:—

Thy vows are on me, oh to serve Thee truly, Pants, pants my soul to perfectly obey!

Burn, burn, O Fire, O Wind, now winnow throughly!

Constrain, inspire to follow all the way!

Oh that in me Thou, my Lord, may see Of the travail of Thy soul, And be satisfied.

We had only a few hours to spend in the town of the Floating Festival; and being anxious to discover how things were among the Temple community, I spent the first hour in their quarter, a block of substantial buildings each in its own compound, near the Temple. I saw the house from which two of our dearest children came, delivered by a miracle; it looked like a fortress with its wall all round, and upstairs balcony barred by a trellis. The street door was locked as the women were at the Festival. In another of less dignified appearance I saw a pretty woman of about twenty, dressed in pale blue and gold, evidently just ready to go out. One of those abandoned beings whose function it is to secure little children "to continue the succession" was in the house, and so nothing could be attempted but the most casual conversation. All the other houses in the block were locked as the women were out; but I saw a new house outside, built in best Indian style, and finely finished. It had been built for, and given as a free gift, to a noted Temple woman.

These houses would open, in the missionary sense of the word, but not in an afternoon. It would take time and careful endeavour to win an entrance. Such a worker would need to be one whom no disappointment could discourage, a woman to whom the word had been spoken, "Go, love, ;. . . according to the love of the Lord." When will such a worker come? As I left the Temple quarter, I met my two companions who had been at work elsewhere, and we walked together to the place of festival. Tripping gaily along in front was a little maid with flowers in her hair. It was easy to know who she was, there was something in the very step that marked the light-footed Temple child. Poor little all-unconscious illustration of India's need of God!

Later on we saw the same illustration again, lighted up like a great transparency, the focus for a thousand eyes. For on the daïs of the barge, in the place of honour nearest the idols, stood three women and a child. The women were swathed in fold upon fold of rich violet silk, sprinkled all over with tinsel and gold; they were crowned with white flowers, wreathed round a golden ornament like a full moon set in their dark hair; and the effect of the whole, seen in the luminous flush of colour thrown upon them from the shore, was as if the night sky sparkling with stars had come down and robed them where they stood. Then when it paled, and sheet-lightning played, as it seemed, across water and barge and shrine, the effect was wholly mysterious. The three swaying

forms—for they swayed keeping time to the music that never ceased—resembled one's idea of goddesses rather than familiar womenkind. To the Indian mind it was beautiful, bewilderingly beautiful; and the simple country-folk around drew deep breaths of admiration as they passed. The little girl looked more human. She too was in violet silk and spangles and gold, and her little head was wreathed with flowers. It may have been her first Floating Festival, for she gazed about her with eyes full of guileless wonder, and the woman beside whom she stood laid a light, protecting hand upon her shoulder. That Little Child! That little child! How the sight of her held us in pity as the barge sailed slowly round. She was so near to us at times that we could almost have touched her when the barge came near the wall; and yet she was utterly remote, miles of space might have lain between; it was as if we and she belonged to different planets. And yet our little ones who might have been as she, were so close—we could almost feel their loving little arms round our necks at that moment—this child, how far away she was! Had one of us set foot on the place where she stood, the friendly thousands about us would have changed in a second into indignant furies, and so long as the memory of such impiety remained no white face would have been welcome at the Floating Festival.

We stood by the wall awhile and watched; the sorrow of it all sank into us. There in the holiest place of all, according to their thinking, close to the emblems of deity, they had set this grievous perversion of the holy and the pure. Right on the topmost pinnacle of everything known as religious there they had enthroned it, and robed it in starlight and crowned it as queens are crowned. "Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!" "One thing have I desired of the Lord ;. . . to behold the fair beauty of the Lord"—such words open chasms of contrast. God pity them; like those of old, they know not what they do.

We came away, our books all sold and our strength of voice spent out, for everywhere people had listened; and as we came home, strong thanksgiving filled our hearts, thanks and praise unspeakable for the little lives safe in our nursery, for the two especially who but for God's interposition might have been on that barge—and oh, from the ground of our heart we were grateful that He had not let us miss His will concerning these little children. We thought of those special two with their dear little innocent ways. We could not think of them on the barge. We could not bear to think of it—again and again we thanked God, with humble adoring thanksgiving, that He kept us from missing our chance. But the mere thinking of that intolerable thought brought us back upon another thought. What of that girl by the fireside? What if she misses her chance? We know, for letters confess it, that many a life has missed its chance. What of the woman, strong and keen, with pent-up energies waiting for she knows not what? What of the girl by the fireside crushing down the sense of an Under-call that will not let her rest? The work to which that Call would lead her will not be anything great: it will only mean little humble everyday doings wherever she is sent. But if the Call is a true Call from heaven, it will change to a song as she obeys; and through all the afterward of life, through all the loneliness that may come, through all the disillusions when her "dreams of fair romance which no day brings" slip away from her—and the usual and commonplace are all about her—then and for ever that song of the Lord will sing itself through the quiet places of her soul, and she will be sure—with the sureness that is just pure peace—that she is where her Master meant her to be.

"This I wish to do, this I Desire" Not that we would write as if obedience must always mean service in the foreign field. We know it is not so: we know it may be quite the opposite; but shall we not be

forgiven if we sometimes wonder how it is that with so much earnest Church life at home, with so many evangelistic campaigns, and conventions, there is so poor an output so far as these lands abroad are concerned? Can it be that so many are meant to stay at home? We would never urge any individual friend to come, far less would we plead for numbers, however great the need; we would only say this: Will the girl by the fireside, if such a one reads this book, lay the book aside, and spend an hour alone with her Lord? Will she, if she is in doubt about His will, wait upon Him to show it to her? Will she ask Him to fit her to obey? "And this I wish to do, this I desire; whatsoever is wanting in me, do Thou, I beseech Thee, vouchsafe to supply."

Forgive if we seem to intrude upon holy ground, but sometimes we see in imagination some great gathering of God’s people, and we hear them singing hymns; and sometimes the beautiful words change into others not beautiful, but only insistent:— The Lord our God arouse us! We are sleeping, Dreaming we wake, while through the heavy night Hardly perceived, the foe moves on unchallenged, Glad of the dream that doth delay the fight.

O Christ our Captain, lead us out to battle!

Shame on the sloth of soldiers of the light!

. . . . .

Good Shepherd, Jesus, pitiful and tender, To whom the least of straying lambs is known, Grant us Thy love that wearieth not, nor faileth;

Grant us to seek Thy wayward sheep that roam Far on the fell, until we find and fold them Safe in the love of Thee, their own true home.

1.08.36. Book 8: 36. "Thy sweet original joy"

CHAPTER XXXVI "Thy Sweet Original Joy"

Beacons of hope, ye appear!

Languor is not in your heart, Weakness is not in your word, Weariness not on your brow.

WITHIN the last few months a friend, a lover of books, sent me The Trial and Death of Socrates, translated into English by F. J. Church. Opening it for the first time, I came upon this passage:—

Socrates: "Does a man who is in training, and who is in earnest about it, attend to the praise and blame of all men, or of the one man who is doctor or trainer?"

Crito: "He attends only to the opinion of the one man."

Socrates: "Then he ought to fear the blame and welcome the praise of the one man, not the many?"

Crito: "Clearly." And Socrates sums the argument thus: "To be brief; is it not the same in everything?"

Surely the wise man spoke the truth: it is the same in everything. The one thing that matters is the opinion of the One. If He is satisfied, all is well. If He is dissatisfied, the commendation of the many is as froth. "Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall have much peace." But Nature is full of pictures of bright companionship in service; the very stars shine in constellations. This book of the skies has been opening up to us of late. Who, to whom the experience is new, will forget the first evenings spent with even a small telescope, but powerful enough to distinguish double stars and unveil nebulæ? You look and see a single point of light, and you look again and twin suns float like globes of fire on a midnight sea; and sometimes one flashes golden yellow and the other blue, each the complement of the other, like two perfectly responsive friends. You look and see a little lonely cloud, a breath of transparent mist; you look and see spaces sprinkled with diamond dust, or something even more awesome, reaches of radiance that seem to lie on the borderland of Eternity. And the shining glory lingers and lights up the common day, for the story of the sky is the story of life.

Far was the Call, and farther as I followed Grew there a silence round my Lord and me— is for ever the inner story, as for ever the stars must move alone, however close they are set in constellations or strewn in clusters; but in another sense is it not true that there is the joy of companionship and the pure inspiration of comradeship? God fits twin souls together like twin suns; and sometimes, with delicate thought for even the sensitive pleasure of colour, it is as if He arranged them so that the gold and the blue coalesce. And we think of the places which were once blank, mere misty nothings to us. They sparkle now with friends. Some of them are familiar friends known through the wear and tear of life; some we shall never see till we meet above the stars. And there the nebula speaks its word of mystery beyond mystery, but all illuminated by the light from

the other side.

Another Compelling Influence In the work of which these chapters have told there has been the wonderful comfort of sympathy and help from fellow-missionaries of our own and sister missions; and, as all who have read, understand, nothing could have been done without the loyal co-operation of our Indian fellow-workers whose tenderness and patience can never be described. We think of the friends in the mission houses along the route of our long journeyings; we remember how no hour was too inconvenient to receive us and our tired baby travellers; we think of those who in weariness and painfulness have sought for the little children; and we think of those who have made the work possible by being God’s good Ravens to us. We think of them all, and we wish their names could be written on the cover of this book instead of the name least worthy to be there. And now latest and nearest comfort and blessing, there are the two new "Sitties," whose first day with us made them one of us. What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? The future is full of problems. Even now in these Nursery days questions are asked that are more easily asked than answered. We should be afraid if we looked too far ahead, so we do not look. We spend our strength on the day’s work, the nearest "next thing" to our hands. But we would be blind and heedless if we made no provision for the future. We want to gather and lay up in store against that difficult time (should it ever come) a band of friends for the children, who will stand by them in prayer.

There has been another compelling influence. We recognise something in the Temple-children question which touches a wider issue than the personal or missionary. Those who have read Queen Victoria’s Letters must have become conscious of a certain enlargement. Questions become great or dwindle into nothingness according as they affect the honour and the good of the Empire. We find ourselves instinctively "thinking Imperially," regarding things from the Throne side—from above instead of from below. But

We fear exaggerated language. We would not exaggerate the importance of these little children or their cause. We have said that we realise, as we did not when first this work began, how very delicate and difficult a matter it would be for Government to take any really effective action, and less than effective action is useless. We recognise the value of our pledge of neutrality in religious matters, and we know what might happen if Government moved in a line which to India might appear to be contrary to the spirit of that pledge. It would be far better if India herself led the way and declared, as England declared when she passed the Industrial Schools Amendment Act of 1880, that she will not have her little children demoralised in either Temple houses recognised as such, or in any similar houses, such as those which abound in areas where the Temple child nominally is non-existent. But must we wait till India leads the way? Scattered all over the land there are men who are against this iniquity, and would surely be in favour of such legislation as would make for its destruction. But few would assert that the people as a whole are even nearly ready. A great wave of the Power of God, a great national turning towards Him, would, we know, sweep the iniquity out of the land as the waters of the Alpheus swept the stable-valley clean, in the old classic story. Oh for such a sudden flow of the River of God, which is full of water! But must we wait until it comes? Did we wait until India herself asked for the abolition of suttee? Surely what is needed is such legislation as has been found necessary at home, which empowers the magistrate to remove a child from a dangerous house, and deprives parents of all parental rights who are found responsible for its being forced into wrong. Surely such action would be Imperially right; and

can a thing right in itself and carried out with a wise earnestness, ever eventually do harm? Must it not do good in the end, however agitating the immediate result may appear? Surely the one calm answer, "It is Right," will eventually silence all protest and still all turbulence!

Such a law, it is well to understand at the outset, will always be infinitely more difficult to enforce in India than in England, because of the immensely greater difficulty here in getting true evidence; and because—unless that River of God flow through the land—there will be for many a year the force of public opinion as a whole against us, or if not actively against, then inert and valueless. Caste feeling will come in and shield and circumvent and get behind the law. The Indian sensitiveness concerning Custom will be all awake and tingling with a hidden but intense vitality; and this, which is inevitable because natural, will have to be taken into account in every attempt made to enforce the law. The whole situation bristles with difficulties; but are difficulties an argument for doing nothing?

"Whoever buys hires or otherwise obtains possession of, whoever sells lets to hire or otherwise disposes of any minor under sixteen with the intent that such minor shall be employed or used for ;. . . any unlawful purpose or knowing it likely that such minor will be employed or used for any such purpose shall be liable to imprisonment up to a term of ten years and is also liable to a fine." But where it appeared that certain minor girls were being taught singing and dancing and were being made to accompany their grandmother and Temple woman to the Temple with a view to qualify them as Temple women, it was held that this did not amount to a disposal of the minors within the meaning of the section.

Ought this interpretation of the Indian Penal Code to be possible? The proof the law requires at present, proof of the sale of the child or its definite dedication to the idol, is rarely obtainable. The fact that it is being taught singing and dancing (although it is well known, as the barrister’s letter proves, that among orthodox Hindus such arts are never taught to little children except when the intention is bad) is not considered sufficient evidence upon which to base a conviction. To us it seems that the presence of the child in such a house, or in any house of known bad character, is sufficient proof that it is in danger of the worst wrong that can be inflicted upon a defenceless child—the demoralisation of its soul, the spoiling of its whole future life, before it has ever had a chance to know and choose the good. From the Rock, Dohnavur. And so we write it finally as our solemn conviction that there is need for a law like our own English law, and we add—and those who know India know how true this sentence is—such legislation, however carefully framed, will be a delusion, a blind, a dead letter, unless men of no ordinary insight and courage and character are appointed to see that it is carried out.

God grant that these chapters, written in weakness, may yet do something towards moving the Church to such prayer that the answer will be, as once before, that an angel will be sent to open the doors of the prison-house! The frontispiece shows the rock to which we go sometimes when we feel the need of a climb and a blow. It is associated in our minds with a story:—"Between the passages by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines’ garrison there was a sharp rock on the one side and a sharp rock on the other side. . . . And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour: ’Come and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.’ And his armour-bearer said unto him: ’Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee, behold I am with thee

according to thy heart.'"

We have a rock to climb, and there is nothing the least romantic about it. We shall have to climb it "upon our hands and upon our feet." It is all grim earnest. "We make our way wrapped in glamour to the Supreme Good, the summit," writes Guido Rey, the mountaineer, in the joy of his heart. But later it is: "One precipice fell away at my feet, and another rose above me. . . . It was no place for singing." Friends, we shall come to such places on the Matterhorn of life. As we follow the Gleam wherever it leads, may we count upon the upholding of those for whom we have written—the lovers of little children?

"So God maketh His Precious Opal" And now, in conclusion, all I would say has already been so perfectly said, that I cannot do better than copy from the writings of two who fought a good fight and have been crowned—Miss Ellice Hopkins, brave, sensitive, soldier-soul on the hardest of life's battlefields; and George Herbert, courtier, poet, and saint. "Often in that nameless discouragement," wrote Miss Hopkins, as she lay slowly dying, "before unfinished tasks, unfulfilled aims and broken efforts, I have thought of how the creative Word has fashioned the opal, made it of the same stuff as desert sands, mere silica—not a crystallised stone like the diamond, but rather a stone with a broken heart, traversed by hundreds of small fissures which let in the air, the breath, as the Spirit is called in the Greek of our Testament; and through those two transparent mediums of such different density it is enabled to refract the light, and reflect every lovely hue of heaven, while at its heart burns a mysterious spot of fire. When we feel, therefore, as I have often done, nothing but cracks and desert dust, we can say: So God maketh His precious opal!"

We would never willingly disguise one fraction of the truth in our desire to win sympathy and true co-operation. There will be hours of nameless discouragement for all who climb the rock. For some there will be the "broken heart." And yet there is a joy that is worth it all a thousand times—well worth it all. Who that has known it will doubt it? This reach of water recalls it. The palms, as we look at them, seem to lift their heads in solemn consciousness of it. For the water-side—where we stand with those for whom we have travailed in soul, when for the first time they publicly confess their faith in Christ—is a sacred place to us. THE PLACE OF BAPTISM. Has our story wandered sometimes into sorrowful ways? To be true it has to be sorrowful sometimes. We look back to the day of its beginning, the day that our first little Temple child came and opened a new door to us.

Since that time many a bitter storm My soul hath felt, e'en able to destroy, Had the malicious and ill-meaning harm His swing and sway; But still Thy sweet original joy Sprung from Thine eye did work within my soul, And surging griefs when they grew bold control, And got the day.

It is true. Many a bitter storm has come; there have been the shock and the darkness of new knowledge of evil, and grief beside which all other pain pales, the grief of helplessness in the face of unspeakable wrong. But still, above and within, and around, like an atmosphere, like a fountain, there has been something bright, even that "sweet original joy" which nothing can darken or quench.

If Thy first glance so powerful be A mirth but opened and sealed up again, What wonders shall we feel when we shall see Thy full-orbed love! When Thou shalt look us out of pain, And one aspect of Thine spend in delight, More than a thousand worlds' disburse in light In heaven above! And not

alone, oh, not alone, shall we see Him as He is! There will be the little children too.

Those who care to know how the Temple Children’s work began will find the story in "Things As They Are." Preface by Eugene Stock; 320 pp. and Thirty-two Illustrations from Photographs taken specially for this work. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net (post free 2s. 10d.) Also, "Overweights of Joy." Preface by Rev. T. Walker, C.M.S. With Thirty-four Illustrations chiefly from Photographs taken specially for this work. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net (post free 2s. 10d.), Morgan & Scott Ld., 12, Paternoster Buildings, London.

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———————

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[344] ALSO BY AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL THINGS AS THEY ARE:

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Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors were corrected. The original contained each chapter number and title on a page preceding the actual start of the chapter. These repeated Chapter Titles were removed to avoid redundancy.

Varied hyphenation, such as "armchair" and "arm-chair", was retained. The Bear Garden is not hyphenated when used in titles but is hyphenated within the text. The remaining corrections made are indicated by dotted lines under the corrections. Scroll the mouse over the word and the original text will appear.

1.09.00. Book 9: Things as they are (1905)

Things as They Are

Old India. "You think you know us; you know nothing at all about us!" and the old eyes peer intently into yours, and the old head shakes and he smiles to himself as he moves off. Every bit of this picture is suggestive: the closed door behind,—only a Brahman may open that door; the mythological carving,—only a Brahman has the right to understand it; the three-skein cord,—only a Brahman may touch it. Even the ragged old cloth is suggestive. In old India nothing but Caste counts for anything, and a reigning Prince lately gave his weight in gold to the Brahmans, as part payment for ceremonies which enabled him to eat with men of this old man’s social position. Look at the marks on the baby’s forehead; they are suggestive too.

Things as They Are

MISSION WORK IN SOUTHERN INDIA BY AMY WILSON-CARMICHAEL Keswick Missionary C.E.Z.M.S.

AUTHOR OF "FROM SUNRISE LAND," ETC. WITH PREFACE BY

EUGENE STOCK VICTORY TO JESUS’ NAME!

LONDON: MORGAN AND SCOTT (Office of "The Christian") 12, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS, E.C. And may be ordered of any bookseller

1905 First Edition April 1903 ReprintedAugust 1903 "January 1904 "November 1904 "January 1905 To the Memory of My Dear Friend,

ELEANOR CARR, Whose last message to the Band, before her translation on June 16, 1901, was:

"YOU WILL BE IN THE THICK OF THE FIGHT BY THE TIME THIS REACHES YOU, THE BATTLE IS THE LORD’S!"

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Glossary AgniGod of Fire.

Aiyo Alas! "Ai" runs together almost like "eye." The word is repeated rapidly, Eye-eye Y■ Eye-eye Y■!

Amm■ Mother! (vocative case). "A" is pronounced like "u" in "up." The word is also used by all women in speaking to each other, and by girls in speaking to women.

Amm■l Lady or woman. "A" is pronounced like "u" in "up."

Anna One penny.

Areca Nut Nut "eaten" by the Indians with betel leaf or lime.

Betel Leaf of a creeper.

Bandy A bullock cart.

Brahma The first person in the Hindu Triad, regarded as the Creator.

Brahman The highest of the Hindu Castes.

Bramo Samâj A sect of Hindu reformers who honour Christ as a man, but reject Him as a Saviour.

Chee! Exclamation of derision, disgust, or remonstrance.

Compound A piece of ground surrounding a house.

Coolie A paid labourer. "Coolie" is the Tamil word for pay.

[xvi]Curry A preparation of meat or vegetables made by grinding various condiments and mixing them together.

Fakeer Religious beggar.

Guru A religious teacher.

Iyer Title given to Brahmans and Gurus.

Paddy Rice in the husk. Paddy fields = rice fields.

Pariah A depressed class.

P■jah Worship. "■" is pronounced like "oo."

Rupee Value 1s. 4d.

Saivite A worshipper of Siva.

Salaam A salutation meaning "peace," used in greeting and farewell, and often in the sense of "thank you." The right hand is raised to the forehead as one says salaam.

Seeley Tamil woman’s dress of silk, muslin, or cotton.

Shanar A Caste of Palmyra-palm climbers.

Siva The third person in the Hindu Triad. The Destroyer.

Tom-Tom An Indian drum.

Vaishnavite A worshipper of Vishnu.

Vellalar A Caste of landowners and cultivators.

Vishnu The second person in the Hindu Triad. The Preserver.

Note

WITHIN a few weeks of the publication of Things as They Are, letters were received from missionaries working in different parts of India, confirming its truth. But some in England doubt it. And so it was proposed that if a fourth edition were called for, a few confirmatory notes, written by experienced South Indian missionaries, other than those of the district described, would be helpful. Several such notes are appended. The Indian view of one of the chief facts set forth in the book is expressed in the note written by one who, better than any missionary, and surely better even than any onlooker at home, has the right to be heard in this matter—and the right to be believed. And now at His feet, who can use the least, we lay this book again; for "to the Mighty One," as the Tamil proverb says, "even the blade of grass is a weapon." May it be used for His Name’s sake, to win more prayer for India—and all dark lands—the prayer that prevails.

Amy Wilson-Carmichael, Dohnavur, Tinnevelly District,

S. India.

Confirmatory Notes From Rev. D. Downie, D.D., American Baptist Mission, Nizam’s Dominions, S. India.

I have felt for many years that we missionaries were far too prone to dwell on what is called the "bright side of mission work." That it has a bright side no one can question. That it has a "dark" side some do question; but I for one, after thirty years of experience, know it to be just as true as the bright side is true. I have heard Miss Carmichael’s book denounced as "pessimistic." Just what is meant by that I am not quite sure; but if it means that what she has written is untrue, then I am prepared to say that it is NOT pessimistic, for there is not a line of it that cannot be duplicated in this Telugu Mission. That she has painted a dark picture of Hindu life cannot be denied, but, since it is every word true, I rejoice that she had the courage to do what was so much needed, and yet what so many of us shrank from doing, "lest it should injure the cause." From Rev. T. Stewart, M.A., Secretary, United Free Church Mission, Madras. This book, Things as They Are, meets a real need—it depicts a phase of mission work of which, as a rule, very little is heard. Every missionary can tell of cases where people have been won for Christ, and mention incidents of more than passing interest. Miss Carmichael is no exception, and could tell of not a few trophies of grace. The danger is, lest in describing such incidents the impression should be given that they represent the normal state of things, the reverse being the case. The people of India are not thirsting for the Gospel, nor "calling us to deliver their land from error’s chain." The night is still one in which the "spiritual hosts of wickedness" have to be overcome before the captive can be set free. The writer has laid all interested in the extension of the Kingdom of God under a deep debt of obligation by such a graphic and accurate picture of the difficulties that have to be faced and the

obstacles to be overcome. Counterparts of the incidents recorded can be found in other parts of South India, and there are probably few missionaries engaged in vernacular work who could not illustrate some of them from their own experience. From Dr. A. W. Rudisill, Methodist Episcopal Press, Madras. In Things as They Are are pictured, by camera and pen, some things in Southern India. The pen, as faithfully as the camera, has told the truth, and nothing but the truth. The early chapters bring out with vivid, striking, almost startling reality the wayside hearers in India. One can almost see the devil plucking away the words as fast as they fall, and hear the opposers of the Gospel crying out against it.

Paul did not hesitate to write things as they were of the idolaters to whom he preached, even though the picture was very dark. It is all the more needful now, when so many are deceived and being deceived as to the true nature of idolatry, that people at home who give and pray should be told plainly that what Paul wrote of idolaters in Rome and Corinth is still true of idolaters in India.

Miss Carmichael has given only glances and glimpses, not full insights. Let those who think the picture she has drawn is too dark know that, if the whole truth were told, an evil spirit only could produce the pictures, and hell itself would be the only fit place in which to publish them, because in Christian lands eyes have not seen and ears have not heard of such things. From Rev. C. W. Clarke, M.A., Principal, Noble College, Masulipatam.

I have worked as Principal of a College for over seventeen years amongst the caste people of South India, and I entirely endorse Miss Carmichael’s views as to the actual risks run by students and others desirous of breaking caste and being baptized. While the teaching of the Bible and English education generally have removed a great deal of prejudice, and greatly raised the ethical standard amongst a number of those who come under such influences, Hinduism as held and practised by the vast majority of caste people remains essentially unchanged. To break caste is held to be the greatest evil a person can inflict upon himself and his community, therefore practically any means may be resorted to to prevent such a calamity. It is a commonplace amongst missionaries, that when a caste man or woman shows any serious intention of being baptized,—in any case, where caste feeling is not modified by special circumstances,—the most stringent precautions must be taken to protect the inquirer from the schemes of his caste brethren. From Krishna Ran, Esq., B.A., Editor, Christian Patriot, Madras (himself a convert). The question is often asked whether a high caste Hindu convert can live with his own people after his baptism. It is only those who know nothing of the conditions of life in India, and of the power of caste as it exists in this country, who raise the question. The convert has to be prepared for the loss of parents and their tender affection; of brothers and sisters, relatives and friends; of wife and children, if he has any; of his birthright, social position, means of livelihood, reputation, and all the power which hides behind the magic word "caste"; of all that he is taught from his childhood to hold as sacred. From Miss Reade, South Arcot, South India.

I am not surprised that anyone unacquainted with mission work in India should be staggered at the facts narrated in Things as They Are. But as one who has worked for nearly thirty years in the heart of heathenism, away from the haunts of civilisation, I can bear testimony that the reality of things far exceeds anything that it would be possible to put into print. One’s tongue falters to tell of what is custom in this country. I know a case where a young girl of ten was placed in such a position that her choice lay between two sinful courses of life, no right way being open to her. I

think one of the most distressing things we[viii] have to meet in caste work in this country is the fact that often as soon as a soul begins to show interest in Christ he or she disappears, and one either hears next that he is dead, or can get no reliable information at all.

Extract from a letter to Miss Carmichael on Things as They Are. (The writer is a veteran American missionary.)

I could duplicate nearly every incident in the book; so I know it is a true picture, not alone because I believe your word, but because my experience has been so similar to yours. Many times, while reading it, the memory of the old heart-break has been so vivid that I have had to lay the book down and look round the familiar room in order to convince myself that it was you, and not I, who was agonising over one of the King's own children who was being crowded back into darkness and hurled down to destruction, because Satan's wrath is great as he realises that his time is short.

I wish the book might be read by all the Christians in the homeland. From Pandita Ramabai.

While I was reading Things as They Are, I fancied I was living my old life among Hindus over again. I can honestly corroborate everything said in regard to the religious and social life of the Hindus. I came from that part of the country, and I am very glad that the book has succeeded in bringing the truth to light. From Miss L. Trotter.

There is hardly a phase of all the heart-suffering retold that we have not known: page after page might have been written out here, word for word.

1.09.000. Book 9: Preface

Preface THE writer of these thrilling chapters is a Keswick missionary, well known to many friends as the adopted daughter of Mr. Robert Wilson, the much-respected chairman of the Keswick Convention. She worked for a time with the Rev. Barclay Buxton in Japan; and for the last few years she has been with the Rev. T. Walker (also a C.M.S. Missionary) in Tinnevelly, and is on the staff of the Church of England Zenana Society.

I do not think the realities of Hindu life have ever been portrayed with greater vividness than in this book; and I know that the authoress's accuracy can be fully relied upon. The picture is drawn without prejudice, with all sympathy, with full recognition of what is good, and yet with an unswerving determination to tell the truth and let the facts be known,—that is, so far as she dares to tell them. What she says is the truth, and nothing but the truth; but it is not the whole truth—that she could not tell. If she wrote it, it could not be printed. If it were printed, it could not be read. But if we read between the lines, we do just catch glimpses of what she calls "the Actual."

It is evident that the authoress deeply felt the responsibility of writing such a book; and I too feel the[x] responsibility of recommending it. I do so with the prayer of my heart that God will use it to move many. It is not a book to be read with a lazy kind of sentimental "interest." It is a book to send the reader to his knees—still more to her knees.

Most of the chapters are concerned with the lives of Heathen men and women and children surrounded by the tremendous bars and gates of the Caste system. But one chapter, and not the least important one, tells of native Christians. It has long been one of my own objects to correct the curious general impression among people at home that native Christians, as a body, are—not indeed perfect,—no one thinks that, but—earnest and consistent followers of Christ. Narratives, true narratives, of true converts are read, and these are supposed to be specimens of the whole body. But (1) where there have been "mass movements" towards Christianity, where whole villages have put themselves under Christian instruction, mixed motives are certain; (2) where there have been two or three generations of Christians it is unreasonable to expect the descendants of men who may have been themselves most true converts to be necessarily like them. Hereditary Christianity in India is much like hereditary Christianity at home. The Church in Tinnevelly, of which this book incidentally tells a little, is marked by both these features. Whole families or even villages have "come over" at times; and the large majority of the Christians were (so to speak) born Christians, and were baptized in infancy. This is not in itself a result to be despised. "Christian England," unchristian as a great part of its population really is, is better than Heathen India; and in the chapter now referred to, Miss Carmichael herself notices the difference between a Hindu and a Christian[xi] village. But the more widely Christianity spreads, the more will there assuredly be of mere nominal profession. Is the incorrect impression I allude to caused by missionaries dwelling mostly on the brighter side of their work? Here and there in the book there is just a suggestion that they are wrong in doing so. But how can they help it? What does a clergyman or an evangelist in England tell of? Does he tell of his many daily disappointments, or of

his occasional encouraging cases? The latter are the events of his life, and he naturally tells of them. The former he comprises in some general statement. How can he do otherwise? And what can the modern missionary do in the short reports he is able to write? Fifty years ago missionary journals of immense length came home, and were duly published; and then the details of Hindu idolatry and cruelty and impurity, and the tremendous obstacles to the Gospel, were better known by the few regular readers. Much that Miss Carmichael tells was then told over and over again, though not perhaps with a skilful pen like hers. But the work has so greatly developed in each mission, and the missions are so far more numerous and extended, that neither can missionaries now write as their predecessors did, nor, if they did, could all the missionary periodicals together find space for their journals. The fault of incorrect impressions lies mainly in the want of knowledge and want of thought of home speakers and preachers. I remember, thirty years ago, an eloquent Bishop in Exeter Hall triumphantly flinging in the face of critics of missions the question, "Is Tinnevelly a fiction?"—as if Tinnevelly had become a Christian country, which apparently some people still suppose it to be, notwithstanding the warning words to the contrary which the C.M.S. publications have again and again uttered. Even now, there are in Tinnevelly about twenty heathen to every one Christian; and of what sort the twenty are this book tells. Tinnevelly is indeed "no fiction," but in a very different sense from that of the good Bishop’s speech. Again, a few months ago, I heard a preacher, not very favourable to the C.M.S., say that the C.M.S., despite its shortcomings, deserved well of the Church because it had "converted a nation" in Uganda!—as if the nation comprised only 30,000 souls. Some day the "Actual" of Uganda will be better understood, and the inevitable shortcomings of even its Christian population realised, and then we shall be told that we deceived the public—although we have warned them over and over again. But the larger part of this book is a revelation—so far as is possible—of the "Actual" of Hinduism and Caste. God grant that its terrible facts and its burning words may sink into the hearts of its readers! Perhaps, when they have read it, they will at last agree that we have used no sensational and exaggerated language when we have said that the Church is only playing at missions! Service, and self-denial, and prayer, must be on a different scale indeed if we are ever—I do not say to convert the world—but even to evangelise it.

EUGENE STOCK.

1.09.02. Book 9: 2. Three Afternoons off the Track

CHAPTER II Three Afternoons off the Track "They are led captive by Satan at his will in the most quiescent manner."

David Brainerd, North America.

"Oh that the Lord would pour out upon them a spirit of deep concern for their souls!"

Henry Martyn, India.

"I ask you earnestly to pray that the Gospel may take saving and working effect."

James Gilmour, Mongolia. THE Western Ghauts sweep down to the sea in curves. Dohnavur is in one of the last of these curves. There are no proper roads running under the mountains, only rough country ruts crossing the plain. We were rolling along one of these at the rate of two miles an hour.

Crash and tumble went the bandy, a springless construction with a mat roof; bang over stones and slabs of rock, down on one side, up on the other; then both wheels were sharp aslant. But this is usual. On that particular First Afternoon the water was out, which is the South Indian way of saying that the tanks, great lake-like reservoirs, have overflowed and flooded the land. Once we went smoothly down a bank and into a shallow swollen pool, and the water swished in at the lower end and floated our books out quietly. So we had to stop, and fish them up; and then, huddled close at the upper end we sat, somewhat damp, but happy. At last we got to our destination, reached through a lane which then was a stream with quite a swift little current of its own. Cupid’s Lake the place is called. We thought the name appropriate. Cupid’s Lake is peopled by Castes of various persuasions; we made for the Robber quarter first. The Robber Caste is honourable here; it furnishes our watchmen and the coolies who carry our money. There is good stuff in the Robber Caste people: a valiant people are they, and though they were not prepared for the thing that was coming towards them, they met it with fortitude. A little girl saw it first. One glance at my hat through the end of the cart, and she flew to spread the news—

"Oh! everyone come running and see! A great white man is here! Oh what an appalling spectacle! A great white man!"

Then there was a general rush; children seemed to spring from the ground, all eyes and tongues and astonishment. "She isn’t a man!" "He is!" "She isn’t!" "He has got a man’s turban!" "But look at her seeley!" (Tamil dress.) A woman, and white—it staggered them till the assurances of the Band Sisters prevailed; and they let me into a neighbouring house, out of the sun which made that hat a necessity. Once it was off they lost all fear, and crowded round in the friendliest fashion; but later, one of the Band was amused by hearing me described in full: "Not a man, though great and white, and wearing a white man’s turban, too! Was it not an appalling spectacle?" And the old body who was addressed held up both her hands amazed, and hastened off to investigate. An English magazine told us lately exactly what these poor women think when they see, for the first time in

their lives, the lady missionary. They greatly admire her, the article said, and consider her fairer and more divine than anything ever imagined before—which is very nice indeed to read; but here what they say is this: "Was it not an appalling spectacle? A great white man!" And now that the spectacle was safe in the house, the instincts of hospitality urged clean mats and betel. Betel (pronounced beetle) is the leaf of a climbing plant, into which they roll a morsel of areca nut and lime. The whole is made up into a parcel and munched, but not swallowed. This does not sound elegant; neither is the thing. It is one of the minor trials of life to have to sit through the process.

We took a leaf or two, but explained that it was not our custom to eat it; and then we answered questions straight off for ten minutes. "What is your Caste?" "Chee!" in a tone of remonstrance, "don't you see she is white? Married or widow? Why no jewels? What relations? Where are they all? Why have you left them and come here? Whatever can be your business here? What does the Government give you for coming here?" These last questions gave us the chance we were watching for, and we began to explain.

Now what do these people do when, for the first time, they hear the Good Tidings? They simply stare. In that house that day there was an old woman who seemed to understand a little what it was all about. She had probably heard before. But nobody else understood in the least; they did not understand enough to make remarks. They sat round us on the floor and ate betel, as everybody does here in all leisure moments, and they stared. The one old woman who seemed to understand followed us out of the house, and remarked that it was a good religion but a mistaken one, as it advocated, or resulted in, the destruction of Caste. In the next house we found several girls, and tried to persuade the mothers to let them learn to read. If a girl is learning regularly it gives one a sort of right of entrance to the house. One's going there is not so much observed and one gets good chances, but to all our persuasions they only said it was not their custom to allow their girls to learn. Had they to do Government work? Learning was for men who wanted to do Government work. We explained a little, and mentioned the many villages where girls are learning to read. They thought it a wholly ridiculous idea. Then we told them as much as we could in an hour about the great love of Jesus Christ.

I was in the middle of it, and thinking only of it and their souls, when an old lady with fluffy white hair leaned forward and gazed at me with a beautiful, earnest gaze. She did not speak; she just listened and gazed, "drinking it all in." And then she raised a skeleton claw, and grabbed her hair, and pointed to mine. "Are you a widow too," she asked, "that you have no oil on yours?" After a few such experiences that beautiful gaze loses its charm. It really means nothing more nor less than the sweet expression sometimes observed in the eyes of a sorrowful animal. But her question had set the ball rolling again. "Oil! no oil! Can't you even afford a halfpenny a month to buy good oil? It isn't your custom? Why not? Don't any white Ammals ever use oil? What sort of oil do the girls use? Do you never use castor oil for the hair? Oh, castor oil is excellent!" And they went into many details. The first thing they do when a baby is born is to swing it head downwards, holding its feet, and advise it not to sin; and the second thing is to feed it with castor oil, and put castor oil in its eyes. "Do we do none of these things?" We sang to them. They always like that, and sometimes it touches them: but the Tamils are not easily touched, and could never be described as unduly emotional.

All through there were constant and various interruptions. Two bulls sauntered in through the open door, and established themselves in their accustomed places; then a cow followed, and somebody went off to tie the animals up. Children came in and wanted attention, babies made their usual noises. We rarely had five consecutive quiet minutes. When they seemed to be getting tired of us, we said the time was passing, to which they agreed, and, with a word about hoping to come again, to which they answered cordially, "Oh yes! Come to-morrow!" we went out into the street, and finished up in the open air. There is a tree at one end of the village; we stood under it and sang a chorus and taught the children who had followed us from house to house to sing it, and this attracted some passing grown-ups, who listened while we witnessed unto Jesus, Who had saved us and given us His joy. Nothing tells more than just this simple witness. To hear one of their own people saying, with evident sincerity, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see," makes them look at each other and nod their heads sympathetically. This is something that appeals, something they can appreciate; many a time it arrests attention when nothing else would.

We were not able to get the photo of that special girl in the blue seeley, but this girl is so like her that I put her here. She is a Vellalar. The jewels worn by a girl of this class run into thousands of rupees. They are part of the ordinary dress. This girl did not know we were coming, she was "caught" just as she was. She had a ball of pink oleander flowers in her hands and white flowers in her hair.

We were thoroughly tired by this time, and could neither talk nor sing any more. The crowd melted—all but the children, who never melt—one by one going their respective ways, having heard, some of them, for the first time. What difference will it make in their lives? Did they understand it? None of them seemed specially interested, none of them said anything interesting. The last question I heard was about soap—"What sort of soap do you use to make your skin white?" Most of them would far prefer to be told that secret than how to get a white heart.

Afternoon Number Two found us in the Village of the Temple, a tumble-down little place, but a very citadel of pride and the arrogance of ignorance. We did not know that at first, of course, but we very soon found it out. There was the usual skirmish at the sight of a live white woman; no one there had seen such a curiosity. But even curiosity could not draw the Brahmans. They live in a single straggling street, and would not let us in. "Go!" said a fat old Brahman disdainfully; "no white man has ever trodden our street, and no white woman shall. As for that low-caste child with you"—Victory looked up in her gentle way, and he varied it to—"that child who eats with those low-caste people—she shall not speak to one of our women. Go by the way you have come!" This was not encouraging. We salaamed and departed, and went to our bandy left outside ("low-caste bandies" are not allowed to drive down Brahman streets), and asked our Master to open another door. While we were waiting, a tall, fine-looking Hindu came and said, "Will you come to my house? I will show you the way." So we went.

He led us to the Vellala quarter next to the Brahmans, and we found his house was the great house of the place. The outer door opened into a large square inner courtyard. A wide verandah, supported by pillars quaintly carved, ran round it. The women’s rooms, low and windowless, opened on either side; these are the rooms we rejoice to get into, and now we were led right in. But first I had to talk to the men. They were regular Caste Hindus; courteous—for they have had no cause to fear the power of the Gospel—yet keen and argumentative. One of them had evidently

read a good deal. He quoted from their classics; knew all about Mrs. Besant and the latest pervert to her views; and was up in the bewildering tangle of thought known as Hindu Philosophy. "Fog-wreaths of doubt, in blinding eddies drifted"—that is what it really is, but it is very difficult to prove it so.

One truth struck him especially—Christianity is the only religion which provides a way by which there is deliverance from sin now. There is a certain system of philosophy which professes to provide deliverance in the future, when the soul, having passed through the first three stages of bliss, loses its identity and becomes absorbed in God; but there is no way by which deliverance can be obtained here and now. "Sin shall not have dominion over you"—there is no such line as this in all the million stanzas of the Hindu classics. He admitted this freely, admitted that this one tenet marked out Christianity as a unique religion; but he did not go on further; he showed no desire to prove the truth of it.

After this they let us go to the women, who had all this time been watching us, and discussing us with interest.

Once safely into their inner room, we sat down on the floor in the midst of them, and began to make friends. There was a grandmother who had heard that white people were not white all over, but piebald, so to speak; might she examine me? There were several matronly women who wanted to know what arrangements English parents made concerning their daughters' marriages. There were the usual widows of a large Indian household—one always looks at them with a special longing; and there was a dear young girl, in a soft blue seeley (Tamil dress), her ears clustered about with pearls, and her neck laden with five or six necklets worth some hundreds of rupees. She was going to be married; and beyond the usual gentle courtesy of a well-brought-up Tamil girl, showed no interest in us. Almost all the women had questions to ask. On the track it is different; they have already satisfied their lawful curiosity concerning Missie Ammals; but here they have not had the chance; and if we ignore their desires, we defeat our own. They may seem to listen, but they are really occupied in wondering about us. We got them to listen finally, and left them, cheered by warm invitations to return.

Then we thought of the poor proud Brahmans, and hoping that, perhaps, in the interval they had inquired about us, and would let us in, we went to them again. We could see the fair faces and slender forms of the younger Brahman women standing in the shadow behind their verandah pillars, and some of them looked as if they would like to let us in, but the street had not relented; and a Brahman street is like a house—you cannot go in unless you are allowed.

There was one kind-faced, courtly old man, and he seemed to sympathise with us, for he left the mocking group of men, and came to see us off; and then, as if to divert us from the greater topic, he pointed to one of the mountains, a spur of the God King's mountain, famous in all South India, and volunteered to tell me its story. We were glad to make friends with him even over so small a thing as a mountain; but he would speak of nothing else, and when he left us we felt baffled and sorry, and tired with the tiredness that comes when you cannot give your message; and we sat down on a rock outside the Brahman street, to wait till the Band Sisters gathered for the homeward walk.

It was sunset time, and the sky was overcast by dull grey clouds; but just over the Brahman quarter there was a rift in the grey, and the pent-up gold shone through. It seemed as if God were pouring out His beauty upon those Brahmans, trying to make them look up, and they would not. One by one we saw them go to their different courtyards, where the golden glow could not reach them, and we heard them shut their great heavy doors, as if they were shutting Him out. In there it was dark; out here, out with God, it was light. The after-glow, that loveliest glow of the East, was shining through the rent of the clouds, and the red-tiled roofs and the scarlet flowers of the Flame of the Forest, and every tint and colour which would respond in any way, were aglow with the beauty of it. The Brahman quarter was set in the deep green of shadowy trees; just behind it the mountains rose outlined in mist, and out of the mist a waterfall gleamed white against blue.

We spent Afternoon Number Three in the Village of the Warrior, a lonely little place, left all by itself on a great rough moorland—if you can call a patch of bare land "moor" which is destitute of heather, and grows palms and scrub in clumps instead. It took us rather a long time to get to it, over very broken ground on a very hot day; but when we did get there we found such a good opening that we forgot about our feelings, and entered in rejoicing. There were some little children playing at the entrance to the village, and they led us straight to their own house, making friends in the most charming way as they trotted along beside us. They told us their family history, and we told them as much of ours as was necessary, and they introduced us to their mothers as old acquaintances. The mothers were indulgent, and let us have a room all to ourselves in the inner courtyard, where a dozen or more children gathered and listened with refreshing zest. They understood, dear little things, though so often their elders did not.

Then the mothers got interested, and sat about the door. The girls were with me. (We usually divide into two parties; the elder and more experienced Sisters go off in one direction, and the young convert-girls come with me.) And before long, Jewel of Victory was telling out of a full heart all about the great things God had done for her. She has a very sweet way with the women, and they listened fascinated. Then the others spoke, and still those women listened. They were more intelligent than our audience of yesterday; and though they did not follow nearly all, they listened splendidly to the story-part of our message. In the meaning, as is often the case, their interest was simply nil. But we were sorry, and I think so were they, when a commotion outside disturbed us, and we were sorrier when we knew the cause. The village postman, who only visits these out-of-the-way places once a week, had appeared with a letter for the head of the house. One of the men folk had read it. It told of the death of the son in foreign parts—Madras, I think—and the poor old mother’s one desire was to see us out of the room. She had not liked to turn us out; but, as the news spread, more women gathered clamouring round the door; and the moment we left the room empty, in they rushed, with the mother and the women who had listened to us, and flinging themselves on the floor, cried the Tamil cry of sorrow, full of a pathos of its own: "Ai-y■! Ai-y■! Ai-Ai-y■!"

It was sad to leave them crying so, but at that moment we were certainly better away. The children came with us to the well outside the village, and we sat on its wall and went on with our talk. They would hardly let us go, and begged us to come back and "teach them every day," not the Gospel—do not imagine their little hearts craved for that—but reading and writing and sums! As we drove off some of the villagers smiled and salaamed, and the little children’s last words followed us as far as we could hear them: "Come back soon!"

Sometimes, as now, when we come to a new place, we dream a dream, dream that perhaps at last it may be possible to win souls peacefully. Perhaps these courteous, kindly people will welcome the message we bring them when they understand it better. Perhaps homes need not be broken up, perhaps whole families will believe, or individual members believing may still live in their own homes and witness there. Perhaps—perhaps—! And snatches of verse float through our dream—

"Oh, might some sweet song Thy lips have taught us, Some glad song, and sweet, Guide amidst the mist, and through the darkness, Lost ones to Thy feet!"

It sounds so beautiful, so easy, singing souls to Jesus. And we dream our dream.

Till suddenly and with violence we are awakened. Someone—a mere girl, or a lad, or even a little child—has believed, has confessed, wants to be a Christian. And the whole Caste is roused, and the whole countryside joins with the Caste; and the people we almost thought loved us, hate us. And till we go to the next new place we never dream that dream again.

1.09.03. Book 9: 3. Humdrum

CHAPTER III

Humdrum

"A missionary's life is more ordinary than is supposed. Plod rather than cleverness is often the best missionary equipment."

Rev. J. Heywood Horsburgh, China.

"Truly to understand the facts of work for Christ in any land, we must strip it of all romance, and of everything which is unreal."

Miss S. S. Hewlett, India.

THERE have been times of late when I have had to hold on to one text with all my might: "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." Praise God, it does not say "successful."

One evening things came to a climax. We all spent a whole afternoon without getting one good listener. We separated as usual, going two and two to the different quarters of a big sleepy straggly village. Life and I went to the potters. Life spoke most earnestly and well to an uninterested group of women. After she had finished one of them pointed to my hat (the only foreign thing about me which was visible—oh that I could dispense with it!). "What is that?" she said. Not one bit did they care to hear. One by one they went back to their work, and we were left alone.

We went to another quarter. It was just the same. At a rest-house by the way I noticed a Brahman, and went to see if he would listen. He would if I would talk "about politics or education, but not if it was about religion." However, I did get a chance of pleading with him to consider the question of his soul's salvation, and he took a book and said he would read it at his leisure. And then he asked me how many persons I had succeeded in joining to my Way since I began to try. It was exactly the question, only asked in another form, which the devil had been pressing on me all the afternoon. After this he told me politely that we were knocking our heads against a rock; we might smash our heads, but we never would affect the rock.

"Rock! Rock! when wilt thou open?" It is an old cry; I cried it afresh. But the Brahman only smiled, and then with a gesture expressing at once his sense of his own condescension in speaking with me, and his utter contempt for the faith I held, motioned to me to go.

Outside in the road a number of Hindus were standing; some of them were his retainers and friends. I heard them say, as I passed through their midst, "Who will fall into the pit of the Christian Way!" And they laughed, and the Brahman laughed. "As the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, unto this day."

We walked along the road bordered with beautiful banyan trees. We sat down under their shade, and waited for what would come. Some little children followed us, but before we could get a single idea clearly into their heads a man came and chased them away. "It is getting dark," he said. "They are only little green things; they must not be out late." It was broad daylight then, and would be for another hour. Some coolies passing that way stopped to look at us; but before they had time to get interested they too remarked that darkness was coming, and they must be off, and off they went.

We were left alone after that. Within five minutes' walk were at least five hundred souls, redeemed, but they don't know it; redeemed, but they don't want to know it. Sometimes they seem to want to know, but however tenderly you tell it, the keen Hindu mind soon perceives the drift of it all—Redemption must mean loss of Caste. One day last week I was visiting in the Village of the Red Lake. Standing in one of its courtyards you see the Western Ghauts rising straight up behind. The Red Lake lies at the mountain foot; we call it Derwentwater, but there are palms and bamboos, and there is no Friar's Crag. That afternoon I was bound for a house in the centre of the village, when an old lady called me to come to her house, and I followed her gladly. There were six or eight women all more or less willing to listen; among them were two who were very old. Old people in India are usually too attached to their own faith, or too utterly stupid and dull, to care to hear about another; but this old lady had been stirred to something almost like active thought by the recent death of a relative, and she felt that she needed something more than she had to make her ready for death. She was apparently devout. Ashes were marked on her brow and arms, and she wore a very large rosary. It is worn to accumulate merit. I did not refer to it as I talked, but in some dim way she seemed to feel it did not fit with what I was saying, for, with trembling hands, she took it off and threw it to a child. I hoped this meant something definite, and tried to lead her to Jesus. But as soon as she understood Who He was, she drew back. "I cannot be a disciple of your Guru, here," she said; "would my relations bear such defilement?" Being a Christian really meant sooner or later leaving her home and all her people for ever. Can you wonder an old lady of perhaps seventy-five stopped at that? The little children in the Village of the Warrior are not allowed to learn. The men of the place have consulted and come to the decision. The chill of it has struck the little ones, and they do not care to run the chance of the scolding they would receive if they showed too much interest in us. The mothers are as friendly as ever, but indifferent. "We hear this is a religion which spoils our Caste," they say, and that is the end of it. In the great house of the Temple Village they listened well for some weeks. Then, as it gradually opened to them that there is no Caste whatever in Christianity, their interest died.

How much one would like to tell a different story! But a made-up story is one thing and a story of facts is another. So far we have only found two genuine earnest souls here. But if those two go on—! Praise God for the joy on before!

We went again to the potters' village and sat on the narrow verandah and talked to a girl as she patted the pots into shape underneath where the wheel had left an open place. She listened for awhile; then she said, "If I come to your Way will you give me a new seeley and good curry every day?" And back again we went to the very beginning of things, while the old grandfather spinning his wheel chuckled at us for our folly in wasting our time over potters. "As if we would ever turn to your religion!" he said. "Have you ever heard of a potter who changed his Caste?"

Caste and religion! They are so mixed up that we do not know how to unmix them. His Caste to the potter meant his trade, the trade of his clan for generations; it meant all the observances bound up with it; it meant, in short, his life. It would never strike him that he could be a Christian and a potter at the same time, and very probably he could not; the feeling of the Caste would be against it. Then what else could he be? He does not argue all this out; he does not care enough about the matter to take the trouble to think at all. He has only one concern in life—he lives to make pots and sell them, and make more and sell them, and so eat and sleep in peace. But the girl had the look of more possibility; she asked questions and seemed interested, and finally suggested we should wait till she had finished her batch of pots, and then she would "tell us all her mind." So we waited and watched the deft brown hands as they worked round the gaping hole till it grew together and closed; and at last she had finished. Then she drew us away from the group of curious children, and told us if we would come in three days she would be prepared to join our Way and come with us, for she had to work very hard at home, and her food was poor and her seeley old, and she thought it would be worth risking the wrath of her people to get all she knew we should give her if she came; and this was all her mind.

She had touched a great perplexity. How are we to live in India without raising desires of this sort? It is true the Brahmans look down upon us, and the higher Castes certainly do not look up, but to the greater number of the people we seem rich and grand and desirable to cultivate. The Ulterior-Object-Society is a fact in South India. We may banish expensive-looking things from our tables, and all pictures and ornaments from our walls, and confine ourselves to texts. This certainly helps; there is less to distract the attention of the people when they come to see us, and we have so many the fewer things to take care of—a very great advantage—but it does not go far towards disillusioning them as to what they imagine is our true position. We are still up above to them; not on a level, not one of themselves. The houses we live in are airy and large, and they do not understand the need of protection from the sun. The food we eat is abundant and good, and to them it looks luxurious, for they live on rice and vegetable curry, at a cost of twopence a day. Our walls may be bare, but they are clean, and the texts aforesaid are not torn at the corners; so, whatever we say, we are rich.

Identification with the people whom we have come to win is the aim of many a missionary, but the difficulty always is the same—climate and customs are dead against it; how can we do it? George Bowen struck at English life and became a true Indian, so far as he could, but even he could not go all the way. No matter how far you may go, there is always a distance you cannot cover—yards or inches it may be, but always that fatal hiatus. We seem so undeniably up, far up above them in everything, and we want to get to the lowest step down, low enough down to lift lost souls up.

"I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels." The vessel the potters are making here is worth about a halfpenny, but it is perfect of its kind. The moulder never lifts his hand from it from the moment he puts a lump of shapeless clay on the wheel till the moment he takes it off finished, so far as the wheel can finish it. If it is "marred," it is "marred in the hand of the potter," and instantly he makes it again another vessel as it seems good to him. He never wastes the clay. On and on, if they will let us, time after time, by text and hymn and story, we have to explain what things really mean before they are able to understand even a fraction of the truth. The fact that this girl had thought enough to get her ideas into shape was encouraging, and with such slender cause for hope we still hoped. But when after some weeks’ visiting she began to

see that the question was not one of curries and seeleys but of inward invisible gifts, her interest died, and she was "out" when we went, or too busy patting her pots to have time to listen to us.

Humdrum we have called the work, and humdrum it is. There is nothing romantic about potters except in poetry, nor is there much of romance about missions except on platforms and in books. Yet "though it’s dull at whiles," there is joy in the doing of it, there is joy in just obeying. He said "Go, tell," and we have come and are telling, and we meet Him as we "go and tell."

But, dear friends, do not, we entreat you, expect to hear of us doing great things, as an everyday matter of course. Our aim is great—it is India for Christ! and before the gods in possession here, we sing songs unto Him. But what we say to you is this: Do not expect every true story to dovetail into some other true story and end with some marvellous coincidence or miraculous conversion. Most days in real life end exactly as they began, so far as visible results are concerned. We do not find, as a rule, when we go to the houses—the literal little mud houses, I mean, of literal heathendom—that anyone inside has been praying we might come. I read a missionary story "founded on fact" the other day, and the things that happened in that story on these lines were most remarkable. They do not happen here. Practical missionary life is an unexciting thing. It is not sparkling all over with incident. It is very prosaic at times.

1.09.04. Book 9: 4. Correspondences

CHAPTER IV

Correspondences

"It is very pleasant when you are in England, and you see souls being saved, and you see the conviction of sin, and you see the power of the Gospel to bring new life and new joy and purity to hearts. But it is still more glorious amongst the heathen to see the same things, to see the Lord there working His own work of salvation, and to see the souls convicted and the hearts broken, and to see there the new life and the new joy coming out in the faces of those who have found the Lord Jesus."

Rev. Barclay F. Buxton, Japan.

BEFORE putting this chapter together, I have looked long at the photograph which fronts it. The longer one looks the more pitiful it seems. Perhaps one reads into it all that one knows of her, all one has done for her, how one has failed—and this makes it sadder than it may be to other eyes. And yet can it fail to be sad? Hood’s lines reversed describe her—

"All that is left of her Now is not womanly." The day we took her photo she was returning from her morning worship at the shrine. She had poured her libation over the idol, walked round and round it, prostrated herself before it, gone through the prayers she had learned off by heart, and now was on her way home. A Saivite ascetic. Siva represents the severer side of Hinduism, the Powers of Nature which destroy. But as all disintegrated things are reintegrated in some other form, the two Powers, Destruction and Reconstruction, were united in the thought of the old Hindus, and Siva represents the double Power. The Saivite form of Hinduism is older than the Vaishnavite, and more widely spread over India. There are said to be 30,000,000 symbols of the god Siva scattered about the land. Saivites are instantly recognised by the mark of white ashes on their foreheads, and sometimes on the breast and arms, and often a necklet of berries is worn.

We had gone to her village to take photographs, and had just got the street scene in the morning light. The crowd followed us, eager to see more of the doings of the picture-catching box; and she, fearing the defiling touch of the mixed Castes represented there, had climbed up on a granite slab by the side of the road, and stood waiting till we passed.

There we saw her, and there we took her,—for, to our surprise, she did not object,—and now here she is, to show with all the force of truth how far from ideal the real may be. We looked at her as I look at her now, stripped of all God meant her to have when He made her, deep in the mire of the lowest form of idolatry, a devotee of Siva. She had been to Benares and bathed in the sacred Ganges, and therefore she is holy beyond the reach of doubt. She has no room for any sense of the need of Christ. She pities our ignorance when we talk to her. Is she not a devotee? Has she not been to Benares?

Often and often we meet her in the high-caste houses of the place, where she is always an honoured guest because of her wonderful sanctity. She watches keenly then lest any of the younger members of the household should incline to listen to us.

One of her relatives is an English-educated lawyer, a bitter though covert foe, who not long ago stirred up such opposition that we were warned not to go near the place. Men had been hired "to fall upon us and beat us." This because a girl, a connection of his, read her Bible openly, instead of in secret as she had done before. He connected this action on her part with a visit we had paid to the house, and so induced certain of the baser sort to do this thing. We went, however, just the same, as we had work we had promised to do, and saw the old gentleman sitting on the verandah reading his English newspaper in the most pacific fashion. He seemed surprised to see us as we passed with a salaam; we saw nothing of the beaters, and returned with whole bones, to the relief of the community at large. Only I remember one of our Band was woefully disappointed: "I thought, perhaps, we were going to be martyrs," she said.

Street in the Red Lake Village. An ordinary typical village scene, except that just then there were more people than usual before the picture-catching box. The only way to keep them from crowding round it was to show them something else: this explains the group on the stones at the side. And so we realise, as so often in India, the power of both extremes; the one with all the force of his education, and the other with all the force of her superstition, each uniting with the other in repelling the coming of the Saviour both equally need. As one looks at the photograph, does it not help in the effort to realise the utter hopelessness, from every human point of view, of trying to win such a one, for example, to even care to think of Christ? There is, over and above the natural apathy common to all, an immense barrier of accumulated merit gained by pilgrimages, austerities, and religious observances, and the soul is perfectly satisfied, and has no desire whatever after God. It is just this self-satisfaction which makes it so hopeless to try to do anything with it. And yet nothing is hopeless to God; "Set no borders to His strength," a Japanese missionary said. We say it over and over again to ourselves, in the face of some great hopelessness, like that photograph before us; and sometimes, as if to assure us it is so, God lifts some such soul into light. Just now we are rejoicing in a letter from the eastern side of the district, telling us of the growth in the new life of one who only a little while ago was a temple devotee.

One has often longed to see Him work as He worked of old, healing the sick by the word of His power, raising the dead. But when we see Him gathering one—and such a one!—from among the heathen to give thanks unto His holy Name and to triumph in His praise, one feels that indeed it is a miracle of miracles, and that greater than a miracle wrought on the body is a miracle wrought on the soul. But nothing I can write can show you the miracle it was. In that particular case it was like seeing a soul drawn out of the hand of the Ruler of Darkness. All salvation is that in reality, but sometimes, as in her case, when the whole environment of the soul has been strongly for evil in its most dangerous phase, then it is more evidently so.

Perhaps we should explain. We know that in its widest sense environment simply means "all that is." We know that "all that is" includes the existence of certain beings, described as "Powers" in Ephesians 6:12. Some of us are more or less unconscious of this part of our environment. We have no conscious correspondence with it, but it is there. Others, again, seek and find such correspondence, to their certain and awful loss.

Such a subject can hardly bear handling in language. Thank God we know so little about it that we do not know how to speak of it accurately. Neither, indeed, do we wish to intrude into those things which we have not seen by any attempt at close definition; but we know there is this unhallowed correspondence between men and demons, which in old days drew down, as a lightning conductor, the flash of the wrath of God.

Here in India it exists; we often almost touch it, but not quite. We would not go where we knew we should see it, even if we might; so, unless we happen upon it, which is rare, we never see it at all. A year ago I saw it, and that one look made me realise, as no amount of explanations ever could, how absolutely out of reach of all human influence such souls are. Nothing can reach them, nothing but the might of the Holy Ghost. So I close with this one look. Will you pray for those to whom in the moonless night, at the altar by the temple, there is the sudden coming of that which they have sought—the "possession," the "afflatus," which for ever after marks them out as those whose correspondences reach beyond mortal ken. All devotees have not received this awful baptism, but in this part of India many have.

We were visiting in a high-caste house. The walls were decorated with mythological devices, and even the old wood-carvings were full of idolatrous symbols. The women were listening well, asking questions and arguing, until one, an old lady, came in. Then they were silent. She sat down and discussed us. We thought we would change the subject, and we began to sing. She listened, as they always do, interrupting only to say, "That’s true! that’s true!" Till suddenly—I cannot describe what—something seemed to come over her, and she burst into a frenzy, exclaiming, "Let me sing! let me sing!" And then she sang as I never heard anyone sing before—the wildest, weirdest wail of a song all about idolatry, its uselessness and folly, its sorrow and sin. So far I followed her, for I knew the poem well, but she soon turned off into regions of language and thought unreached as yet by me. Here she got madly excited, and, swaying herself to and fro, seemed lashing herself into fury. Nearer and nearer she drew to us (we were on the floor beside her); then she stretched out her arm with its clenched fist, and swung it straight for my eye. Within a hair’s-breadth she drew back, and struck out for Victory’s; but God helped her not to flinch.

Then I cannot tell what happened, only her form dilated, and she seemed as if she would spring upon us, but as if she were somehow held back. We dare not move for fear of exciting her more. There we sat for I know not how long, with this awful old woman’s clenched fist circling round our heads, or all but striking into our eyes, while without intermission she crooned her song in that hollow hum that works upon the listener till the nerve of the soul is drawn out, as it were, to its very farthest stretch. It was quite dark by this time; only the yellow flicker of the wind-blown flame of the lamp made uncertain lights and shadows round the place where we were sitting, and an eerie influence fell on us all, almost mesmeric in effect. I did not need the awestruck whispers round me to tell me what it was. But oh! I felt, as I never felt before, the reality of the presence of unseen powers, and I knew that the Actual itself was in the room with me. At last she fell back exhausted, trembling in every limb. Her old head hit the wall as she fell, but I knew we must not help her; it would be pollution to her if we touched her. The people all round were too frightened to move. So she fell and lay there quivering, her glittering eyes still fixed on us; and she tried to speak, but could not.

Softly we stole away, and we felt we had been very near where Satan’s seat is.

Think of someone you love—as I did then—of someone whose hair is white like hers; but the face you think of has peace in it, and God's light lightens it. Then think of her as we saw her last—the old face torn with the fury of hell, and for light the darkness thereof.

Oh, friends, do you care enough? Do we care enough out here? God give us hearts that can care!

1.09.05. Book 9: 5. The Prey of the Terrible

CHAPTER V The Prey of the Terrible

"I believe we are in the midst of a great battle. We are not ourselves fighting, we are simply accepting everything that comes; but the Powers of Light are fighting against the Powers of Darkness, and they will certainly prevail. The Holy Spirit is working, but the people do not as yet know it is the Spirit."

Hester Needham, Sumatra. THE devil's favourite device just now is to move interested people to far-away places. We have had several who seemed very near to the Kingdom. Then suddenly they have disappeared.

There was Wreath, of the Village of the Temple. She used to listen in the shadow of the door while we sat on the outside verandah. Then she got bolder, and openly asked to see Golden, and talk with her. One day, unexpectedly, Golden was led to the Red Lake Village, and to her surprise found Wreath there. She had been sent away from the Village of the Temple, and was now with some other relations, under even stricter guard. But God led Golden, all unknowingly, to go straight to the very house where she was. So she heard again.

Next time Golden went she could not see her alone, but somehow Wreath got her to understand that if she went to a certain tree near the women's bathing-place, at a certain time next week, she would try to meet her there. Golden went, and they met. Wreath told her she believed it all, but she could not then face breaking Caste and destroying her family's name. They had been good to her, how could she disgrace them? Still, she eagerly wanted to go on hearing, and we felt that if she did, the love of God would win. So we were full of hope.

Next time Golden went she could find no trace of her. She has never seen her since. There is a rumour that she has been carried off over the mountains, hundreds of miles away. In another village a bright, keen boy of seventeen listened one day when we taught the women, and, becoming greatly interested, openly took the Gospel's part when the village elders attacked it. After some weeks he gathered courage to come and see the Iyer. He was a very intelligent boy, well known all over the countryside, because he had studied the Tamil classics, and also because of his connection with one of the chief temples of the district. A fortnight after his visit here, our Band went to his village. They heard that he was married and gone, where, no one would say. The relations must have heard of his coming to us (of course he was urged to tell them), and they rushed him through a marriage, and sent him off post haste. So now there is another key turned, locking him into Hinduism. In the Village of the Wind a young girl became known as an inquirer. Her Caste passed the word along from village to village wherever its members were found, and all these relations and connections were speedily leagued in a compact to keep her from hearing more. When we went to see her, we found she had been posted off somewhere else. When we went to the somewhere else (always freely mentioned to us, with invitations to go), we found she had been there, but had been forwarded elsewhere. For weeks she was tossed about like this;

then we traced her, and found her. But she was thoroughly cowed, and dared not show the least interest in us. It is often like that. Just at the point where the soul-poise is so delicate that the lightest touch affects it, something, someone, pushes it roughly, and it trembles a moment, then falls—on the wrong side. The reason for all this alertness of opposition is, that scattered about the five thousand square miles we call our field, here and there seeds are beginning to grow. Some of the sowers are in England now, and some are in heaven—sowers and reapers, English and Tamil, rejoice together! This is known everywhere, for the news spreads from town to town, and then out to the villages, and the result is opposition. Sometimes the little patch of ground which looked so hopeful is trampled, and the young seedlings killed; sometimes they seem to be rooted up. When we go to our Master and tell Him, He explains it: "An Enemy hath done this." But as the measure of the Enemy's activity is in direct proportion to the measure of God's working, we take it as a sign of encouragement, however hindering it may be. Satan would not trouble to fight if he saw nothing worth attacking; he does not seem to mind the spread of a head knowledge of the Doctrine, or even a cordial appreciation of it. Often we hear the people say how excellent it is, and how they never worship idols now, but only the true God; and even a heathen mother will make her child repeat its texts to you, and a father will tell you how it tells him Bible stories; and if you are quite new to the work you put it in the Magazine, and at home it sounds like conversion. All this goes on most peacefully; there is not the slightest stir, till something happens to show the people that the Doctrine is not just a Creed, but contains a living Power. And then, and not till then, there is opposition. This opposition is sufficiently strong in the case of a boy or young man (older Caste men and women rarely "change their religion" in this part of South India), but if a girl is in question, the Caste is touched at its most sensitive point, and the feeling is simply intense. Men and demons seem to conspire to hold such a one in the clutch of the Terrible.

There is a young girl in Cupid's Lake Village whose heart the Lord opened some weeks ago. She is a gentle, timid girl, and devoted to her mother. "Can it be right to break my mother's heart?" she used to ask us pitifully. We urged her to try to win her mother, but the mother was just furious. The moment she understood that her daughter wanted to follow Jesus, or "join the Way," as she would express it, she gathered the girl's books and burnt them, and forbade her ever to mention the subject; and she went all round the villages trying to stop our work. At last things came to a crisis. The girl was told to do what she felt would be sin against God. She refused. They tried force, sheer brute force. She nerved herself for the leap in the dark, and tried to escape to us. But in the dark night she lost the way, and had to run back to her home. Next morning the village priest spread a story to the effect that his god had appeared to him, told him of her attempt to escape, and that she would try twice again, "but each time I will stand in the way and turn her back," he said. This naturally startled the girl. "Is his god stronger than Jesus?" she asked in real perplexity. We told her we thought the tale was concocted to frighten her; the priest had seen her, and made up the rest. But twice since then, driven by dire danger, that girl has tried to get to us, and each time she has been turned back. And now she is kept in rigorous guard, as her determination to be a Christian is well known to all in the place. Do you say, "Tell her to stay at home and bear it patiently"? We do tell her so, when we can see her, but we add, "till God makes a way of escape"; and if you knew all there is to be known about a Hindu home, and what may happen in it, you would not tell her otherwise. But supposing there is nothing more than negative difficulty to be feared, have you ever tried in thought to change places with such a girl? Have you ever considered how impossible it is for such a one to grow? The simple grace of continuance is in

danger of withering when all help of every sort is absolutely cut off, and the soul is, to begin with, not deeply rooted in God. Plants, even when they have life, need water and sunshine and air. Babes need milk.

You find it hard enough to grow, if one may judge from the constant wails about "leanness," and yet you are surrounded by every possible help to growth. You have a whole Bible, not just a scrap of it; and you can read it all, and understand at least most of it. You have endless good books, hymn-books, and spiritual papers; you have sermons every week, numerous meetings for edification, and perhaps an annual Convention. Now strip yourself of all this. Shut your Bible, and forget as completely as if you had never known it all you ever read or heard, except the main facts of the Gospel. Forget all those strengthening verses, all those beautiful hymns, all those inspiring addresses. Likewise, of course, entirely forget all the loving dealings of God with yourself and with others—a Hindu has no such memories to help her. Then go and live in a devil's den and develop saintliness. The truth is, even you would find it difficult; but this Hindu girl's case is worse than that, a million times worse. Think of the life, and then, if you can, tell her she must be quite satisfied with it, that it is the will of God. You could not say that it is His will! It is the will of the Terrible, who holds on to his prey, and would rather rend it limb from limb than ever let it go.

We are often asked to tell converts' stories; and certainly they would thrill, for the way of escape God opens sometimes is, like Peter's from prison, miraculous; and truth is stranger than fiction, and far more interesting. But we who work in the Terrible's lair, and know how he fights to get back his prey, even after it has escaped from him, are afraid to tell these stories too much, and feel that silence is safest, and, strange as it may seem to some, for the present most glorifies God. For a certain connection has been observed between publicity and peril. And we have learned by experience to fear any attempt to photograph spiritual fruit. The old Greek artist turned away the face that held too much for him to paint; and that turned-away face had power in it, they say, to touch men's hearts. We turn these faces away from you; may the very fact that we do it teach some at home to realise how much more lies in each of them than we can say, how great a need there is to pray that each may be kept safe. The names of one and another occur, because they came in the letters so often that I could not cross them all out without altering the character of the whole; they are part of one's very life. But as even a passing mention may mean danger, unless a counteracting influence of real prayer protects them, we ask you to pray that the tender protection of God may be folded round each one of them; and then when we meet where no sin can creep into the telling, and no harm can follow it, they will tell you their stories themselves, and God will give you your share in the joy, comrades by prayer at home! But let us press it on you now—pray, oh, pray for the converts! Pray that they may grow in Christ. Pray that He may see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied with each of them. And pray that we may enter into that travail of soul with Him. Nothing less is any good. Spiritual children mean travail of soul—spiritual agony. I wonder who among those who read this will realise what I mean. Some will, I think; so I write it. It is a solemn thing to find oneself drawn out in prayer which knows no relief till the soul it is burdened with is born. It is no less solemn afterwards, until Christ is formed in them. Converts are a responsible joy. And now we have told you a little of what is going on. There are days when nothing seems to be done, and then again there are days when the Terrible seems almost visible, as he gathers up his strength, and tears and mauls his prey. And so it is true we have to fight a separate fight for each soul. But another view of the case is a strength to us many a time. "We are

not ourselves fighting, but the Powers of Light are fighting against the Powers of Darkness," and the coming of the victory is only a question of time. "Shall the prey be taken from the Mighty or the captives of the Terrible be delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the Mighty shall be taken away and the prey of the Terrible shall be delivered."

1.09.06. Book 9: 6. Missed Ends

CHAPTER VI

Missed Ends

"If you could only know what one feels on finding oneself . . . where the least ray of the Gospel has not penetrated! If those friends who blame . . . could see from afar what we see, and feel what we feel, they would be the first to wonder that those redeemed by Christ should be so backward in devotion and know so little of the spirit of self-sacrifice. They would be ashamed of the hesitations that hinder us. . . . We must remember that it was not by interceding for the world in glory that Jesus saved it. He gave Himself. Our prayers for the evangelisation of the world are but a bitter irony so long as we only give of our superfluity, and draw back before the sacrifice of ourselves."

M. François Coillard, Africa.

"Someone must go, and if no one else will go, he who hears the call must go; I hear the call, for indeed God has brought it before me on every side, and go I must."

Rev. Henry Watson Fox, India. THE tom-toms thumped straight on all night, and the darkness shuddered round me like a living, feeling thing. I could not go to sleep, so I lay awake and looked; and I saw, as it seemed, this: That I stood on a grassy sward, and at my feet a precipice broke sheer down into infinite space. I looked, but saw no bottom; only cloud shapes, black and furiously coiled, and great shadow-shrouded hollows, and unfathomable depths. Back I drew, dizzy at the depth.

Then I saw forms of people moving single file along the grass. They were making for the edge. There was a woman with a baby in her arms and another little child holding on to her dress. She was on the very verge. Then I saw that she was blind. She lifted her foot for the next step . . . it trod air. She was over, and the children over with her. Oh, the cry as they went over!

Then I saw more streams of people flowing from all quarters. All were blind, stone blind; all made straight for the precipice edge. There were shrieks as they suddenly knew themselves falling, and a tossing up of helpless arms, catching, clutching at empty air. But some went over quietly, and fell without a sound.

Then I wondered, with a wonder that was simply agony, why no one stopped them at the edge. I could not. I was glued to the ground, and I could not call; though I strained and tried, only a whisper would come.

Then I saw that along the edge there were sentries set at intervals. But the intervals were far too great; there were wide, unguarded gaps between. And over these gaps the people fell in their blindness, quite unwarned; and the green grass seemed blood-red to me, and the gulf yawned like the mouth of hell.

Then I saw, like a little picture of peace, a group of people under some trees, with their backs turned towards the gulf. They were making daisy chains. Sometimes when a piercing shriek cut the quiet air and reached them it disturbed them, and they thought it a rather vulgar noise. And if one of their number started up and wanted to go and do something to help, then all the others would pull that one down. "Why should you get so excited about it? You must wait for a definite call to go! You haven't finished your daisy chains yet. It would be really selfish," they said, "to leave us to finish the work alone."

There was another group. It was made up of people whose great desire was to get more sentries out; but they found that very few wanted to go, and sometimes there were no sentries set for miles and miles of the edge.

Once a girl stood alone in her place, waving the people back; but her mother and other relations called, and reminded her that her furlough was due; she must not break the rules. And being tired and needing a change, she had to go and rest for awhile; but no one was sent to guard her gap, and over and over the people fell, like a waterfall of souls.

Once a child caught at a tuft of grass that grew at the very brink of the gulf; it clung convulsively, and it called—but nobody seemed to hear. Then the roots of the grass gave way, and with a cry the child went over, its two little hands still holding tight to the torn-off bunch of grass. And the girl who longed to be back in her gap thought she heard the little one cry, and she sprang up and wanted to go; at which they reproved her, reminding her that no one is necessary anywhere; the gap would be well taken care of, they knew. And then they sang a hymn.

Then through the hymn came another sound like the pain of a million broken hearts wrung out in one full drop, one sob. And a horror of great darkness was upon me, for I knew what it was—the Cry of the Blood.

Then thundered a Voice, the Voice of the Lord: "And He said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brothers' blood crieth unto Me from the ground."

. . . . . The tom-toms still beat heavily, the darkness still shuddered and shivered about me; I heard the yells of the devil-dancers and the weird wild shriek of the devil-possessed just outside the gate.

What does it matter, after all? It has gone on for years; it will go on for years. Why make such a fuss about it?

God forgive us! God arouse us! Shame us out of our callousness! Shame us out of our sin!

One afternoon, a few weeks after that night at the precipice edge, Victory and I were visiting in the Red Lake Village, when we heard the death-beat of the tom-tom and the shriek of the conch shell, and we knew that another had gone beyond our reach. One can never get accustomed to this. We stopped for a moment and listened. The women we were teaching broke in with eager explanations. "Oh, he was such a great one! He had received the Initiation. There will be a grand ceremonial, grander than ever you have!" Then they told us how this great one had been initiated into the Hindu mysteries by his family priest, and that the mystical benefits accruing from this initiation were to be caused to revert to the priest. This Reverting of the Initiation was to be one of the ceremonies. We watched the procession pass down the street. They were going for water from

a sacred stream for the bathing of purification. When they return, said the women, the ceremonies will begin. A little later we passed the house, and stood looking in through the doorway. There was the usual large square courtyard, with the verandah running round three sides. The verandah was full of women. We longed to go in, but did not think they would let us. The courtyard was rather confused; men were rushing about, putting up arches and decorating them; servants were sweeping, and cooking, and shouting to one another; the women were talking and laughing. And all the time from within the house came the sound of the dirge for the dead, and the laugh and the wail struck against each other, and jarred. No one noticed us for awhile, but at last a woman saw us, and beckoned us to come. "We are all defiled to-day; you may sit with us," they said; and yielding to the instincts of their kindly Tamil nature, they crushed closer together to make room for us beside them. How I did enjoy being squeezed up there among them. But to appreciate that in the least you would have to work in a caste-bound part of old India; you can have no idea, until you try, how hard it is to refrain from touching those whom you love. The house door opened upon the verandah, and we could hear the moan of the dirge. "There is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet." There was no quietness, only the ceaseless moan, that kept rising into a wail; there were tears in the sound of the wail, and I felt like a sort of living harp with all its strings drawn tight. But the women outside cared nothing at all. It was strange to see how callous they were. It was not their own who had died, so they chatted and laughed and watched the proceedings—the tying of the garlands round the arches, the arrangement of offerings for the Brahmans. It was all full of interest to them. We tried to turn their thoughts to the Powers of the World to Come. But no. They did not care.

Presently there was a stir. "The men are coming!" they said. "Run! there is a shady corner under those palms on the far verandah! Run and hide! They are here!" And, even as they spoke, in streamed the men, each with his brass water-vessel poised on his head, and they saw us standing there. We thought they would turn us out, and were quite prepared to go at a sign from the head of the clan. But he was a friend of ours, and he smiled as we salaamed, and pointed to a quiet corner, out of the way, where we could see it all without being too much seen. To understand this, which to me was a surprise, one must remember that by nature the Indian is most courteous, and if it were not for Caste rules we should be allowed to come much closer to them than is possible now. To-day they were all ceremonially unclean, so our presence was not considered polluting. Also the Indian loves a function; sad or glad, it matters little. Life is a bubble on the water; enjoy it while you may. And they sympathised with what they thought was our desire to see the show. This was human; they could understand it. So they let us stay; and we stayed, hoping for a chance later on.

Then the ceremonies began. They carried the dead man out and laid him in the courtyard under the arch of palms. He was old and worn and thin. One could see the fine old face, with the marks of the Hindu trident painted down the forehead. He had been a most earnest Hindu; all the rites were duly performed, and morning and night for many years he had marked those marks on his brow. Had he ever once listened to the Truth? I do not know. He must have heard about it, but he had not received it. He died, they told us, "not knowing what lay on the other side." The water-bearers laid their vessels on the ground. Each had a leaf across its mouth. The priest was crowned with a chaplet of flowers. Then came the bathing. They threw up a shelter, and carried him there. It was reverently done. There was a touch of refinement in the thought which banished

the women and children before the bathing began. Tamils bathe in the open air, and always clothed, but always apart. And as the women's verandah overlooked the screened enclosure, they were all ordered off. They went and waited, silent now, awed by the presence of the men. While the bathing was going on the priests chanted and muttered incantations, and now and again a bell was rung, and incense waved, and tapers lighted. Now they were causing that mysterious Something which still hovered round the lifeless form to leave it and return to them, and when the bathing was over they signified that all was done; the Influence had departed, descended; the funeral ceremonies might proceed. And all this time, without a break, the dirge was being sung by the mourners in the house. It was a sort of undernote to all the sounds outside. Then the old man, robed in white and crowned and wreathed with flowers, was carried round to the other side; and oh, the pitifulness of it all! St. Paul must have been thinking of some such scene when he wrote to the converts, "That ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope." And I thought how strangely callous we were, how superficial our sympathy. The Lord's command does not stir us, the sorrow of those we neglect does not touch us; we think so much more of ourselves and our own selfish pleasure than we think of the purpose for which we were saved—and at such a tremendous cost! Oh for a baptism of reality and obedience to sweep over us! Oh to be true to the hymns we sing and the vows we make! God make us true.

Forgive all this. It was burnt into me afresh that day as I sat there watching the things they did and listening to what they said. We had come too late for that old dead man, too late for most of the living ones too. Can you wonder if at such solemn times one yields oneself afresh and for ever to obey?

Rice was prepared for the dead man's use, and balls of rice were ready to be offered to his spirit after his cremation; for the Hindus think that an intermediate body must be formed and nourished, which on the thirteenth day after death is conducted to either heaven or hell, according to the deeds done on earth. The ceremonies were all characterised by a belief in some future state. The spirit was somewhere—in the dark—so they tried to light the way for him. This reminds me of one ceremony especially suggestive. All the little grandchildren were brought, and lighted tapers given to them; then they processioned round the bier, round and round many times, holding the tapers steadily, and looking serious and impressed.

Then the widow came out with a woman on either side supporting her. And she walked round and round her husband, with the tears rolling down her face, and she wailed the widow's wail, with her very heart in it. Why had he gone away and left her desolate? His was the spirit of fragrance like the scented sandal-wood; his was the arm of strength like the lock that barred the door. Gone was the scent of the sandal, broken and open the door; why had the bird flown and left but the empty cage? Gone! was he gone? Was he really gone? Was it certain he was dead? He who had tossed and turned on the softest bed they could make, must he lie on the bed of his funeral pyre? Must he burn upon logs of wood? Say, was there no way to reach him, no way to help him now? "I have searched for thee, but I find thee not." And so the dirge moaned on.

I could not hear all this then; Victory told it to me, and much more, afterwards. "Last time I heard it," she said, "I was inside, wailing too." As the poor widow went round and round she stopped each time she got to the feet, and embraced them fervently. Sometimes she broke through all restraint, and clasped him in her arms. A photo rarely possible. The dead woman lies in her bier;

the white on her eyes and brow is the mark of Siva's ashes. Some of the mourners are so marked, as they are all Saivites. The fire is lighted from the pot of fire to the right. Just before it is lighted, the chief mourner takes a vessel of water, pierces a hole in it, walks round the dead, letting the water trickle out, pierces another hole and repeats the walk. After the third piercing and walk, he throws the pot backwards over his shoulder, and as it smashes the water all splashes out. This is to refresh the spirit if it should be thirsty while its body is being burned.

After many ceremonies had been performed, the men all went away, and the women were left to bid farewell to the form soon to be carried out. Then the men came back and bore him across the courtyard, and paused under the arch outside, while the women all rushed out, tearing their hair and beating themselves and wailing wildly. As they were lifting the bier to depart the cry was, "Stop! stop! Will he not speak?" And this, chanted again and again, would have made the coldest care. Then when all was over, and the long procession, headed by the tom-toms and conch shells, had passed out of sight, the women pressed in again, and each first let down her hair, and seized her nearest neighbour, and they all flung themselves on the ground and knocked their heads against it, and then, rising to a sitting posture, they held on to one another, swaying backwards and forwards and chanting in time to the swaying, in chorus and antiphone. All this, even to the hair-tearing and head-knocking, was copied by the children who were present with terrible fidelity.

We sat down among them. They took our hands and rocked us in the orthodox way. But we did not wail and we did not undo our hair. We tried to speak comforting words to those who were really in grief, but we found it was not the time. A fortnight later we went again, and found the house door open because we had been with them that day. But we could not help them then, so we rose and were going away, when, held by the power of that dirge of theirs, I turned to look again. The last rays of the afternoon sun were lighting up the courtyard, and shining on the masses of black hair and grey. As I looked they got up one by one, and put their disordered dress to rights, and shook out the dust from their glossy hair, and did it up again. And one by one, without farewell of any sort, they went away. An hour later we met groups of them coming home from bathing. They would not touch us then. Afterwards the chief mourners came out and bathed, and went all round the village wailing. And the last thing I saw, as the sun set over the hills and the place grew chill and dark, was the old widow, worn out now, returning home in her wet things, wailing still.

I write this under a sense of the solemnity of being "a servant . . . separated unto the Gospel." I would not write one word lightly. But oh! may I ask you to face it? Are we honest towards God? If we were, would these people be left to die as they are being left to die?

We feel for them. But feelings will not save souls; it cost God Calvary to win us.

It will cost us as much as we may know of the fellowship of His sufferings, if those for whom He died that day are ever to be won.

. . . . . .

I am writing in the midst of the sights and the sounds of life. There is life in the group of women at the well; life in the voices, in the splash of the water, in the cry of a child, in the call of the mother; life in the flight of the parrots as they flock from tree to tree; life in their chatter as they quarrel and scream; life, everywhere life. How can I think out of all this, back into death again? But I want to, for you may live for many a year in India without being allowed to see once what we have seen

twice within two months, and it cannot be for nothing that we saw it. We must be meant to show it to you. This needs to be looked into. Gradually the middle clears. The women are holding each other's hands preparatory to swaying backwards and forwards as they chant the dirge for the dead. The lamp (you see its top near the vessel on the right) was lighted as soon as the old woman died, and placed at her head on the floor. So blindly they show their sense of the darkness of death. The brass water vessel, with the leaves laid across its mouth, was filled with the water of purification. This was poured in a circle on the floor round the body. The bits of grass are the sacred Kusa grass used in many religious ceremonies. The Picture-catching Missie and I were in the Village of the Tamarind Tree, when for the second time I saw it. They are very friendly there, and just as in the Red Lake Village they let us look behind the curtain, so here again they pushed it back, and let us in, and went on with their business, not minding us. We crouched up close together on the only scrap of empty space, and watched.

Everything was less intense; the dead was only a poor and very old widow who had lived her life out, and was not wanted. There were no near kindred, only relations by marriage; it was evident everyone went through the form without emotion of any sort. The woman lay on a rough bier on the floor, and round her crowded a dozen old women. At her head there was a brass vessel of water, a lamp-stand, some uncooked rice, and some broken cocoanuts. Just before we came in they had filled a little brass vessel from the larger one. Now one of the old hags walked round the dead three times, pouring the water out as she walked. Then another fed her—fed that poor dead mouth, stuffed it in so roughly it made us sick and faint. There were other things done hurriedly, carelessly; we could not follow them. The last was the rubbing on of ashes—she had been a worshipper of Siva—also they covered the closed eyes with ashes and patted them down flat. And all the time the gabble of the women mocked at the silence of death. There was no reverence, no sense of solemnity; the ceremonial so full of symbol to its makers, the thinkers of Védic times, was to them simply a custom, a set of customs, to be followed and got through as quickly as might be by heedless hands. And yet they faithfully carried out every detail they knew, and they finished their heartless work and called to the men to come. The men were waiting outside. They came in and carried her out.

It seemed impossible to think of a photograph then; it was most unlikely they would let us take one, and we hardly felt in the spirit of picture-catching. Yet we thought of you, and of how you certainly could never see it unless we could show it to you; and we wanted to show it to you, so we asked them if we might. Of course if there had been real grief, as in the other I had seen, we could not have asked it, it would have been intrusion; but here there was none—that was the pathos of it. And they were very friendly, so they put their burden on the ground, and waited.

There it is. To the right the barber stands with his fire-bowl hanging from a chain; this is to light the funeral pyre. The smoke interfered with the photo, but then it is true to life. To the left stands the man with the shell ready to blow. At the back, with the sacred ashes rubbed on forehead and breast and arms, stand the two nearest relatives, who to-morrow will gather the ashes and throw them into the stream. The picture was caught. The man with the shell blew it, the man with the fire came in front, the bearers lifted the bier; they went away with their dead.

These are three of the mourners, but they were only mourning ceremonially; and so, released for the moment from their duty, they quite enjoyed themselves.

Then the old women, who had been pressing through the open door, rushed back in the usual way and began the usual rock and dirge. These Comparison Songs are always full of soul. They have sprung into being in times of deepest feeling, taken shape when hearts were as finely wrought moulds which left their impress upon them. And to hear them chanted without any soul is somehow a pitiful thing, a sort of profanation, like the singing of sacred words for pay. The photograph was not easy to take, the space was so confined, the movement so continuous, the commotion so confusing. How it was taken I know not; the women massed on the floor were not still for more than a moment. In that moment it was done. Then we persuaded three of them to risk the peril of being caught alone. They would not move farther than the wall of the house, and as it was in a narrow street, again there were difficulties. But the crowning perplexity was at the water-side. It was windy, and our calls were blown away, so they did not hear what we wanted them to do, and they splashed too vigorously. Their only idea just then was to get themselves and their garments ceremonially clean, defiled as they were by contact with the dead. But let those six whom you can partly see stand for the thousands upon thousands whom you cannot see at all. Those thousands are standing in water to-day from the North to the uttermost South, as the last act in the drama which they have played in the presence of the dead.

. . . . . The women have gone from the well. The parrots have flown to other trees. The Tamils say the body is the sheath of the soul. I think of that empty sheath I saw, and wonder where the soul has flown. It has gone—but where? Has it gone home, like the women from the well? Has it flown far, like the birds among the trees? It has gone, it has gone, that is all we know. It has gone.

Then I read these words from Conybeare and Howson’s translation: "If the tent which is my earthly house be destroyed I have a mansion built by God . . . eternal in the heavens. And herein I groan with earnest longings, desiring to cover my earthly raiment with the robes of my heavenly mansion. . . . And He who has prepared me for this very end is God." The dead man missed his End. That old dead woman missed it too. And the millions around us still alive are missing their End to-day. "This very End"—think of it—Mortality swallowed up in Life—Death only an absence, Life for ever a presence—Present with the Lord who has prepared us "for this very End." Can we enjoy it all by ourselves? Will there be no sense of incompleteness if the many are outside, missing it all because they missed their End? Will the glory make us glad if they are somewhere far away from it and God? Will not heaven be almost an empty place to one who has never tried to fill it? Yet there is room, oh so much room, for those we are meant to bring in with us! And there is room, oh so much room, along the edge of the precipice. There are gaps left all unguarded. Can it be that you are meant to guard one of those gaps? If so, it will always remain as it is, a falling-point for those rivers of souls, unless you come. Are these things truth or are they imagination? If they are imagination—then let the paper on which they are written be burnt, burnt till it curls up and the words fall into dust. But if they are true—then what are we going to do? Not what are we going to say or sing, or even feel or pray—but what are we going to do? The ceremonial bathing. They are all old women, but the very oldest old woman in India bathes most vigorously. After this bathing is over, they are purified from the defilement contracted by going to the house of the dead.

1.09.07. Book 9: 7. "The Dust of the Actual"

CHAPTER VII "The Dust of the Actual"

"This may be counted as our richest gain, to have learned afresh one’s utter impotency so completely that the past axiom of service, ’I can no more convert a soul than create a star,’ comes to be an awful revelation, so that God alone may be exalted in that day."

Rev. Walter Searle, Africa.

WE have just come back from a Pariah village. Now see it all with me. Such a curious little collection of huts, thrown down anywhere; such half-frightened, half-friendly faces; such a scurrying in of some and out of others; and we wonder which house we had better make for. We stop before one a shade cleaner than most, and larger and more open.

"May we come in?" Chorus, "Come in! oh, come in!" and in we go. It is a tiny, narrow slip of a room. At one end there is a fire burning on the ground; the smoke finds its way out through the roof, and a pot of rice set on three stones is bubbling cheerfully. No fear of defilement here. They would not like us to touch their rice or to see them eating it, but they do not mind our being in the room where it is being cooked. At the other end of the narrow slip there is a goat-pen, not very clean; and down one side there is a raised mud place where the family apparently sleep. This side and the two ends are roofed by palmyra palm. It is dry and crackles at a touch, and you touch it every time you stand up, so bits of it are constantly falling and helping to litter the open space below. An ancient Pariah, but the baby in her arms is a son of the Caste of Palmyra Climbers. Both faces—the old crone’s and the baby boy’s—are very typical. The baby is a "Christian," I should explain, and his parents are true Christians, otherwise the Pariah woman would not have been allowed to touch him.

Five babies at different stages of refractoriness are sprawling about on this strip of floor; they make noises all the time. Half a dozen imbecile-looking old women crowd in through the low door, and stare and exchange observations. Three young men with nothing particular to do lounge at the far end of the platform near the goats. A bright girl, with more jewellery on than is usual among Pariahs, is tending the fire at the end near the door; she throws a stick or two on as we enter, and hurries forward to get a mat. We sit down on the mat, and she sits beside us; and the usual questions are asked and answered by way of introduction. There is a not very clean old woman diligently devouring betel; another with an enormous mouth, which she always holds wide open; another with a very loud voice and a shock of unspeakable hair. But they listen fairly well till a goat creates a diversion by making a remark, and a baby—a jolly little scrap in its nice brown skin and a bangle—yells, and everyone’s attention concentrates upon it. The goat subsides, the baby is now in its mother’s arms; so we go on where we left off, and I watch the bright young girl, and notice that she listens as one who understands. She looks rather superior; her rose-coloured seeley is clean, and two large gold jewels are in each ear; she has a little gold necklet round her throat, and silver bangles and toe rings. All the others are hopelessly grubby and very unenlightened, but they

listen just as most people listen in church, with a sort of patient expression. It is the proper thing to do.

I am talking to them now, and till I am half-way through nobody says anything, when suddenly the girl remarks, "We have ten fingers, not just one!" which is so astonishing that I stop and wonder what she can be thinking of. I was talking about the one sheep lost out of one hundred. What has that got to do with one finger and ten? She goes on to explain, "I have heard all this before. I have a sister who is a Christian, and once I stayed with her, and I heard all about your religion, and I felt in my heart it was good. But then I was married" ("tied," she said), "and of course I forgot about it; but now I remember, and I say if ten of our people will join and go over to your Way, that will be well, but what would be the use of one going? What is the use of one finger moving by itself? It takes ten to do the day's work."

"If ten of you had cholera, and I brought you cholera medicine, would you say, 'I won't take it unless nine others take it too'?" I replied. She laughs and the others laugh, but a little uneasily. They hardly like this reference to the dreaded cholera; death of the body is so much more tremendous in prospect than death of the soul. "You would take it, and then the others, seeing it do you good, would perhaps take it too"; and we try to press home the point of the illustration. But a point pricks, and pricking is uncomfortable. The three men begin to shuffle their feet and talk about other things; the old mother-in-law proposes betel all round, and hands us some grimy-looking leaves with a pressing invitation to partake. The various onlookers make remarks, and the girl devotes herself to her baby. But she is thinking; one can see old memories are stirred. At last with a sigh she gets up, looks round the little indifferent group, goes over to the fireplace, and blows up the fire. This means we had better say salaam; so we say it and they say it, adding the usual "Go and come."

It will be easier to help these people out of their low levels than it will be to help their masters of the higher walks of life. But to do anything genuine or radical among either set of people is never really easy.

"It takes the Ideal to blow a hair's-breadth off the Dust of the Actual."

It takes more. It takes God. It takes God to do anything anywhere. Yesterday we were visiting in one of the Caste villages, and one old lady, who really seems to care for us, said she would greatly like to take my hand in hers; "but," she explained, "this morning one of the children of the place leaned over the edge of the tank to drink, and he fell in and was drowned; so I have been to condole with his people, and I have now returned from bathing, and do not feel equal to bathing again." If she touched me she would have to bathe to get rid of the defilement. Of course I assured her I quite understood, but as she sat there within two inches of me, yet so carefully preserving inviolate those two inches of clear space, I felt what a small thing this caste-created distance was, the merest "Dust of the Actual" on the surface of the system of her life; and yet, "to blow a hair's-breadth of it off, nothing less is needed than the breath of the power of God." "Come, O Breath, and breathe!" we cry. Nothing else will do.

Something in our talk led to a question about the character of Jesus, and, as we tried to describe a little of the loveliness of our dear Lord to her, her dark eyes kindled. "How beautiful it is!" she said; "how beautiful He must be!" She seemed "almost persuaded," but we knew it was only almost, not

quite; for she does not yet know her need of a Saviour, she has no sense of sin. Sometimes, it is true, that comes later; but we find that if the soul is to resist the tremendous opposing forces which will instantly be brought to bear upon it if it turns in the least towards Christ, there must be a conviction wrought within it; nothing so superficial as a feeling, be it ever so appreciative or hopeful or loving, will stand that strain.

So, though the eyes of this dear woman fill with tears as she hears of the price of pain He paid, and though she gladly listens as we read and talk with her and pray, yet we know the work has not gone deep, and we make our "petitions deep" for her, and go on. In India men must work among men, and women among women, but sometimes, in new places, as I have told before, we have to stop and talk with the men before they will let us pass. For example, one afternoon I was waylaid on my way to the women by the head of the household I was visiting, a fine old man of the usual type, courteous but opposed. He asked to look at my books. I had a Bible, a lyric book, and a book of stanzas bearing upon the Truth, copied from the old Tamil classics. He pounced upon this. Then he began to chant the stanzas in their inimitable way, and at the sound several other old men drew round the verandah, till soon a dozen or more were listening with that appreciative expression they seem to reserve for their own beloved poetry.

After the reader had chanted through a dozen or more stanzas, he stopped abruptly and asked me if I really cared for it. Of course I said I did immensely, and only wished I knew more, for the Tamil classics are a study in themselves, and these beautiful ancient verses I had copied out were only gleanings from two large volumes, full of the wisdom of the East.

They were all thoroughly friendly now, and we got into conversation. One of the group held that there are three co-eternal substances—God, the Soul, and Sin. Sin is eternally bound up in the soul, as verdigris is inherent in copper. It can be removed eventually by intense meditation upon God, and by the performance of arduous works of merit. But these exercises they all admitted were incompatible with the ordinary life of most people, and generally impracticable. And so the fact is, the verdigris of sin remains.

I remember the delight with which I discovered that Isaiah 1:25 uses this very illustration; for the word translated "dross" in English is the colloquial word for verdigris in Tamil; so the verse reads, "I will turn My hand to thee, and thoroughly purify thee, so as to remove thy verdigris."

Most of the others held a diametrically opposite view. So far from Soul and Sin being co-eternal with God they are not really existent at all. Both are illusory. There is only one existent entity. It is the Divine Spirit, and it has neither personality nor any personal qualities. All apparent separate existences are delusive. Meditation, of the same absorbing type held necessary by the other, is the only way to reach the stage of enlightenment which leads to reabsorption into the Divine essence, in which we finally merge, and lose what appeared to be our separate identity. We are lost in God, as a drop is lost in the ocean.

Some of the men advocated a phase of truth which reminds one of Calvinism gone mad, and others exactly opposite are extravagantly Arminian. The Calvinists illustrate their belief by a single illuminating word, Cat-hold, and the Arminians by another, Monkey-hold. Could you find better illustrations? The cat takes up the kitten and carries it in its mouth; the kitten is passive, the cat does everything. But the little monkey holds on to its mother, and clings with might and main.

Those who have watched the "cat-hold" in the house, and the "monkey-hold" out in the jungle, can appreciate the accuracy of these two illustrations. But running through every form of Hinduism, however contradictory each to the other may be, there is the underlying thought of pure and simple Pantheism. And this explains many of the aforesaid contradictions, and many of the incongruities which are constantly cropping up and bewildering one who is trying to understand the Hindu trend of thought. So, though those men all affirmed that there is only one God, they admitted that they each worshipped several. They saw nothing inconsistent in this. Just as the air is in everything, so God is in everything, therefore in the various symbols. And as our King has divers representative Viceroys and Governors to rule over his dominions in his name, so the Supreme has these sub-deities, less in power and only existing by force of Himself, and He, being all-pervasive, can be worshipped under their forms. This argument they all unitedly pressed upon me that afternoon, and though capital answers probably present themselves to your mind, you might not find they satisfied the Hindu who argues along lines of logic peculiar to the East, and subtle enough to mystify the practical Western brain; and then—for we are conceited as well as practical—we are apt to pity the poor Hindu for being so unlike ourselves; and if we are wholly unsympathetic, we growl that there is nothing in the argument, whereas there is a good deal in it, only we do not see it, because we have never thought out the difficulty in question. Quite opposite, sometimes we have to meet a type of mind like that of MacDonald's student of Shakespeare, who "missed a plain point from his eyes being so sharp that they looked through it without seeing it, having focussed themselves beyond it." Assuredly there is much to learn before one can hope to understand the winding of the thread of thought which must be traced if one would follow the working of the Hindu mind. Let no one with a facility for untying mental knots think that his gift would be wasted in India! The word that struck those men that afternoon was 1 John v. 11 and 12: "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I was longing to get to the women, but when they began to read those verses and ask about the meaning, I could not go without trying to tell them. Oh, how one needed at that moment Christ to become to us Wisdom, for it is just here one may so easily make mistakes. Put the truth of God's relation to the soul subjectively—"He that hath the Son hath life"—before thoughtful Hindus such as these men were, and they will be perfectly enchanted; for the Incarnation presents no difficulty to them, as it would to a Mohammedan; and perhaps, to your sudden surprise and joy, they will say, that is exactly what they are prepared to believe. "Christ in me"—this is comprehensible. "The indwelling of the Spirit of God"—this is analogous to their own phrase: "The indwelling of the Deity in the lotus of the heart." But probably by trading on words and expressions which are already part of the Hindu terminology, and which suggest to them materialistic ideas, we may seriously mislead and be misled. We need to understand not only what the Hindu says, but also what his words mean to himself, a very different thing. That talk ended in a promise from the men that they would arrange a meeting of Hindus for the Iyer, if he would come and take it, which of course he did. I should like to finish up by saying, "and several were converted," but as yet that would not be true. These deep-rooted ancient and strong philosophies are formidable enough, when rightly understood, to make us feel how little we can do to overturn them; but they are just as "Dust" in comparison with the force of the "Actual" entrenched behind them. Only superficial Dust; and yet, as in every other case, nothing but the Breath of God can blow this Dust away.

Another widow. She was never a wife; and, moved by some sort of pity, they let her keep one jewel in each ear. She is a Vellalar; her people are wealthy landowners. She was ashamed of having yielded to the weakness of letting us take her photo; and when we went to show it to her, she would not look at it. She has no desire whatever to hear; and she and the young girl on the step at her feet are resolute in opposing the teaching.

We left the old men to their books and endless disquisitions, and went on to the women's quarter. There we saw a young child-widow, very fair and sweet and gentle, but quieter than a child should be; for she is a widow accursed. Her mind is keen—she wants to learn; but why should a widow learn, they say, why should her mind break bounds? She lives in a tiny mud-built house, in a tiny mud-walled yard; she may not go out beyond those walls, then why should she think beyond? But she is better off than most, for she lives with her mother, who loves her, and her father makes a pet of her, and so she is sheltered more or less from the cruel scourge of the tongue.

There is another in the next courtyard; she is not sheltered so. She lives with her mother-in-law, and the world has lashed her heart for years; it is simply callous now. There she sits with her chin in her hand, just hard. Years ago they married her, an innocent, playful little child, to a man who died when she was nine years old. Then they tore her jewels from her, all but two little ear-rings, which they left in pity to her; and this poor little scrap of jewellery was her one little bit of joy. She could not understand it at first, and when her pretty coloured seeleys were taken away, and she had to wear the coarse white cloth she hated so, she cried with impotent childish wrath; and then she was punished, and called bitter names,—the very word widow means bitterness,—and gradually she understood that there was something the matter with her. She was not like other little girls. She had brought ill-fortune to the home. She was accursed.

It is true that some are more gently dealt with, and many belong to Castes where the yoke of Custom lies lighter; for these the point of the curse is blunted, there is only a dull sense of wrong. But in all the upper Castes the pressure is heavy, and there are those who feel intensely, feel to the centre of their soul, the sting of the shame of the curse.

"It is fate," says the troubled mother; "who can escape his fate?" "It is sin," says the mother-in-law; and the rest of the world agrees. "'Where the bull goes, there goes its rope.' 'Deeds done in a former birth, in this birth burn.'"

Much of the working of the curse is hidden behind shut doors. I saw a young widow last week whose mind is becoming deranged in consequence of the severity of the penance she is compelled to perform. When, as they put it, "the god of ill-fortune seizes her," that is, when she becomes violent, she is quietly "removed to another place." No one sees what is done to her there, but I know that part of the treatment consists in scratching her head with thorns, and then rubbing raw lime juice in—lime juice is like lemon juice, only more acid. When the paroxysm passes she reappears, and does penance till the next fit comes. This has been repeated three times within the last few months.

I was visiting in a Hindu house for two years before I found out that all that time a girl of seventeen was kept alone in an upper room. "Let her weep," they said, quoting a proverb; "'though she weeps, will a widow's sorrow pass?'" Once a day, after dark, she was brought downstairs for a few minutes, and once a day, at noon, some coarse food was taken up to her. She is allowed

downstairs now, but only in the back part of the house; she never thinks of resisting this decree—it, and all it stands for, is her fate. Sometimes the glad girl-life reasserts itself, and she plays and laughs with her sister-in-law's pretty baby boy; but if she hears a man's voice she disappears upstairs. There are proverbs in the language which tell why.

I sat on the verandah of a well-to-do Hindu house one day, and talked to the bright-looking women in their jewels and silks. And all the time, though little I knew it, a widow was tied up in a sack in one of the inner rooms. This wrong is a hidden wrong.

I do not think that anyone would call the Hindus distinctively cruel; in comparison with most other Asiatics their instincts are kind. A custom so merciless as this custom, which punishes the innocent with so grievous a punishment, does not seem to us to be natural to them. It seems like a parasite custom, which has struck its roots deep into the tree of Hindu social life, but is not part of it. Think of the power which must have been exerted somewhere by someone before the disposition of a nation could be changed. This custom as it stands is formidable enough. Many a man, Indian and foreign, has fought it and failed. It is a huge and most rigorous system of tyrannical oppression, a very pyramid to look at, old, immovable. But there is Something greater behind it. It is only the effect of a Cause—the Dust of the Actual.

What can alter the custom? Strong writing or speaking, agitations, Acts of Parliament? All these surely have their part. They raise the question, stir the Dust—but blow it off? Oh no! nothing can touch the conscience of the people, and utterly reverse their view of things, and radically alter them, but God.

Yes, it is true, we may make the most of what has been done by Government, by missionaries and reformers, but there are times in the heart histories of all who look far enough down to see what goes on under the surface of things, when the sorrow takes shape in the Prophet's cry, "We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth!"

It is true. We have not. We cannot even estimate the real weight of the lightest speck of the Dust that has settled on the life of this people. But we believe that our God, Who comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, comprehends to the uttermost the Dust of the Actual, and we believe to see Him work, with Whom is strength and effectual working.

We believe to see, and believing even now we see; and when we see anything, be it ever so little, when the Breath breathes, and even "a hair's-breadth" of that Dust is blown away, then, with an intensity I cannot describe, we feel the presence of the Lord our God among us, and look up in the silence of joy and expectation for the coming of the Day when all rule, and all authority and power, yea, the power of the very Actual itself, shall be put down, that God may be all in all. So again and yet again we ask you to pray not less for the Reform movement, and the Educational movement, and the Civilising movement of India, but far more for the Movement of the Breath of God, and far more for us His workers here, that we may abide in Him without Whom we can do nothing.

1.09.08. Book 9: 8. Roots

CHAPTER VIII

Roots

"It is not an easy thing in England to lead an old man or woman to Christ, even though the only ’root’ which holds them from Him is love of the world. As the Tamil proverb says, ’That which did not bend at five will not be bent at fifty,’ still less at sixty or seventy. When a soul in India is held down, not by one root only, but by a myriad roots, who is sufficient to deliver it? Only He who overturneth the mountains by the roots. ’This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.’" An Indian Missionary.

"AMMA, you are getting old."

"Yes (grunt), yes."

"When we are old then death is near."

"Yes (grunt), yes."

"Then we must leave our bodies and go somewhere else."

Three more grunts.

"Amma, do you know where you are going?"

Then the old woman wakes up a little, grunts a little more, "Who knows where she is going?" she mumbles, and relapses into grunts.

"I know where I am going," the girl answers. "Amma, don’t you want to know?"

"Don’t I want to know what?"

"Where you are going."

"Why do I want to know what?" The girl goes over it again. The old woman turns to her daughter-in-law. "Is the rice ready?" she says. The girl tries again. The old woman agrees we all must die. Death is near to the ancient; she is ancient, therefore death is near to her, she must go somewhere after death. It would be well to know where she is going. She does not know where she is going. Then she gazes and grunts.

Enlargement of one of the old dames seen in chapter vi. A capital typical face. We have a number of these keen, interesting old people, but very rarely find they have any desire to "change their religion." They are "rooted." The girl tries on different lines. Whom is the old woman looking to, to help her when death comes?

"God."

"What God?"

"The great God." And rousing herself to express herself she declares that He is her constant meditation, therefore all is well. "Is the rice ready?"

"No."

"Then give me some betel leaf," and she settles down to roll small pieces of lime into little balls, and these balls she rolls up in a betel leaf, with a bit of areca nut for taste, and this betel leaf she puts into her mouth—all this very slowly, and with many inarticulate sounds, which I have translated "grunts." And this is all she does. She does not want to listen or talk, she only wants to scrunch betel, and grunt. This is not a touching tale. It is only true. It happened this evening exactly as I have told it, and the girl, a distant connection of the old woman, who had come with me so delightedly, eager to tell the Good Tidings, had to give it up. She had begun by speaking about the love of Jesus, but that had fallen perfectly flat; so she had tried the more startling form of address, with this result—grunts.

I spent an afternoon not long ago with a more intelligent specimen. Here she is, a fine sturdy old character, one of the three you saw before. She was immensely interested with her photo, which I showed her, and she could not understand at all how, in the one moment when she stood against a wall, her face "had been caught on a piece of white paper." A little explanation opened the way for the greater thing I had come about. We were sitting on a mud verandah, opening on to a square courtyard; two women pounding rice, two more grinding it, another sweeping, a cow, some fowls, a great many children, and several babies, made it exceedingly difficult to concentrate one’s attention on anything, and still more difficult to get the wandering brains of an old woman to concentrate on a subject in which she had no interest. She had been interested in the photograph, but that was different. The conversation ended by her remarking that it was getting dark, ought I not to be going home? It was not getting dark yet, but it meant that she had had enough, so I salaamed and went, hoping for a better chance again. Next time we visited the Village of the Tamarind she was nowhere to be seen; she had gone to her own village, she had only come here for the funeral. Would she return, we asked? Not probable, they said, "she had come and gone." "Come and gone." As they said it, one felt how true it was. Come, for that one short afternoon within our reach; gone, out of it now for ever. In that same village there is one who more than any other drew one’s heart out in affection and longing, but so far all in vain.

I first saw her in the evening as we were returning home. She was sitting on her verandah, giving orders to the servants as they stood in the courtyard below. Then she turned and saw us. We were standing in the street, looking through the open door. The old lady, in her white garments, with her white hair, sat among a group of women in vivid shades of red, behind her the dark wood of the pillar and door, and above the carved verandah roof. The men were fresh from the fields, and stood with their rough-looking husbandry implements slung across their shoulders; the oxen, great meek-eyed beasts, were munching their straw and swishing their tails as they stood in their places in the courtyard, where some little children played. The paddy-birds, which are small white storks, were flying about from frond to frond of the cocoanut palms that hung over the wall, and the sunset light, striking slanting up, caught the underside of their wings, and made them shine with a clear pale gold, gold birds in a darkness of green. A broken mud wall ran round one end, and the sunset colour painted it too till all the red in it glowed; and then it came softly through the palms, and

touched the white head with a sort of sheen, and lit up the brow of the fine old face as, bending forward, she beckoned to us. "Come in! come in!" she said.

We soon made friends with her. She was a Saivite and we heard afterwards had received the Initiation; the golden symbol of her god had been branded upon her shoulder, and she was sworn to lifelong devotion to Siva; but she had found that he was vain, and she never worshipped him, she worshipped God alone, "and at night, when the household is sleeping, I go up alone to an upper room, and stretch out my hands to the God of all, and cry with a long, loud cry." Then she suddenly turned and faced me full. "Tell me, is that enough?" she said. "Is it all I must do for salvation? Say!"

I did not feel she was ready for a plunge into the deep sea of full knowledge yet, and I tried to persuade her to leave that question, telling her that if she believed what we told her of Jesus our Lord, she would soon know Him well enough to ask Him direct what she wanted to know, and He Himself would explain to her all that it meant to follow Him. But she was determined to hear it then, and, as she insisted, I read her a little of what He says about it Himself. She knew quite enough to understand and take in the force of the forceful words. She would not consent to be led gently on. "No, I must know it now," she said; and as verse by verse we read to her, her face settled sorrowfully. "So far must I follow, so far?" she said. "I cannot follow so far."

It was too late for much talk then, but she promised to listen if we would come and read to her. She could not read, but she seemed to know a great deal about the Bible. For some weeks one of us went once a week; sometimes the men of the house were in, and then we could not read to her, as they seemed to object; but oftener no one was about, and she had her way, and we read.

She told us her story one afternoon. She was the head of a famous old house; her husband had died many years ago; she had brought up her children successfully, and now they were settled in life. She had a Christian relation, but she had never seen him; she thought he had a son studying in a large school in England—Cambridge, I knew, when I heard the name; the father is one of our true friends.

All her sons are greatly opposed, but one of her little girls learnt for a time, and so the mother heard the Truth, and, being convinced that it was true, greatly desired to hear more. But the child was married, and went away, and she feared to ask the Missie Ammal to come again, lest people should notice it and talk. So the years passed emptily, "and oh, my heart was an empty place, a void as empty as air!" And she stretched out her arms, and clasping her hands she looked at the empty space between, and then at me with inquiring eyes, to see if I understood.

How well one understood!

"I am an emptiness for Thee to fill, My soul a cavern for Thy sea, . . .

I have done nought for Thee, am but a Want."

She had never heard it, but she had said it. We do not often hear it said, and when we do our whole heart goes out to meet the heart of the one who says it; everything that is in us yearns with a yearning that cannot be told, to bring her to Him Who said "Come."

We were full of hope about her, and we wrote to her Christian relative, and he wrote back with joy. It seemed so likely then that she would decide for Christ. But one day, for the first time, she did not care to read. I remember that day so well; it was the time of our monsoon, and the country was one great marsh. We had promised to go that morning, but the night before the rivers filled, and the pool between her and us was a lake. We called the bandyman and explained the situation. He debated a little, but at last—"Well, the bulls can swim," he said, and they swam.

We need not have gone, she was "out." "Out," or "not at home to-day," is a phrase not confined to Society circles where courtesy counts for more than truth. "I am in, but I do not want to see you," would have been true, but rude. This was the first chill, but she was in next time, and continued to be in, until after a long talk we had, when again the question rose and had to be faced, "Can I be a Christian here?"

It was a quiet afternoon; we were alone, only the little grandchildren were with her—innocent, fearless, merry little creatures, running to her with their wants, and pulling at her hands and dress as babies do at home. Their grandmother took no notice of them beyond an occasional pat or two, but the childish things, with their bright brown eyes and little fat, soft, clinging hands went into the photo one's memory took, and helped one the better to understand and sympathise in the humanness of the pretty home scene, that humanness which is so natural, and which God meant to be. I think there is nothing in all our work which so rends and tears at the heart-strings within us, as seeing the spiritual clash with the natural, and to know that while Caste and bigotry reign it always must be so.

We had a good long talk. "I want to be a Christian," she said, and for a moment I hoped great things, for she as the mistress of the house was almost free to do as she chose. I thought of her influence over her sons and their wives, and the little grandchildren; and I think my face showed the hope I had, for she said, looking very direct at me, "By a Christian I mean one who worships your God, and ceases to worship all other gods; for He alone is the Living God, the Pervader of all and Provider. This I fully believe and affirm, but I cannot break my Caste."

"Would you continue to keep it in all ways?"

"How could I possibly break my Caste?"

"And continue to smear Siva's sign on your forehead?"

"That is indeed part of my Caste."

More especially part of it, I knew, since she had received the Initiation.

Then the disappointment got into my voice, and she felt it, and said, "Oh, do not be grieved! These things are external. How can mere ashes affect the internal, the real essential, the soul?"

It was such a plausible argument, and we hear it over and over again; for history repeats itself, there is nothing new under the sun.

I reminded her that ashes were sacred to Siva.

"I would not serve Siva," she answered me, "but the smearing of ashes on one's brow is the custom of my Caste, and I cannot break my Caste."

Then she looked at me very earnestly with her searching, beautiful, keen old eyes, and she went over ground she knew I knew. She reminded me what the requirements of her Caste had always been, that they must be fulfilled by all who live in the house, and she told me in measured words and slow that I knew she could not live at home if she broke the laws of her Caste. But why make so much of trifling things? For matter and spirit are distinct, and when the hands are raised in prayer, when the lamp is lighted and wreathed with flowers, the outward observer may mistake and think the action is pujah to Agni, but God who reads the heart understands, and judges the thought and not the act. "Yes, my hand may smear on Siva's ashes, while at the same moment my soul may commune with God the Eternal, Who only is God."

I turned to verse after verse to show her this sort of thing could never be, how it would mock at the love of Christ and nullify His sacrifice. I urged upon her that if she were true, and the central thought of her life were towards God, all the outworkings would correspond, creed fitting deed, and deed fitting creed without the least shade of diversity. But faith and practice are not to be confused, each is separate from the other; the two may unite or the one may be divorced from the other without the integrity of either being affected: this is the unwritten Hindu code which she and hers had ever held; and now, after years of belief in it, to face round suddenly to its opposite—this was more than she could do. She held, as it were, the Truth in her hand, and turned it round and round and round, but she always ended where she began; she would not, could not, see it as Truth, or perhaps more truly, would not accept it. It meant too much.

There she sat, queen of her home. The sons were expected, and she had been making preparations for their coming. Her little grandchildren played about her, each one of them dear as the jewel of her eye. How could she leave it all, how could she leave them all—home, all that it stands for; children, all that they mean?

Then she looked at me again, and I shall never forget the look. It seemed as if she were looking me through and through, and forcing the answer to come. She spoke in little short sentences, instinct with intensity. "I cannot live here and break my Caste. If I break it I must go. I cannot live here without keeping my customs. If I break them I must go. You know all this. I ask you, then, tell me yes or no. Can I live here and keep my Caste, and at the same time follow your God? Tell me yes or no!"

I did not tell her—how could I? But she read the answer in my eyes, and she said, as she had said before, "I cannot follow so far—so far, I cannot follow so far!"

"Reverence for opinions and practice held sacred by his ancestors is ingrained in every fibre of a Hindu's character, and is, so to speak, bred in the very bone of his physical and moral constitution." So writes Sir Monier Williams. It is absolutely true.

Oh, friends, is it easy work? My heart is sore as I write, with the soreness that filled it that day. I would have given anything to be able truthfully to say "yes" to her question. But "across the will of nature leads on the path of God" for them; and they have to follow so very far, so very, very far!

All trees have roots. To tear up a full-grown tree by the roots, and transplant it bodily, is never a simple process. But in India we have a tree with a double system of roots. The banyan tree drops roots from its boughs. These bough roots in time run as deep underground as the original root. And the tap root and its runners, and the branch roots and theirs, get knotted and knit into each

other, till the whole forms one solid mass of roots, thousands of yards of a tangle of roots, sinuous and strong. Conceive the uprooting of such a tree, like the famous one of North India, for instance, which sheltered an army of seven thousand men. You cannot conceive it; it could not be done, the earthward hold is so strong. The old in India are like these trees; they are doubly, inextricably rooted. There is the usual great tap root common to all human trees in all lands—faith in the creed of the race; there are the usual running roots too—devotion to family and home. All these hold the soul down. But in India we have more—we have the branch-rooted system of Caste; Caste so intricate, so precise, that no Western lives who has traced it through its ramifications back to the bough from which it dropped in the olden days. This Caste, then, these holding laws, which most would rather die than break, are like the branch roots of the banyan tree with their infinite strength of grip. But the strangest thing to us is this: the people love to have it so; they do not regard themselves as held, these roots are their pride and joy. Take a child of four or five, ask it a question concerning its Caste, and you will see how that baby tree has begun to drop branch rootlets down. Sixty years afterwards look again, and every rootlet has grown a tree, each again sending rootlets down; and so the system spreads. But we look up from the banyan tree. God! what are these roots to Thee? These Caste-root systems are nothing to Thee! India is not too hard for Thee! O God, come!

1.09.09. Book 9: 9. The Classes and the Masses

CHAPTER IX The Classes and the Masses

"We speak of work done against the force of gravitation. If the magnitude of a force can be estimated in any sense by the resistance which it has to overcome, then verily there is no land under the sun more calculated than India to display the Grand Forces of God’s Omnipotent Grace. For here it has to face and overcome the combined resistances of the Caste system, entrenched heathenism, and deeply subtle philosophies. Praise God! it can and will be done. Thou, who alone doest wondrous things, work on. ’So will we sing and praise Thy power.’"

Rev. T. Walker, India.

PERHAPS it would help towards the better understanding of these letters if we stopped and explained things a little. Some may have been wondering, as they read, how it is that while the South Indian fields are constantly quoted as among the most fruitful in the world, we seem to be dealing with a class where fruit is very rare, and so subject to blighting influences after it has appeared, that we hardly like to speak of it till it is ripe and reaped and safe in the heavenly garner. I think it will be easier to understand all this if we view Hindu Tamil South India (with which alone this book deals) from the outside, and let it fall into two divisions the Classes and the Masses. There is, of course, the border line between, crossed over on either side by some who belong to the Classes but are almost of the Masses, and by some who belong to the Masses but are almost of the Classes. Broadly speaking, however, there is a distinct difference between the two. As to their attitude towards the Gospel, the Classes and the Masses unite; they are wholly indifferent to it. In a paper read at the Student Volunteers’ Conference in 1900, a South Indian missionary summed up the matter in a comprehensive sentence: "Shut in for millenniums by the gigantic wall of the Himalayas on the North, and by the impassable ocean on the South, they have lived in seclusion from the rest of the world, and have developed social institutions and conceptions of the universe, and of right and wrong, quite their own. Their own religion and traditionary customs are accepted as sufficiently meeting their needs, and they are not conscious of needing any teaching from foreigners. They will always listen courteously to what we say, and this constitutes an open door for the Gospel, but of conscious need and hungering for the Gospel there is little or none. So long as it is only a matter of preaching, there are in the world no more patient listeners than the Hindus. But as soon as a case arises of one of their number abandoning the Caste customs and traditionary worship, all their hostility is aroused, and the whole community feels it a duty of patriotism to do its utmost to deprive that individual of liberty of action, and to defend the vested rights of Hinduism." For the true Hindu is fervently Hindu. His religion "may be described as bound up in the bundle of his everyday existence." His intense belief in it, and in his Caste, which is part of it, gives edge to the blade with which he fights the entrance of a new religion to his home. This new religion he conceives of as something inherently antagonistic to his Caste, and as Caste is at every point connected with Hinduism, a thing interwoven with it, as if Hinduism were the warp and Caste the woof of the fabric of Indian life, we cannot say he is mistaken in regarding Christianity as

a foe to be fought if he would continue a Caste Hindu. So far, in South Indian religious history, we have no example on a large scale of anything approaching the Bramo Samâj of the North. In the more conservative South there is almost no compromise with, and little assimilation of, the doctrine which makes all men one in Christ. To return to the division—Classes and Masses—the Classes comprise members of what are known as the higher Castes, and in speaking of towns and villages where these dwell, and of converts from among them, the prefix "Caste" is sometimes used. Among the Classes we find women of much tenderness of feeling and a culture of their own, but their minds are narrowed by the petty lives they live, lives in many instances bounded by no wider horizon than thoughts concerning their husbands and children and jewels and curries, and always their next-door neighbour's squabbles and the gossip of the place. Much of this gossip deals with matters which are not of an elevating character. It takes us years to understand it, because most of the conversation is carried on in allusion or innuendo. But it is understood by the children. One of our converts told me that she often prays for power to forget the words she heard, and the things she saw, and the games she played, when she was a little child in her mother's room. This old man is the Hindu village schoolmaster. The boys write on a strip of palm leaf with an iron style. These little lads come to us every Sunday afternoon. Will some one remember them? The young girls belonging to the higher Castes are kept in strict seclusion. During these formative years they are shut up within the courtyard walls to the dwarfing life within, and as a result they get dwarfed, and lose in resourcefulness and independence of mind, and above all in courage; and this tells terribly in our work, making it so difficult to persuade such a one to think for herself or dare to decide to believe. Such seclusion is not felt as imprisonment; a girl is trained to regard it as the proper thing, and we never find any desire among those so secluded to break bounds and rush out into the free, open air. They do not feel it cramped as we should; it is their custom.

It is this custom which makes work among girls exceedingly slow and unresultful. They have to be reached one by one, and it takes many months of teaching before the mind opens enough to understand that it may be free. The reaction of the physical upon the mental is never more clearly illustrated than in such cases. Sometimes it seems as if the mind could not go out beyond the cramping walls; but when it has, by God's illumination, received light enough to see into the darkness of the soul, and the glory that waits to shine in on it, conceive of the tremendous upheaval, the shock of finding solid ground sink, as gradually or suddenly the conviction comes upon such a one that if she acts upon this new knowledge there is no place for her at home. She must give everything up—everything! Do you wonder that few are found willing to "follow so far"? Do you wonder that our hearts nearly break sometimes, as we realize the cost for them? Do you wonder that, knowing how each is set as a target for the archer who shoots at souls, we fear to say much about them, lest we should set the targets clearer in his sight? The men and boys of the Classes live a more liberal life, and here you find all varying shades of refinement. There is education, too, and a great respect for learning, and reverence for their classic literature and language, a language so ancient that we find certain Tamil words in the Hebrew Scriptures, and so rich, that while "nearly all the vernaculars of India have been greatly enriched from the Sanscrit, Sanscrit has borrowed from Tamil." Almost every Caste village has its own little school, and every town has many, where the boys are taught reading, writing, poetry, and mental arithmetic.

There is not much education among the Masses. Here and there a man stands out who has fought his way through the ignorance of centuries, up into the light of the knowledge of books. Such a man is greatly respected by the whole community. The women have the same kindly nature as the women of the Classes, and there is surprising responsiveness sometimes, where one would least expect it. We have known a Tamil woman, distinctly of the Masses, never secluded in her girlhood, but left to bloom as a wild flower in the field, as sensitive in spirit as any lady born. The people are rough and rustic in their ways, but there are certain laws observed which show a spirit of refinement latent among them; there are customs which compare favourably with the customs of the masses at home. As a whole, they are like the masses of other lands, with good points and bad points in strong relief, and just the same souls to be saved.

Converts from among the Masses, as a general rule, are able to live at home. There is persecution, but they are not turned out of village, street, or house. Often they come in groups, two or three families together perhaps, or a whole village led by its headman comes over. There is less of the single one-by-one conversion and confession, though there is an increasing number of such, and they are the best we have.

It is easy to understand how much more rapidly Christianity spreads under such conditions than among those prevailing among the Classes; we see it illustrated over and over again. For example, in a certain high-caste Hindu town some miles distant from our station on the Eastern side, a young man heard the Gospel preached at an open-air meeting; he believed, and confessed in baptism, thus breaking Caste and becoming an alien to his own people. He has never been able to live at home since, and so there has been no witness borne, no chance to let the life show out the love of God. The men of that household doubtless know something of the truth; they know enough, at least, to make them responsible for refusing it; but what can the women know? Only that the son of the house has disgraced his house and name; only that he has destroyed his Caste and broken his mother’s heart. "Shame upon him," they cry with one voice, "and curses on the cause of the shame, the ’Way’ of Jesus Christ!" It is useless to say they are merely women, and do not count; they do count. Their influence counts for a very great deal. Theoretically, women in India are nothing where religion is concerned; practically, they are the heart of the Hindu religion, as the men are its sinew and brain. There has never been a convert in that town since that young man was banished from it, out-casted by his Caste. But in a village only a few miles from that town a heathen lad believed, and was baptised, and returned home, not so welcome as before, but not considered too defiled to be reckoned a son of the household still. His father is dead, his mother is a bitter opponent, but his brother has come since, and within a stone’s-throw another; and so it goes on: the life has a chance to tell. Almost every time we have gone to that village we have found some ready for baptism, and though none of the mothers have been won, they witness to the change in the life of their sons. "My boy’s heart is as white as milk now," said one, who had stood by and seen that boy tied up and flogged for Christ’s sake. They rarely "change their religion," these staunch old souls; "let me go where my husband is; he would have none of it!" said one, and nothing seems to move them; but they let their boys live at home, and perhaps, even yet, the love will break down their resistance. They are giving it a chance.

I think this one illustration explains more than many words would the difference between work among the Classes and the Masses, and why it is that one form of work is so much more fruitful than the other. A village woman of the Shanar Caste. The photo shows the baby’s ears being

prepared for the jewels her mother hopes will fill them by and by. Holes are made first and filled with cotton wool, graduated leaden weights are added till the lobes are long enough. The Masses must not be understood as a vast casteless Mass, out-casted by the Classes, for the Caste system runs down to the very lowest stratum, but their Caste rules allow of freer intercourse with others. We may visit in their houses more freely, enter more freely into their thoughts, share more freely in the interests of their lives. We are less outside, as it were. But the main difference between the one set of people and the other lies deeper; it is a difference underground. It works out, however, into something all can see. Among the Masses, "mass movements" are of common occurrence; among the Classes, with rare exceptions, each one must come out alone. This is often forgotten by observers of the Indian Field from the home side. There are parts of that field where the labourers seem to be always binding up sheaves and singing harvest songs; and from other parts come fewer songs, for the sheaves are fewer there, or it may be there are none at all, only a few poor ears of corn, and they had to be gathered one by one, and they do not show in the field.

1.09.10. Book 9: 10. The Creed Chasm

CHAPTER X The Creed Chasm

"I have had to deal in the same afternoon’s work, on the one hand with men of keen powers of intellect, whose subtle reasoning made one look to the foundations of one’s own faith; and on the other hand with ignorant crowds, whose conception of sin was that of a cubit measure, and to whom the terms ’faith’ and ’love’ were as absolutely unknown as though they had been born and bred in some undeveloped race of Anthropoids."

Rev. T. Walker, India. IN writing about the Classes and the Masses of South India, one great difference which does not exist at home should be explained. In England a prince and a peasant may be divided by outward things—social position, style of life, and the duty of life—but in all inward things they may be one—one in faith, one in purpose, one in hope. The difference which divides them is only accidental, external; and the peasant, perhaps being in advance of the prince in these verities of existence, may be regarded by the prince as nobler than himself: there is no spiritual chasm between them. It is the same in the realm of scholarship. All true Christians, however learned or however unlearned, hold one and the same faith. But in India it is not so. The scholar would smile at the faith of the simple villagers, he would even teach them to believe that which he did not believe himself, holding that it was more suitable for them, and he would marvel at your ignorance if you confounded his creed with theirs; and yet in name both he and they are Hindus.

Sir Monier Williams explains the existence of this difference by describing the receptivity and all-comprehensiveness of Hinduism. "It has something to offer which is suited to all minds, its very strength lies in its infinite adaptability to the infinite diversity of human characters and human tendencies. It has its highly spiritual and abstract side, suited to the metaphysical philosopher; its practical and concrete side, suited to the man of affairs and the man of the world; its æsthetic and ceremonial side, suited to the man of poetic feeling and imagination; its quiescent and contemplative side, suited to the man of peace and lover of seclusion. Nay, it holds out the right hand of brotherhood to nature worshippers, demon worshippers, animal worshippers, tree worshippers, fetich worshippers. It does not scruple to permit the most grotesque forms of idolatry and the most degrading varieties of superstition, and it is to this latter fact that yet another remarkable peculiarity of Hinduism is mainly due—namely, that in no other System of the world is the chasm more vast which separates the religion of the higher, cultured, and thoughtful Classes, from that of the lower, uncultured, and unthinking Masses."

Naturally, therefore, work among them is different; one almost needs a different vocabulary for each, and certainly one needs a different set of ideas. I remember how, in one afternoon’s work, we saw the two types most perfectly. In thinking of it, it is as if one saw again the quiet face of the old scholar against a background of confusion, the clear calm features carved as in ivory, and set with a light upon it; chaotic darkness behind. We were visiting his wife, when he came out from the inner room, and asked if he might talk with us. Usually to such a question I say no; we have come

to the women, who are far the more needy, the men can easily hear if they will. But he was such an old man, I felt I could not refuse; so he began to tell me what he held as truth, which was, in brief, that there are two sets of attachment, one outer, one inner; that deliverance from these, and from Self, the Ego, which regards itself as the doer, constitutes Holiness; that is, that one must be completely disentangled and completely self-less. This attained, the next is Bliss, which is progressive. First comes existence in the same place as God. Second, nearness to God. Third, likeness to God. Fourth, identity with God. Then he quoted from a classic beloved by all the old Tamil school, stanza after stanza, to prove the truth of the above, ending with one which Dr. Pope has thus translated—

"Cling thou to that which He to Whom nought clings hath bid thee cling, Cling to that bond, to get thee free from every clinging thing."

He knew Sanscrit, and read me strange-sounding passages from a huge ancient book, and then, in return for a booklet, he gave me one of Mrs. Besant's translations from the Bhagavad Gita. The talk ended in my quoting what he could not deny was the true heart-cry of one of his greatest poets. "I know nothing! nothing! I am in darkness! Lord, is there no light for me?" And another, from the poem he had quoted, which asks the question, "What is the use of knowledge, mere knowledge, if one does not draw near to the All-knowing, All-pure One?" And this led into what he would not listen to at first, a little reading from the Book of books, before whose light even these wonderful books pale as tapers in clear sunshine. The marvel of our Bible never shows more marvellous than at such times, when you see it in deed and in truth the Sword of the Spirit, and it cuts. The old man asked me to come again, and I did, as the Iyer was away. He often got out of my depth, and I longed to know more; but I always found the Bible had the very word he needed, if he would only take it. So far as I know, he did not, and I left him—to quote his own words, though not spoken of himself, alas!—"bewildered by numerous thoughts, meshed in the web of delusion." As we left our old scholar, we came upon a thing wholly foolish and brainless, animalism in force. It was the difference between the Classes and the Masses once for all painted in glare. A huge procession was tearing along the streets and roads, with all the usual uproar. They stopped when they got to a big thorn bush, and then danced round it, carrying their idols raised on platforms, and borne by two or three dozen to each. We passed, singing as hard as ever we could "Victory to Jesus' Name! Victory!" and when we got rather out of the stream, stopped, and sang most vigorously, till quite a little crowd gathered, and we had a chance to witness.

It was dark, and the flaming torches lit up the wildest, most barbaric bit of heathenism I have seen for a long time. The great black moving mass seemed like some hellish sea which had burst its bounds, and the hundreds of red-fire torches moving up and down upon it like lights in infernal fishermen's boats, luring lost souls to their doom. As we waited and spoke to those who would hear, a sudden rush from the centre of things warned us to go; but before we could get out of the way, a rough lad with a thorn-branch torch stuck it right into the bandy, and all but set fire to us. He ran on with a laugh, and another followed with an idol, a hideous creature, red and white, which he also pushed in upon us. Our bullocks trotted as fast as they could, and we soon got out of it all, and looking back saw the great square of the devil temple blazing with torches and firebrands, and heard the drummings and clangings and yells which announced the arrival of the procession.

All that night the riotous drumming continued, and, as one lay awake and listened, one pictured the old scholar sitting in the cool night air on his verandah, reading his ancient palm-leaf books by the light of the little lamp in the niche of his cottage wall.

1.09.11. Book 9: 11. Caste Viewed as a Doer

CHAPTER XI Caste viewed as a Doer

"It is matter for especial notice that in every department of applied science we have to deal with the unseen. All forces, whether in physics, mechanics, or electricity, are invisible."

Alexander Mackay, Africa. THE division of the Tamil people, over fifteen million strong, into Classes and Masses, though convenient and simple, is far too simple to be of value in giving an accurate idea of the matter as it is understood from within. As we said, it is only an outside view of things. A study of Caste from an Indian point of view is a study from which you rise bewildered.

What is Caste? What is electricity? Lord Kelvin said, on the occasion of his jubilee, that he knew no more of electric and magnetic force . . . than he knew and tried to teach his students of natural philosophy fifty years ago in his first session as Professor. We know that electricity exists, we are conscious of its presence in the phenomena of light, heat, sound; but we do not know what it is.

Nothing could more perfectly illustrate Caste. You cannot live long in a conservative part of India, in close contact with its people, without being conscious of its presence; if you come into conflict with it, it manifests itself in a flash of opposition, hot rage of persecution, the roar of the tumult of the crowd. But try to define it, and you find you cannot do it. It is not merely birth, class, a code of rules, though it includes all these. It is a force, an energy; there is spirit in it, essence, hidden as the invisible essence which we call electricity.

Look at what it does. A few months ago a boy of twelve resolved to be a Christian. His clan, eight thousand strong, were enraged. There was a riot in the streets; in one house the poison cup was ready. Better death than loss of Caste. In another town a boy took his stand, and was baptised, thus crossing the line that divides secret belief from open confession. His Caste men got hold of him afterwards; next time he was seen he was a raving lunatic. The Caste was avenged.

It may be someone will wonder if these things are confined to one part of the field, so I quote from another, working in a neighbouring field, Tamil, but not "ours."

She tells of a poor low-caste woman who learned in her home, and believed. Her husband also believed, and both thought of becoming Christians. The village soothsayer warned them that their father’s god would be angry; they did not heed him, but went on, and suddenly their baby died. This was too much for their faith then, and they both went back to idolatry. A few years afterwards their eldest child began to learn to read, and the mother’s faith revived. The soothsayer and her husband reminded her of the infant’s fate, but she was brave, and let her child learn. Then her cow suddenly died. "Did we not tell you so?" they said, and for the moment she was staggered; but she rallied, and only became more earnest in faith. So the soothsayer threatened worse.

Cooking in a house of the Shanar Caste, always the most accessible of all Castes here, but this is a specially friendly house, or we should not have been allowed to take the photo. The small girl who is grinding curry stuff on the stone is the "Imp" of chapter xx.

Then a Caste meeting was called to determine what could be done with this woman. The husband attended the meeting, and was treated to some rice and curry; before he reached home he was taken violently ill, and in three days he died. The relatives denounced the woman as the cause of her husband's death, took her only son from her, and entreated her to return to her father's gods before they should all be annihilated. They gave her "two weeks to fast and mourn for her husband, then finding her mind as firmly fixed on Christ as before, they sent her to Burmah." This happened recently. It is told without any effort to appeal to the sympathies of anyone, simply as a fact; a witness, every line of it, to the power of Caste as a Doer. But there is something in the tale, told so terribly quietly, that makes one's heart burn with indignation at the unrelenting cruelty which would hound a poor woman down, and send her, bereft of all she loved, into exile, such as a foreign land would be to one who knew only her own little village. And when you remember the Caste was "low," which they took such infinite pains to guard, you can judge, perhaps, what the hate would be, the concentration of scorn and hate, if the Caste were higher or high. But look at Caste in another way, in its power in the commonplace phases of life. For example, take a kitchen and cooking, and see how Caste rules there. For cooking is not vulgar work, or infra dig. in any sense, in India; all Caste women in good orthodox Hindu families either do their own or superintend the doing of it by younger members of the same family or servants of the same Caste. "We Europeans cannot understand the extent to which culinary operations may be associated with religion. The kitchen in every Indian household is a kind of sanctuary or holy ground. . . . The mere glance of a man of inferior Caste makes the greatest delicacies uneatable, and if such a glance happens to fall on the family supplies during the cooking operations, when the ceremonial purity of the water used is a matter of almost life and death to every member of the household, the whole repast has to be thrown away as if poisoned. The family is for that day dinnerless. Food thus contaminated would, if eaten, communicate a taint to the souls as well as bodies of the eaters, a taint which could only be removed by long and painful expiation." Thus far Sir Monier Williams (quoted as a greater authority than any mere missionary!). Think of the defilement which would be contracted if a member of the household who had broken Caste in baptism took any part in the cooking. It would never be allowed. Such a woman could take no share in the family life. Her presence, her shadow, above all her touch, would be simply pollution. Therefore, and for many other reasons, her life at home is impossible, and the Hindu, without arguing about it, regards it as impossible. It does not enter into the scheme of life as laid down by the rules of his Caste. He never, if he is orthodox, contemplates it for a moment as a thing to be even desired.

Cooking and kitchen work may seem small (though it would not be easy for even the greatest to live without reference to it), so let us look out on the world of trade, and see Caste again as a Doer there. If a merchant becomes a Christian, no one will buy his goods; if he is a weaver, no one will buy his cloth; if he is a dyer, no one will buy his thread; if he is a jeweller, no one will employ him. If it is remembered that every particular occupation in life represents a particular Caste, it will be easily understood how matters are complicated where converts from the great Trades Unions are concerned. Hence the need of Industrial Missions, and the fact that they exist. A man wants to become a Christian, say, from the blacksmith or carpenter Caste. As a Christian he loses his trade, and he has been trained to no other. His forefathers worked in iron or wood, and he cannot attempt to learn other work. Let the Christians employ him, you say. Some do; but the question involves other questions far too involved for discussion here. And even if we discussed it, we should probably end where we began—facing a practical problem which no one can hope to solve

while Caste is what it is.

Just now this system is in full operation in the case of a lad of the brassworker Caste. He is a thoughtful boy, and he has come to the conclusion that Christianity is the true religion; he would like to be a Christian; if the conditions were a little easier he would be enrolled as an inquirer to-morrow. But here is the difficulty. His father is not strong, his mother and little sisters and brothers are his care; if he were a Christian he could not support them; no one would sell him brass, no one would buy the vessels he makes. He knows only his inherited trade. He can make fine water-pots, lamps, vases, and vessels of all sorts, nothing else. He is too old to learn any other trade; but supposing such an arrangement could be made, who would support the family in the meantime? Perhaps we might do it; we certainly could not let them starve; but it would not do to tell him so, or to hold out hopes of earthly help, till we know beyond a doubt that he is true. This is what is holding him back. He reads over and over again, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me," and then he looks at his father and mother and the little children; and he reads the verse again, and he looks at them again. It is too hard.

It is easy enough to tell him that God would take care of them if he obeys. We do tell him so, but can we wonder at the boy for hesitating to take a step which will, so far as he can see, take house and food and all they need from his mother and those little children?

These are some of the things which make work in India what is simply called difficult. We do not want to exaggerate. We know all lands have their difficulties, but when being a Christian means all this, over and above what it means elsewhere, then the bonds which bind souls are visibly strengthened, and the work can never be described as other than very difficult. Or take the power of Caste in another direction—its callous cruelty. I give one illustration from last year’s life.

I was visiting in the house where the old lady lives upon whom the afflatus fell. The first time we went there we saw a little lad of three or four, who seemed to be suffering with his eyes. He lay in a swinging bag hung from the roof, and cried piteously all the time we were there. Now, two months afterwards, there he lay crying still, only his cries were so weary he had hardly strength to cry.

They lifted him out. I should not have known the child—the pretty face drawn and full of pain, the little hands pressed over the burning eyes. Only one who has had it knows the agony of ophthalmia. They told me he had not slept, "not even the measure of a rape-seed," for three months. Night and day he cried and cried; "but he does not make much noise now," they added. He couldn’t, poor little lad!

I begged them to take him to the hospital, twenty-five miles away, but they said to go to a hospital was against their Caste. The child lay moaning so pitifully it wrung my heart, and I pleaded and pleaded with them to let me take him if they would not. Even if his sight could not be saved, something could be done to ease the pain, I knew. But no, he might die away from home, and that would disgrace their Caste.

"Then he is to suffer till he is blind or dead?" and I felt half wild with the cold cruelty of it.

"What can we do?" they asked; "can we destroy our Caste?"

Oh, I did blaze out for a moment! I really could not help it. And then I knelt down among them all, just broken with the pity of it, and prayed with all my heart and soul that the Good Shepherd would come and gather the lamb in His arms!

I wonder if you can bear to read it? I can hardly bear to write it. But you have not seen the little wasted hands pressed over the eyes, and then falling helplessly, too tired to hold up any longer; and you have not heard those weak little wails—and to think it need not have been! But we could do nothing. We were leaving the place next day, and even if we could have helped him, they would not have let us. They had their own doctor, they said; the case was in his hands. As we came away they explained that one of the boy's distant relatives had died two years ago, and that this was what prevented any of them leaving the house, as some obscure Caste rule would be broken if they did; otherwise, perhaps they might have been able to take him somewhere for change of treatment. So there that child must lie in his pain, one more little living sacrifice on the altar of Caste.

"I determined not to laugh!" That was what she said when she saw it, and she was fairly satisfied with the result of her efforts. The jewels are gold, the seeley a rich red. A woman of this type makes a fine picture,—the strong intelligent face, the perfect arms and hands, the glistening gold on the clear brown, and the graceful dress harmonising so perfectly with the colour of eyes and hair. The one deformity is the ear, cut so as to hold the jewels, which are so heavy that one wonders the stretched lobes do not break. The last thing I heard them say as we left the house was, "Cry softly, or we'll put more medicine in!" And the last thing I saw was the tightening of the little hands over the poor shut eyes, as he tried to stifle his sobs and "cry softly." This told one what the "medicine" meant to him. One of the things they had put in was raw pepper mixed with alum. Is not Caste a cruel thing? Those women were not heartless, but they would rather see that baby die in torture by inches, than dim with one breath the lustre of their brazen escutcheon of Caste! This is one glimpse of one phase of a power which is only a name at home. It is its weakest phase; for the hold of Caste upon the body is as nothing to the hold it has upon the mind and soul. It yields to the touch of pain sometimes, as our medical missionaries know; but it tightens again too often when the need for relief is past. It is unspeakably strong, unmercifully cruel, and yet it would seem as though the very blood of the people ran red with it. It is in them, part of their very being.

This, then, is Caste viewed as a Doer. It does strange things, hard things, things most cruel. It is, all who fight it are agreed, the strongest foe to the Gospel of Christ on the Hindu fields of South India.

1.09.12. Book 9: 12. Petra

CHAPTER XII

Petra

"This work in India . . . is one of the most crucial tests the Church of Christ has ever been put to. The people you think to measure your forces against are such as the giant races of Canaan are nothing to."

Bishop French, India and Arabia.

IT was very hot, and we were tired, and the friendly voice calling "Come in! come in! Oh, come and rest!" was a welcome sound, and we went in.

She was a dear old friend of mine, the only real friend I have in that ancient Hindu town. Her house is always open to us, the upper room always empty—or said to be so—when we are needing a rest. But she is a Hindu of the Hindus, and though so enlightened that for love's sake she touches us freely, taking our hands in hers, and even kissing us, after we go there is a general purification; every scrap of clothing worn while we were in the house is carefully washed before sunset.

She insisted now upon feeding us, called for plantains and sugar, broke up the plantains, dabbed the pulp in the sugar, and commanded us to eat. Then she sat down satisfied, and was photographed. This town, a little ancient Hindu town, is two hours journey from Dohnavur. There are thirty-eight stone temples and shrines in and around it, and five hundred altars. No one has counted the number of idols; there are two hundred under a single tree near one of the smaller shrines. Each of the larger temples has its attendant temple-women; there are two hundred recognised Servants of the gods, and two hundred annual festivals.

Wonderful sums are being worked just now concerning the progress of Christianity in India. A favourite sum is stated thus: the number of Christians has increased during the last decade at a certain ratio. Given the continuance of this uniform rate of increase, it will follow that within a computable period India will be a Christian land. One flaw in this method of calculation is that it takes for granted that Brahmans, high-caste Hindus, and Mohammedans will be Christianised at the same rate of progress as prevails at present among the depressed classes.

There are sums less frequently stated. Here in the heart of this Hindu town they come with force; one such sum worked out carefully shows that, according to the present rate of advance, it will be more than twenty thousand years before the Hindu towns of this district are even nominally Christian. Another still more startling gives us this result: according to the laws which govern statistics, thirteen hundred thousand years must pass before the Brahmans in this one South Indian district are Christianised. And if the sum is worked so as to cover all India, the result is quite as staggering to faith based on statistics.

Praise God, this is not His arithmetic! It is a purely human invention. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; we believe in God, even God Who calleth the things that are not as though they were: therefore these sums prove nothing. But if such sums are worked at all, they ought to be worked on both sides, and not only on the side which yields the most encouraging results.

Two of us spent a morning in the Brahman street. In these old Hindu towns the Brahman street is built round the temple, and in large towns this street is a thoroughfare, and we are allowed in. The women stood in the shadow of the cool little dark verandahs, and we stood out in the sun and tried to make friends with them. Then some Mission College boys saw us and felt ashamed that we should stand in that blazing heat, and they offered us a verandah; but the women instantly cleared off, and the men came, and the boys besought us under their breath to say nothing about our religion.

We spoke for a few minutes, throwing our whole soul into the chance. We felt that our words were as feathers floating against rocks; but we witnessed, and they listened till, as one of them remarked, it was time to go for their noontide bathe, and we knew they wished us to go. We went then, and found a wall at the head of the Brahman street, and we stood in its shadow and tried again. Crowds of men and lads gathered about us, but our College boys stood by our side and helped to quiet them. "Now you see," they said to us, as they walked with us down the outer street, "how quite impossible for us is Christianity."

It is good sometimes to take time to take in the might of the foe we fight. That evening two of us had a quiet few minutes under the temple walls. Those great walls, reaching so high above us, stretching so far beyond us, seemed a type of the wall Satan has built round these souls.

We could touch this visible wall, press against it, feel its solid strength. Run hard against it, and you would be hurt, you might fall back bleeding; it would not have yielded one inch. And the other invisible wall? Oh, we can touch it too! Spirit-touch is a real thing. And so is spirit-pain. But the wall, it still stands strong.

It was moonlight. We had walked all round the great temple square, down the silent Brahman streets, and we had stood in the pillared hall, and looked across to the open door, and seen the light on the shrine.

Now we were out in God’s clean light, looking up at the mass of the tower, as it rose pitch-black against the sky. And we felt how small we were.

Then the influences of the place began to take hold of us. It was not only masonry; it was mystery. "The Sovereigns of this present Darkness" were there.

How futile all of earth seemed then, against those tremendous forces and powers. What toy-swords seemed all weapons of the flesh. Praise God for the Holy Ghost!

While we were sitting there a Brahman came to see what we were doing, and we told him some of our thoughts. He asked us then if we would care to hear his. We told him, gladly. He pointed up to the temple tower. "That is my first step to God." We listened, and he unfolded, thought by thought, that strange old Védic philosophy, which holds that God, being omnipresent, reveals Himself in various ways, in visible forms in incarnations, or in spirit. The visible-form method of revelation is

the lowest; it is only, as it were, the first of a series of steps which lead up to the highest, intelligent adoration of and absorption into the One Supreme Spirit. "We are only little children yet. We take this small first step, it crumbles beneath us as we rise to the next, and so step by step we rise from the visible to the invisible, from matter to spirit—to God. But," he added courteously, "as my faith is good for me, so, doubtless, you find yours for you."

Next morning we went down to the river and had talks with the people who passed on their way to the town. It was all so pretty in the early morning light. Men were washing their bullocks, and children were scampering in and out of the water. Farther downstream the women were bathing their babies and polishing their brass water-vessels. Trees met overhead, but the light broke through in places and made yellow patches on the water. Out in one of those reaches of yellow a girl stood bending to fill her vessel; she wore the common crimson of the South, but the light struck it, and struck the shining brass as she swung it up under her arm, and made her into a picture as she stood in her clinging wet red things against the brown and green of water and wood. Everywhere we looked there was something beautiful to look at, and all about us was the sound of voices and laughter, and the musical splashing of water; then, as we enjoyed it all, we saw this:

Under an ancient tree fifteen men were walking slowly round and round, following the course of the sun. Under the tree there were numbers of idols, and piles of oleander and jessamin wreaths, brought fresh that morning. The men were elderly, fine-looking men; they were wholly engrossed in what they were doing. It was no foolish farce to them; it was reality.

There is something in the sight of this ordinary, evident dethronement of our God which stirs one to one’s inmost soul. We could not look at it.

Again and again we have gone to that town, but to-day those men go round that tree, and to-day that town is a fort unwon.

Petra, I have called it; the word stands for many a town walled in as that one is. In Keith’s Evidence of Prophecy there is a map of Petra, the old strong city of Edom, and in studying it a light fell upon David’s question concerning it, and his own triumphant answer, "Who will lead me into the strong city? Who will bring me into Edom? Wilt not Thou, O God?" for the map shows the mountains all round except at the East, where they break into a single narrow passage, the one way in. There was only one way in, but there was that one way in!

Here is a town walled up to heaven by walls of Caste and bigotry, but there must be one way in. Here is a soul walled all round by utter indifference and pride, but there must be one way in.

"Who will lead me into the strong city? Who will bring me into Edom? Wilt not Thou, O God?"

1.09.13. Book 9: 13. Death by Disuse

CHAPTER XIII

Death by Disuse

"There is a strong tendency to look upon the Atonement of Christ as possessing some quality by virtue of which God can excuse and overlook sin in the Christian, a readiness to look upon sinning as the inevitable accompaniment of human nature 'until death do us part,' and to look upon Christianity as a substitute for rather than a cause of personal holiness of life."

Rev. I. W. Charlton, India.

"From many things I have heard I fancy many at home think of the mission as a sort of little heaven upon earth, but when one looks under the surface there is much to sadden one. . . . Oh, friends, much prayer is needed! Many of the agents know apparently nothing about conversion.

"You may not like my writing so plainly, but sometimes it seems as if only the bright side were given, and one feels that if God's praying people at home understood things more as they really are . . . more prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our agents and converts would ascend to God. . . . We do long to see all our pastors and agents really converted men, men of prayer and faith, who, knowing that they themselves are saved, long with a great longing to see the heathen round them brought out of darkness into His light, and the Christians who form their congregations, earnest converted men and women."

A. J. Carr, India.

"Fifty added to the Church sounds fine at home, but if only five of them are genuine what will it profit in the Great Day?"

David Livingstone, Africa.

"Oh for the Fire to set the whole alight, and melt us all into one mighty Holy-Ghost Church!"

Minnie Apperson, China. THE lamps were being lighted, the drums beaten, the cymbals struck, and the horns blown for evening pujah in all the larger temples and shrines of the "Strong City," when we turned out of it, and, crossing the stream that divides the two places, went to the Christian hamlet, which by contrast at that moment seemed like a little corner of the garden of the Lord. Behind was the heathenish clash and clang of every possible discord, and here the steady ringing of the bell for evening service; behind was all that ever was meant by the "mystery of iniquity," and here the purity and peace of Christianity. This is how it struck me at first; and even now, after a spell of work in the heart of heathendom, Christendom, or the bit of it lying alongside, is beautiful by contrast. There you have naked death, death unadorned, the corpse exhibited; here, if there is a corpse, at least it is decently dressed. And yet that evening it was forced upon me that death is death wherever found and however carefully covered.

"I do feel so shy!" she was just on the point of saying to me, by the way of appeal to be released, when the camera clicked and she was caught. Widows do not wear jewels, as a rule, among the Hindus of the higher Castes, but Christians do as they like. She is a village woman of fairly good position. The first of the Christians to welcome us was a bright-looking widow—this is her photograph. We soon made friends. She told us she had been "born in the Way"; her grandfather joined it, and none of the family had gone back, so she was sure that all was right. We were not so sure, and we tried to find out if she knew the difference between joining the Way and coming to Christ. This was only a poor little country hamlet, but everywhere we have travelled, among educated and uneducated alike, we have found much confusion of thought upon this subject.

"God knows my heart," she said, "God hears my prayers. If I see a bad dream in the night, I pray to God, and putting a Bible under my head, I sleep in perfect peace." Could anything be more conclusive?

There were numbers of other proofs forthcoming: If your grandfather gave six lamps to the church, value three and a half rupees each (the lamps are hanging to-day, and bear witness to the fact); if your father never failed to pay his yearly dues, besides regular Sunday collections (his name is in the church report, and how much he gave is printed); if you freely help the poor, and give them paddy on Christmas Day (quite a sackful of it); if you never offer to demons (no, not when your children are sick, and the other faithless Christians advise you); if you never tie on the cylinder (a charm frequently though covertly worn by purely nominal Christians); and finally, if you have been baptised and confirmed, and "without a break join the Night-supper," surely no one can reasonably doubt that you are a Christian of a very proper sort? As to questions about change of heart, and chronic indulgence in sins, such as lying—who in this wicked world lives without lying? And when it pleases God to do it He will change your heart.

We took the evening meeting for the villagers, who meanwhile had gathered and were listening with approval. Privacy, as we understand it, is a thing unknown in India. "That is right," they remarked cheerfully; "give her plenty of good advice!" And we all trooped into the prayer-room.

Once in there, everyone put on a sort of church expression, and each one took his or her accustomed seat in decorous silence. The little school-children sat in rows in front on the mats with arms demurely folded, and sparkling eyes fixed solemnly; the grown-up people sat on their mats on either side behind, and we sat on ours facing them. We began with a chorus, which the children picked up quickly and shouted lustily, the grown-ups joining in with more reserve; and then we got to work.

Blessing spoke. She had once been a nominal Christian, and she knew exactly where these people were, and how they looked at things. Her heart was greatly moved as she spoke, and the tears were in her eyes, for she knew none of these friends had the joy of conscious salvation, and she told me afterwards she had thirst and hunger for them. But they listened unimpressed. Then we had prayer and a quiet time; sometimes the Spirit works most in quiet, and we rose expectantly; but there was no sign of life.

After the meeting was over they gathered round us again. They are always so loving and friendly in these little villages; but they could not understand what it was that troubled us. Were they not all Christians?

Shortly afterwards they came, as their kindly custom is, to bring us fruit and wreaths of flowers on New Year's Day. I missed my first friend of that evening, and asked for her. "That widow you talked to?" said the old catechist, "three days ago fever seized her, and"—He broke off and looked up. Then I longed to hear how she had died, but no one could tell me anything. Oh, the curtain of silence that covers the passing of souls!

We went soon afterwards to the village, sure that at last the people would be stirred; for she had been a leader among the women, and her call, even in this land of sudden calls, had been very sudden. But we did not find it had affected anyone. They all referred to her in the chastened tone adopted upon such occasions, and, sighing, reminded each other that God was merciful, and she had always been, up to the measure of her ability, a very good woman.

We felt as if we were standing with each one of those people separately, in the one little standing space we were sure of, before that curtain, and we spoke with them as you speak with those whom you know you may never see again on this side of it. But they looked at us, and wondered what was the matter with us. Were they not Christians? Did they not believe in God? Did they not pray regularly night and morning for forgiveness, protection, and blessing? So they could not understand. Was it that the power to understand had been withered up within them? Was the soul God gave them dead—"sentenced to death by disuse"? Dead they are in apathy and ignorance and putrefying customs, and the false security that comes from adherence to the Christian creed without vital connection with Christ. These poor Christians are dead.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Lord, it is not a thing incredible. Thou hast done it before. Oh, do it again. Do it soon!

I have told you how much we need your help for the work among the heathen; but often we feel we need it almost as much for the work among the Christians. Over and over again it is told, but still it is hardly understood, that the Christians need to be converted; that the vast majority are not converted; that statistics may mislead, and do not stand for Eternity work; that many a pastor, catechist, teacher, has a name to live, but is dead; that the Church is very dead as a whole—thank God for every exception. We do not say this thoughtlessly; the words are a grief to write. We humble ourselves that it is so, and take to ourselves the blame. It is true that the corpse of the dead Church is dressed, just as it is at home, only here it is even more dressed; and because the spirit of the land is intensely religious, its grave-clothes are vestments. But dressed death is still death. This will come as a shock to those who have read stories of this or that native Christian, and generalising from these stories, picture the Church as a company of saints. God has His saints in India,[1] men and women hidden away in quiet places out of sight, and some few out in the front; but the cry of our hearts is for more. So we tell you the truth about things as they are, though we know it will not be acceptable, for the best is the thing that is best liked at home; so the best is most frequently written. This may seem to cross out what was said before, about the darker side of the truth being often told. It does not cross it out: read through the magazines and reports, and you will find truth-revealing sentences, which show facts to those who have eyes to see; but though this is so, all will admit that the sanguine view, as it is called, is by far the most in evidence, for the sanguine man is by far the most popular writer, and so is more pressed to write. "People will read what is buoyant and bright; the more of that sort we have the better," wrote a Mission secretary out in the field not long ago, to a missionary who did not feel free to write in quite that

way. Those who, to quote another secretary, "are afraid of writing at all, for fear of telling lies"—excuse the energetic language; I am quoting, not inventing—naturally write much less, and so the best gets known. This is nobody’s fault exactly. The home authorities print for the most part what is sent to them. They even call attention sometimes to the less cheerful view of things; and if, yielding occasionally to the pressure which is brought to bear upon them by a public which loves to hear what it likes, they take the sting out of some strong paragraph by adding an editorial "Nevertheless," is it very astonishing? Do you think we are writing like this because we are discouraged? No, we are not discouraged, except when sometimes we fear lest you should grow weary in prayer before the answer comes. This India is God’s India. This work is His. Oh, join with us then, as we join with all our dear Indian brothers and sisters who are alive in the Lord, in waiting upon Him in that intensest form of waiting which waits on till the answer comes; join with us as we pray to the mighty God of revivals, "O Lord, revive Thy work! Revive Thy work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make known!"

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See Appendix, p. 303.

1.09.14. Book 9: 14. What Happened

CHAPTER XIV

What Happened

"Some years ago England was stirred through and through by revelations which were made as to the 'Bitter Cry' of wronged womanhood. In India the bitter cry is far more bitter, but it is stifled and smothered by the cruel gag of Caste. Orthodox Hindus would rather see their girls betrayed, tortured, murdered, than suffer them to break through the trammels of Caste."

Rev. T. Walker, India.

THERE is another ancient town near Dohnavur, and in that town another temple, and round the temple the usual Brahman square. In one of the streets of this square we saw the girl whose face looks out at you. It struck us as a typical face, not beautiful as many are, but characteristic in the latent power of eyes and brow, a face full of possibilities.

Here is one who might be a queen. What she may be is very different. She is a Brahman girl; all her people are Hindus. She has never even felt a desire, or seen any one in her town who felt a desire, to "fall into the pit of Christianity."

We were rarely able to get anything we specially wanted, but we got this. I look at it now, and wonder how it will develop as the soul behind it shapes and grows. That child is enfolded in influences which ward off the touch of the grace of life.

We saw numbers of women that day, but only at the distance of a street breadth; they would not come nearer, for the town is still a Petra to us, we are waiting to be led in. But if we were able to get in enough to take a photograph, surely we were "in" enough to preach the Gospel? Why not stop and there speak of more important matters? What was to hinder then?

Only this: in that town they have heard of converts coming out, and breaking Caste in baptism, and they have made a law that we (with whom they know some of these converts are) shall never be allowed to speak to any of their women. That hindered us there. But even supposing we had been free to speak, as we trust we shall be soon, and supposing she had wanted to hear, the barriers which lie between such a child and confession of Christ are so many and so great that when, as now, one wants to tell you about them, one hardly knows how to do it. Words seem like little feeble shadows of some grim rock, like little feeble shadows of the grasses growing on it, rather than of it, in its solidity; or, to revert to the old thought, all one can say is just pointing to the Dust as evidence of the Actual.

"What is to hinder high-caste women from being baptised, and living as Christians in their own homes?" The question was asked by an Englishman, a winter visitor, who, being interested in Missions, was gathering impressions. We told him no high-caste woman would be allowed to live as an open Christian in her own home; and we told him of some who, only because they were

suspected of inclining towards Christianity, had been caused to disappear. "What do you suppose happened to them?" he asked, and we told him.

We were talking in the pleasant drawing-room of an Indian Hotel. Our friend smiled, and assured us we must be mistaken. We were under the English Government; such things could not be possible. We looked round the quiet room, with its air of English comfort and English safety; we looked at the quiet faces, faces that had never looked at fear, and we hardly wondered that they could not understand.

Then in a moment, even as they talked, we were far away in another room, looking at other faces, faces unquiet, very full of fear. We knew that all round us, for streets and streets, there were only the foes of our Lord; we knew that a cry that was raised for help would be drowned long before it could escape through those many streets to the great English house outside. There were policemen, you say. But policemen in India are not as at home. Policemen can be bribed. And now we are looking in again. There is a very dark inner room, no window, one small door; the walls are solid, so is the door. If you cried in there, who would hear? And now we are listening—someone is speaking: "Once there was one; she cared for your God. She was buried into the wall in there, and that was the end of her." . . . But we are back in the drawing-room, hearing them tell us these things could never be. . . . Three years passed, and a girl came for refuge to us. She loved her people well; she would never have come to us had they let her live as a Christian at home. But no, "Rather than that she shall burn," they said. We were doubtful about her age, and we feared we should have to give her up if the case came on in the courts. And if we had to give her up? We looked at the gentle, trustful face, and we could not bear the thought; and yet, according to our friends, the Government made all safe.

About that time a paper came to the house; names, dates, means of identification, all were given. This was the story in brief. A young Brahman girl in another South Indian town wanted to be a Christian, and confessed Christ at home. She earnestly wished to be baptised, but she was too young then, and waited, learning steadily and continuing faithful, though everything was done that could be done to turn her from her purpose. She was betrothed against her will to her cousin, and forbidden to have anything to do with the Christians. "She was never allowed to go out alone, and was practically a prisoner." For three years that child held on, witnessing steadfastly at home, and letting it be clearly known that she was and would be a Christian. A Hindu ceremony of importance in the family was held in her grandfather’s house, and she refused to go. This brought things to a crisis. Her people appointed a council of five to investigate the matter. "She maintained a glorious witness before them all," says the missionary; "declared boldly that she was a Christian, and intended to join us; and when challenged about the Bible, she held it out, and read it to the assembled people." For a time it seemed as if she had won the day, but fresh attempts were made upon her constancy by certain religious bigots of the town. They offered her jewels—that failed; tried to get her to turn Mussulman, that being less disgraceful than to be a Christian; and last and worst, tried to stain that white soul black—but, thank God! still they failed. At last the waiting time was over; she was of age to be baptised, and she wrote to tell her missionary friend about it. He sent her books to read, and promised to let her know within two days what he could arrange to do. "Her letter was dated from her grandfather’s house," the missionary writes, "to which she said she had been sent, and put in a room alone. On the following day, hearing a rumour of her death, I went to N.’s house, and there found her body, outside the door. I caused it to be seized by the

police, and the post-mortem has revealed the fact that the poor child was poisoned by arsenic. Bribes have been freely used and atrocious lies have been told, and the net result of all the police inquiries, so far, is that no charge can be brought against anyone."

Last year we met one of the missionaries from this Mission, on the hills, and we asked him if anyone had been convicted. He said no one had been convicted, "the Caste had seen to that."

Here, then, is a statement of facts, divested of all emotion or sensationalism. A child is shut up in a room alone, and poisoned; when she is dead, her body is thrown outside the door. It was found. There have been bodies which have not been found; but we are under the British Government—nothing can have happened to them! The British Government does much, but it cannot do everything. It is notorious in India that false witnesses can be bought at so much a head, according to the nature of witness required. Bribery and corruption are not mere names here, but facts, most difficult for any straightforward official to trace and track and deal with. We know, and everyone knows, that the White Man's Government, though strong enough to win and rule this million-peopled Empire, is weak as a white child when it stands outside the door of an Indian house, and wants to know what has gone on inside, or proposes to regulate what shall go on. It cannot do it. The thought is vain.

"Why not have her put under surveillance?" asked a friend, a military man, about a certain girl who wanted to be a Christian; as if such surveillance were practicable, or ever could be, under such conditions as obtain in high-caste Hindu and Mohammedan circles, except in places directly under the eye of Government. We know there are houses where, at an hour's notice, any kind and any strength of poison can be prepared and administered: quick poison to kill within a few minutes; slow poisons that undermine the constitution, and do their work so safely that no one can find it out; brain poisons, worse than either, and perhaps more commonly used, as they are as effective and much less dangerous. But we could not prove what we know, and knowledge without proof is, legally speaking, valueless. And yet we know these things, we have heard "a cry of tears," we have heard "a cry of blood"—

"Tears and blood have a cry that pierces heaven Through all its hallelujah swells of mirth;

God hears their cry, and though He tarry, yet He doth not forget."

1.09.15. Book 9: 15. "Simply Murdered"

CHAPTER XV "Simply Murdered"

"'Agonia'—that word so often on St. Paul's lips, what did it mean? Did it not just mean the thousand wearinesses . . . and deeper, the strivings, the travailings, the bitter disappointments, the 'deaths oft' of a missionary's life?"

Rev. Robert Stewart, China.

THERE are worse things than martyrdom. There are some who are "simply murdered." There is one who belongs to a Caste which more than any other is considered tolerant and safe. Men converts from this Caste can live at home, and if a husband and wife believe, they may continue living in their own house, among the heathen. And yet this is what happened to a girl because it was known that she wanted to be a Christian.

First persecution. Treasure, as her name may be translated, had learnt as a child in the little mission school, and when we went to her village she responded, and took her stand. She refused to take part in a Hindu ceremony. She was beaten, at first slightly, then severely. This failed, so they sent her out of our reach to a heathen village miles away. This also failed, and she was brought home, and for some months went steadily on, reading and learning when she could, and all the time brightly witnessing. She was a joy to us.

She was very anxious to come out and be baptised, but her age was the difficulty. When a convert comes, the first thing to be done is to let the police authorities know. They send a constable, who takes down the convert's deposition, which is then forwarded to headquarters. One of the first questions concerns age. In some cases a medical certificate is demanded, and the girl's fate turns on that; if we can get one for over sixteen we are safe from prosecution in the Criminal Courts, but eighteen is the safest age, as the Civil Courts, if the case were to proceed, would force us to give her up if she were under eighteen. The difficulty of proving the age, unless the girl is evidently well over it, is very serious. The medical certificate usually takes off a year from what we have every reason to believe is the true age.

One other proof remains—the horoscope. This is a Hindu document written on a palm leaf at the birth of the child; but it is always carefully kept by the head of the family, and so, as a rule, unobtainable. When a case comes on in Court a false horoscope may be produced by the relatives; this was done in a recent case tried in our Courts, so we cannot count upon that. In this girl's case we got the Government registers searched for birth-records of her village, but all such registers we found had been destroyed; none were kept of births sixteen years back. So, though she believed herself to be, and we believed her to be, and the Christians who had known her all her life were sure she was, "about sixteen," we knew it could not be proved. She was a very slight girl, delicate and small for her age. This was against her, and there were other reasons against her coming just then. She had to wait.

I shall never forget the day I had to tell her so. She could not understand it. She knew that all the higher Castes had threatened to combine, and back up her father in a lawsuit, if she became a Christian; but she thought it would be quite enough if she stood up before the judge, and said she knew she was of age, and she wanted to come to us. "I will not be afraid of the people," she pleaded, "I will stand up straight before them all, and speak without any fear!"

I remember how the tears filled her eyes as I explained things; it was so hard for her to understand that we had no power whatever to protect her. It would be worse for her if she came and had to be given up. She was fully sensible of this, but "Would God let them take me away? Would He not take care of me?" she asked.

I suppose it is right to obey the laws. They are, on whole, righteous laws, made in the defence of these very girls. It would never do if anyone could decoy away a mere child from her parents or natural guardians. But the unrighteous thing, as it seems to us, is that the whole burden of proof lies upon us, and that in these country villages no facilities such as Government registers of birth are to be had, by which we could hope legally to prove a point about which we are morally sure. We feel that as the burden of proof rests upon us, surely facilities should be obtainable by which we could find out a girl's age before she comes, so that we might know whether or not we might legally protect her. Still more strongly we feel it is strange justice which decrees that though a child of twelve may be legally held competent to undertake the responsibilities of wifehood, six years more must pass before she may be legally held free to obey her conscience. Free! She is never legally free! A widow may be legally free; a wife in India, never! Hardly a single Caste wife in all this Empire would be found in the little band of open Christians to-day, if the missionary concerned had not risked more than can be told here, and put God's law before man's. But oh, the number who have been turned back!

One stops, forces the words down—they come too hot and fast. There are reasons. As I write, a young wife dear to us is lying bruised and unconscious on the floor of the inner room of a Hindu house. Her husband, encouraged by her own mother, set himself to make her conform to a certain Caste custom. It was idolatrous. She refused. He beat her then, blow upon blow, till she fell senseless. They brought her round and began again. There is no satisfactory redress. She is his wife. She is not free to be a Christian. He knows it. Her relations know it. She knows it, poor child.

O God, forgive us if we are too hot, too sore at heart, for easy pleasantness! And, God, raise up in India Christian statesmen who will inquire into this matter, and refuse to be blindfolded and deceived. His laws and ours clash somewhere; the question is, where? To return to Treasure, we left her waiting to come. A Christian teacher lived next door, and Treasure used to slip in sometimes, as the two courtyards adjoined. We had put up a text on the wall for her: "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." This was her special text, and she looked at it now; and then she grew braver, and promised to be patient and try to win her mother, who was bitterly opposed. But oh, how I remember the wistfulness of her face as I went out; and one's very heart can feel again the stab of pain, like a knife cutting deep, as I left her—to her fate.

You have seen a tree standing stark and bare, a bleak black thing, on a sunny day against a sky of blue. You have looked at it, fascinated by the silent horror of it, a distorted cinder, not a tree, and someone tells you it was struck in the last great thunderstorm.

Next time we saw Treasure she was like that. What happened between, so far as it is known, was this. They tried to persuade her, they tried to coerce her; she witnessed to Jesus, and never faltered, though once they dragged her out of the house by her hair, and holding her down against the wall, struck her hard with a leather strap. One of the Christians saw it, and heard the poor tortured child cry out, "I do not fear! I do not fear! It will only send me to Jesus!"

Then they tried threats. "We will take you out to the lake at night, and cut you in little pieces, and throw you into it." She fully believed them, but even so, we hear she did not flinch.

Then they did their worst to her.

It was a Sunday morning. The Saturday evening before she had managed to see the teacher. She told her hurriedly how one had come, "a bridegroom" she called him, a student from a Mission College; he was telling her all sorts of things—that Christianity was an exploded religion; and how a great and learned woman (Mrs. Besant) had exposed the missionaries and their ways, so that no thinking people had any excuse for being deceived by them.

Then she added earnestly, "It is the devil. Do pray for me. They want me to marry him secretly! Oh, I must go to the Missie Ammal!" And if we had only known, we would have risked anything, any breach of the law of the land, to save her from a breach of the law of heaven! For all this talk, between an Indian girl of good repute and her prospective husband, is utterly foreign to what is considered right in Old India. It in itself meant danger. But we knew nothing, and next day, all that Sunday, she was shut up, and no one knows what happened to her. On Monday she was seen again; but changed, so utterly changed!

We heard nothing of this till the following Wednesday. The Christians were honestly concerned, but the Tamil is ever casual, and they saw no reason for distressing us with bad news sooner than could be helped. As soon as we heard, I sent two of the Sisters who knew her best, to try and see her if possible. They managed to see her for two or three minutes, but found her hopelessly hard. Every bit of care was gone. She laughed in a queer, strained way, they said. It was no use my trying to see her. But I determined to see her. I cannot go over it all again, it is like tearing the skin off a wound; so the letter written at the time may tell the rest of it.

"On Saturday I went. I went straight to the teacher’s house, and sent off the bandy at once, and by God’s special arrangement got in unnoticed. For hours we sat in the little inner room, waiting; we could hear her voice in the courtyard outside—a hard, changed voice. The teacher tried to get her in, but no, she would not come. Oh, how we held on to God! I could not bear to go till I had seen her.

"At last we had to go. The cart came back for us, thus proclaiming where we were, and the last human chance was gone. And then, just then, like one walking in a dream, Treasure wandered in and stood, startled.

"She did not know we were there. We were kneeling with our backs to the door. I turned and saw her.

"I cannot write about the next five minutes; I thought I realised something of what Satan could do in this land, but I knew nothing about it. Oh, when will Jesus come and end it all?

"Just once it seemed as if the spell were broken. My arms were round her, though she had shrunk away at first, and tried to push me from her; she was quiet now, and seemed to understand a little how one cared. She knelt down with me, and covered her eyes as if in prayer, while I poured out my soul for her, and then we were all very still, and the Lord seemed very near. But she rose, unmoved, and looked at us. We were all quite broken down, and she smiled in a strange, hard, foolish way—that was all.

"The cause no one knows. There are only two possible explanations. One is poison. There is some sort of mind-bewildering medicine which it is known is given in such cases. This is the view held by the Christians on the spot. One of them says her cousin was dealt with in this way. He was keen to be a Christian, and was shut up for a day, and came out—dead. Dead, she means, to all which before had been life to him.

"The other, and worse, is sin. Has she been forced into some sin which to one so enlightened as she is must mean an awful darkness, the hiding of God’s face?

"I cannot tell you how bright this dear child was. Up till that Saturday evening her faith never wavered; she was a living sign to all the town that the Lord is God. The heathen are triumphant now."

I have told you plainly what has happened. God’s Truth needs no painting. I leave it with you. Do you believe it is perfectly true? Then what are you going to do?

1.09.16. Book 9: 16. Wanted, Volunteers

CHAPTER XVI Wanted, Volunteers

"We have a great and imposing War Office, but a very small army. . . . While vast continents are shrouded in almost utter darkness, and hundreds of millions suffer the horrors of heathenism or of Islam, the burden of proof lies upon you to show that the circumstances in which God has placed you were meant by Him to keep you out of the foreign mission field."

Ion Keith Falconer, Arabia. IN one of the addresses delivered at the International Student Missionary Conference, London, in January 1900, a South Indian missionary spoke of the Brahman race as "the brain of India." "Their numbers are comparatively small—between ten and fifteen millions—but though numerically few—only five per cent. of the Hindu population—they hold all that population in the hollow of their hand. They occupy every position of influence in the land. They are the statesmen and politicians, the judges, magistrates, Government officials, and clerks of every grade. If there is any position conferring influence over their fellow-men, it will be held by a Brahman. Moreover, they are a sacred Caste, admitted by the people to be gods upon earth—a rank supposed to have been attained by worth maintained through many transmigrations." A typical Brahman face. It is keener than the photo shows, and has the cynical expression so many Brahman faces have. Such a man is hard to win.

Among the Petras of this district is a little old-fashioned country town, held in strength by the Brahmans. No convert has ever come from that town, and the town boasts that none ever shall. None of the houses are open yet to teaching, or even visiting, but we are making friends, and hope for an entrance soon. We spent a morning out in the street; they had no objection to that, and as the free young Brahmans gathered round us, or stood for a moment against a wall to be "caught," it was difficult, even for us who knew it, to realise how bound they were. "Bound, who should conquer; slaves, who should be kings." Bound, body and soul, in a bondage perfectly incomprehensible to the English mind.

Afterwards, when we saw the photographs, we recalled one and another who, while they were young students like these, dared to desire to escape from their bondage; but back they were dragged, and the chains were riveted faster than ever, and every link was tested again, and hammered down hard.

We wanted to be sure of our facts about each of them, that these facts may further answer that smile which assures us things are not as we imagine; so the Iyer wrote to a brother missionary who had known these lads well, and asked him to tell what happened to each of them. This morning the answer to that letter came, and was handed to me with "I hardly like to give it to you, but it tells the truth about what goes on." These boys were students in our C.M.S. College. The first one mentioned in the letter is a young Brahman who confessed Christ in baptism, and bravely withstood the tremendous opposition raised by his friends, who came in crowds for many weeks, and tried by every argument to persuade him to return to Hinduism; but he preached Christ to

them. They brought his young wife, and she tore her hair and wailed, and besought him not to condemn her to the shame of a widow's life. This was the hardest of all to withstand; he turned to the missionary and said, "Oh my father, take her away! She is tearing out my heart!" A typical Brahman student. The marks on the forehead are made of bright red, yellow, and white paste, and represents the footprint of the god Vishnu. These Brahmans are Vaishnavites.

Then came the baptism day of another Brahman student, his friend, who previous to this had been seized by his relatives, shut up and starved, and then fed with poisoned food; but the poison was not strong enough to kill, and he had escaped, and was now safe and ready for baptism.

It was remembered afterwards how the friend of the newly baptised stood and rejoiced, and praised God. Then, the baptism over, fearing no danger in open day, he went to the tank to bathe. He was never seen again.

What happened exactly no one knows. It is thought that men hired to watch him seized their opportunity, and carried him off. What they did then has never been told. Contradictory reports about the boy have reached the missionaries. One, that he is still holding on, another that he is now a priest in one of the great Saivite temples of South India. Which is true, God knows. But we are under the English Government. Could nothing be done? One of his near relatives is the present Judge of the High Court of one of our Indian cities. And among the crowd of Brahmans who came during those weeks, there were influential men, graduates of colleges, members of the legal profession—a favourite profession in India. And yet this thing was done.

There was another; the means used to get hold of him cannot be written here. That is the difficulty which fronts us when we try to tell the truth as it really is. It simply cannot be told. The Dust may be shown—or a little of it; the whole of the Actual, never.

There were others near the Kingdom, but it is the same story over again. They were all spirited away from the college; the missionary writes, "it makes one's heart sick to think of them, and the hellish means invented to turn them from Christ." These are not the words of sentimental imagination. They are the words of a man who gives evidence as a witness. But even a witness may feel.

He tells us of one, a bright, happy fellow, he says he was, whose friends made no objection to his returning home after his baptism, and he returned, thinking he would be able to live as a Christian with his wife. They drugged his food, then what they did has to be covered with silence again. . . . They did their worst. . . . When he awoke from that nightmare of sin, he sought out his missionary friend. Some of the Hindus even, "ashamed of the vile means used" to entice him and destroy him, would have wished him to be received again as a Christian, but his spirit was broken. He said he could not disgrace the cause of Christ by coming back; he would go away where he would not be known. He left his wife, and went. He has never been heard of since. Our comrade tells of another, and again, in telling it, we have to leave it half untold. This one was eager to confess Christ in baptism; he was a student at college then, and very keen. His father knew of his son's desire, and he did what few Hindu fathers would do, he turned his home into a hell, in order to ruin his boy. The infernal plot succeeded. God only knows how far the soul is responsible when the mind is dazed and then inflamed by those fearful drugs. But we do know that the soul He meant should rise and shine, sinks, weighted down by the unspeakable shame of some awful memory darkened,

as by some dark dye that has stained it through and through.

I think of others as I write: one was a boy we knew well, a splendid, earnest lad, keen to witness for Christ. He told us one evening how he had been delivered from those who were plotting his destruction. For several months after his decision to be a Christian, he lived at home and tried to win his people; but they were incensed against him for even thinking of breaking Caste, and would not listen to him. Still he waited, and witnessed to them, not fearing anything. Then one day, suddenly some men rushed into the room where he was sitting, seized and bound and gagged him. They forced something into his mouth as he lay on the floor at their mercy; he feared it was a drug, but it was only some disgusting stuff which, to a Hindu, meant unutterable defilement. Then they left him bound alone, and at night he managed to escape. A few months after he told us this, we heard he had been seized again, and this time "drugged and done for." In South India baptism does not prevent the Caste from using every possible means to get the convert back; once back, certain ceremonies are performed, after which he is regarded as purified, and reinstated in his Caste. The policy of the whole Caste confederation is this: get him back unbaptised if you can, but anyhow get him back. Two Brahman lads belonging to different parts of this district decided for Christ, went through all that is involved in open confession, and were baptised. One of the two was sent North for safety; his people traced him, followed him, turned up unexpectedly at a wayside station in Central India, and forced him back to his home in the South. Once there, they took their own measures to keep him. The other lad was sent to Madras. The Brahmans found out where he was, broke into the house at night, overpowered the boy’s protectors, and carried him off. They too did what seemed good to them there, and they too succeeded. No one outside could interfere. The Caste guards its own concerns.

"O Lord Jesus Christ!" wrote one, a Hindu still, "who knowest us to be placed in such danger that it is as if we were within some magical circle drawn round us, and Satan standing with his wand without, keeping us in terror, break the spell of Satan, and set us free to serve Thee!"

All this may be easy reading to those who are far away from the place where it happened. Distance has a way of softening too distinct an outline; but it is not easy to write, it comes so close to us. Why write it, then? We write it because it seems to us it should be more fully known, so that men and women who know our God, and the secret of how to lay hold upon Him, should lay hold, and hold on for the winning of the Castes for Christ.

Another Brahman, much duller than the last. This and the two preceding photographs are perfect as a study of three types of Brahmanhood as we have it in Southern India—keen, thoughtful, dull.

Surely the very hardness of an enterprise, the very fact that it is what a soldier would call a forlorn hope, is in itself a call and a claim stronger than any put forth by something easier. The soldier does not give in because the hope is "forlorn." It is a hope, be it ever so desperate. He volunteers for it, and win or not, he fights.

There is that in this enterprise which may mark it out as "forlorn." For ages the race has broken one of nature’s laws with blind persistency, and the result is a certain lack of moral fibre, grit, "tone." No separate individual is responsible for this, harsh judgments are entirely out of place; but the fact remains that it is so, and it must be taken into account in dealing with the Brahmans and several of the upper Castes of India. Side by side with this element of weakness there is, in

apparent contradiction, that stubborn element of strength known as the Caste spirit. This spirit is seen in all I have shown you of what happens when a convert comes. It is as if all the million wills of the million Caste men and women were condensed into one single Will, a concentration of essence of Will not comparable with anything known at home.

Look at this face—it is a photographed fact. Does it not show you an absence of that "something" which nerves to endurance, stimulates to dare? Then listen to this:—A Christian man lies dead. The way to the cemetery lies through the Brahman street, in the chief town of this District; there is no other way. The Brahman street is a thoroughfare, it cannot be closed to traffic, but the Brahmans refuse point blank to allow that dead man to be carried through. The Bishop expostulates. No; he was a Christian, he shall not be carried through. Time is passing. In the Tropics the dead must be buried quickly. The Bishop appeals to the Collector (Representative of Government here). The Collector gives an order. The Brahmans refuse to obey. He orders out a company of soldiers. The Brahmans mass on the housetops and stone the soldiers. The order is given to fire. Then, and not till then, the Christians may carry out their dead; and later on the Brahmans carry out theirs. This happened some years ago, and outwardly times have changed since then in that particular town. But the spirit that it shows is in possession to this day, and as small things show great, so this street scene shows the presence of that "something" which intensifies the difficulty of winning the Castes for Christ. Each unit is weak in itself, but in combination, strong.

"A forlorn hope" we have called the attempt to do what we are told to do. The word is a misnomer; with our Captain as our Leader no hope is ever "forlorn"! But our Leader calls for men, men like the brave of old who jeopardised their lives unto the death in the high places of the field, in the day that they came to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. A jeopardised life may be lost.

Christ our Captain is calling for volunteers; here are the terms: "Whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel’s the same shall find it." The teachers’ life may seem "lost" who lives for his college boys; the student’s life may seem "lost" who spends hour after hour through the long hot days in quiet talks in the house. Be it so, for it may mean that. But the life lost for His Name’s sake, the same shall be found again.

1.09.17. Book 9: 17. If it is so very important . . . ?

CHAPTER XVII If it is so very important. . . ?

"Let us for a moment imagine what would have happened on the Galilean hillside, when our Lord fed the five thousand, if the Apostles had acted as some act now. The twelve would be going backwards, helping the first rank over and over again, and leaving the back rows unsupplied. Let us suppose one of them, say Andrew, venturing to say to his brother Simon Peter, 'Ought we all to be feeding the front row? Ought we not to divide, and some of us go to the back rows?' Then suppose Peter replying, 'Oh no; don't you see these front people are so hungry? They have not had half enough yet; besides, they are nearest to us, so we are more responsible for them.' Then, if Andrew resumes his appeal, suppose Peter going on to say, 'Very well; you are quite right. You go and feed all those back rows; but I can't spare anyone else. I and the other ten of us have more than we can do here.'

"Once more, suppose Andrew persuades Philip to go with him; then, perhaps, Matthew will cry out and say, 'Why, they're all going to those farther rows! Is no one to be left to these needy people in front?'

"Let me ask the members of Congress, Do you recognise these sentences at all?"

Eugene Stock, at Shrewsbury Church Congress.

IT was only a common thing. A girl, very ill, and in terrible pain, who turned to us for help. We could do nothing for her. Her people resorted to heathen rites. They prepared her to meet the fierce god they thought was waiting to snatch her away.

We went again and again, but she suffered so that one could not say much, it did not seem any use. The last time we went, the crisis had passed; she would live, they told us with joy. They were eager to listen to us now. "Tell us all about your Way!" clamoured the women, speaking together, and very loud. "Tell us the news from beginning to end!" But, alas! they could take in very little. One whole new Truth was too much for them. "Never mind," they consoled us, "come every day, and then what you say will take hold of our hearts." And I had to tell them we were leaving that evening, and could not come "every day." Is not the contrast good? The old woman so intelligent, the baby so inane. She made a picture sitting there, in her crimson edged seeley, with her dark old face showing up against the darker wall. She is one of the many we have missed by coming so slowly and so late. "How can I change now?" she says. The girl turned her patient face towards us. She had smiled at the Name of Jesus, and it seemed as if down in the depths of her weakness she had listened when we spoke before, and tried to understand. Now she looked puzzled and troubled, and the women all asked, "Why?"

There, in that crowded, hot little room, a sense of the unequal distribution of the Bread of Life came over us. The front rows of the Five Thousand are getting the loaves and the fishes over and over again, till it seems as though they have to be bribed and besought to accept them, while the

back rows are almost forgotten. Is it that we are so busy with the front rows, which we can see, that we have no time for the back rows out of sight? But is it fair? Is it what Jesus our Master intended? Can it be really called fair? The women looked very reproachful. Then one of them said, looking up at me, "You say this is very important. If it is so very important, why did you not come before? You say you will come back again if you can, but how can we be sure that nothing will happen to stop you? We are, some of us, very old; we may die before you come back. This going away is not good." And again and again she repeated, "If it is so very important, why did you not come before?"

Don’t think that the question meant more than it did. It was only a human expression of wonder; it was not a real desire after God. But the force of the question was stronger far than the poor old questioner knew; it appealed to our very hearts. The people saw we were greatly moved, and they pressed closer round us to comfort us, and one dear old grandmother put her arms round me, and stroked my face with her wrinkled old hand, and said, "Don’t be troubled; we will worship your God. We will worship Him just as we worship our own. Now, will you go away glad?" A Brahman widow, the only Brahman woman who would let us take her photo. Brahman women wear their seeleys fastened in a peculiar way, and never cut their ears. Brahman widows are always shaven, and wear no jewels. This one is a muscular character, strong and resolute, an ordinary looking woman, but there must be an under-the-surface life which does not show. A widow’s fate is described in one word here, "accursed." The dear old woman was really in earnest, she wanted so much to comfort us. But her voice seemed to mingle with voices from the homeland; and another—we heard another—the Voice I had heard on the precipice-edge—the voice of our brothers’, our sisters’ blood calling unto God from the ground.

Friends, are these women real to you? Look at this photo of one of them. Surely it was not just a happy chance which brought out the detail so perfectly. Look at the thoughtful, fine old face. Can you look at it and say, "Yes, I am on my way to the Light, and you are on your way to the Dark. At least, this is what I profess to believe. And I am sorry for you, but this is all I can do for you; I can be very sorry for you. I know that this will not show you the way from the Dark, where you are, to the Light, where I am. To show you the way I must go to you, or, perhaps, send you one whom I want for myself, or do without something I wish to have; and this, of course, is impossible. It might be done if I loved God enough—but I love myself better than God or you."

You would not say such a thing, I know, but "Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

1.09.18. Book 9: 18. The Call Intensified

CHAPTER XVIII The Call Intensified

"Sometimes the men and boys will not go away and let us talk to the women; in such cases I find silent prayer the best refuge. In other places the people welcome you, but will listen to anything but the Doctrine of Jesus Christ; and this is harder to bear than anything else I know."

Anna Gordon, China.

"Let the people that are at home not care only to hear about successes; we must train them that they take an interest in the struggle."

Rev. A. Schreiber, Sumatra and India.

"It is a fight making its demands upon physical, mental, and spiritual powers, and there are many adversaries. The dead weight of heathenism, the little appreciation of one’s object and purpose, and the actual, vigorous opposition of the powers of darkness, make it a real fight, and only men of grit, of courage, devotion, and infinite patience and perseverance, will win.

"Have I painted a discouraging picture? Am I frightening good men who might have volunteered and done well? I think not. I think the right sort of men, those who ought to volunteer, will be attracted rather than repelled by the difficulties."

Rev. J. Lampard, India.

WE got this photograph that day in December which we spent in the friendly Brahman street. "There is not another woman in the town who would stand for you like that!" said the men, as she came forward, and, without a thought of posing, stood against the wall for a moment, and looked at the camera straight. Most of the women were afraid even to glance at it, but she was not afraid. She would not stay to talk to us, however, but marched off with the same resolute air. For Brahman widows as a whole are by no means an approachable race. Sometimes we find one who will open out to us, and let us tell her of the Comfort wherewith we are comforted; but oftener we find them hard, or hardening rapidly.

There is nothing to say about it except what is said in the chapter. There is nothing much to look at in a Brahman street. But that single simple street scene represents forces which control two hundred and seven million minds.

It is too soon to write about any of those who have listened during the past few months, but we put this photo in to remind you to remember those who are freer than most women in India to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, if only they would let His love have a chance of drawing them. We have been to the various towns in this and the upper curve of the mountains, but we have not reached the lower curve towns, or half of the many villages scattered close under the mountains, and, except when we went out in camp, we have not of course touched those farther afield.

There are only five working afternoons in a week, for Saturday is given up to other things, and Sunday belongs to the Christians; and when any interest is shown, we return again to the same village, which delays us, but is certainly worth while. Then there are interruptions—sometimes on the Hindu side; festivals, for instance, when no woman has time to hear; and on ours, and on the weather's, so to speak, when great heat or great rain make outdoor work impossible. Theoretically, itinerating is delightfully rapid; but practically, as every itinerating missionary knows, it is quite slow. There are other things to be done; those already brought in have to be taught and trained and mothered, and much time has to be spent in waiting upon God for more; so that, looking back, we seem to have done very little for the thousands about us, and now we must return to the eastern side of the district, for some of the boy converts are there at school, and there may be fruit to gather in after last year's sowing. But I look up from my writing and see a stretch of mountain range thirty miles long, and this range stretches unbroken for a thousand miles to the North. I know how little is being done on the plains below, and I wonder when God's people will awake, and understand that there is yet very much land to be possessed, and arise and possess it. Look down this mountain strip with me; there are towns where work is being done, but it needs supervision, and the missionaries are too few to do it thoroughly. There are towns and numbers of villages where nothing is even attempted, except that once in two years, if possible, the Men's Itinerant Band comes round; but that does not reach the women well, and even if it did, how much would you know of Jesus if you only heard a parable or a miracle or a few facts from His life or a few points of His doctrine once in two years? I do not want to write touching appeals, or to draw one worker from anywhere else,—it would be a joy to know that God used these letters to help to send someone to China, or anywhere where He has need of His workers,—but I cannot help wondering, as I look round this bit of the field, how it is that the workers are still so few.

We have found the people in the towns and villages willing to let us do what we call "verandah work" when they will not let us into their houses. Verandah work, like open-air preaching, is unsatisfactory as regards the women, but it is better than nothing.

We spent an afternoon in the street this photo shows. It is a thoroughfare, and so we were not forbidden; but even so, we always ask permission before we walk down it. Such an ordinary, commonplace street it looks to you; there is no architectural grandeur to awe the beholder, and impress him with the majesty of Brahmanhood; and yet that street, and every street like it, is a very Petra to us, for it is walled round by walls higher and stronger than the temple walls round which it is built; walls built, as it seems, of some crystal rock, imperceptible till you come up to it, and even then not visible, only recognisable as something you cannot get through. Our first day there was encouraging. We began at the far end of the street, and after some persuasion the men agreed to move to one side, and let us have the other for any women who would come. Nothing particular happened, but we count a day good if we get a single good chance to speak in quietness to the women.

Next time we went it was not so good. They had heard in the meantime all about us, and that we had girls from the higher Castes with us, and this was terrible in their eyes. For the Brahman, from his lofty position of absolute supremacy, holds in very small account the souls of those he calls low-caste; but if any from the middle distance (he would not describe them as near himself, only dangerously nearer than the others) "fall into the pit of the Christian religion," he thinks it is time to begin to take care that the Power which took such effect on them should not have a chance to

perform upon him, and, above all, upon his womankind. So that day we were politely informed that no one had time to listen, and, when some women wanted to come, a muscular widow chased them off. We looked longingly back at those dear Brahman women, but appeal was useless, so we went. In one of the other Castes, the Caste represented by this row of men, we found more friendliness; they let us sit on one end of the narrow verandah fronts, and quite a number of women clustered about on the other. They were greatly afraid of defilement there, and would not come too close. And they had the strangest ideas about us. They were sure we had a powder which, if they inhaled it, would compel them to be Christians. They had heard that we went round "calling children," that is, beckoning them, and drawing them to follow after us, and that we were paid so much a head for converts. It takes a whole afternoon sometimes simply to disabuse their minds of such misconceptions.

I heard this commercial aspect of things explained by one who apparently knew. A kindly old Brahman woman had allowed us to sit on her doorstep out of the sun, and bit by bit we had worked our way to the end of the verandah, which was a little more shaded, where a girl was sitting alone who seemed to want to hear. The old woman sat down behind us, and then an old man came up, and the two began to talk. Said the old woman to the old man, "She is trying to make us join her Way." (I had carefully abstained from any such expression.) The old man agreed that such was my probable object. "What will she get if we join? Do you know?" "Oh yes; do I not know! For one of us a thousand rupees, and for a Vellalar five hundred. She even gets something for a low-caste child, but she gets a whole thousand for one of us!" A Shepherd-Caste house of the better sort. We would give a great deal to get into this house, but so far it is closed. You can see straight through to the back courtyard where the women are, where we may not go. The old man is typical of his class, a thoughtful man of refinement of mind, but wholly indifferent to the teaching.

They were both very interested in this conversation, and so indeed was I, and I thought I would further enlighten them, when the old woman got up in a hurry and hobbled into the house. After that, whenever we passed, she used to shake her head at us, and say, "Chee, chee!" No persuasions could ever induce her to let us sit on her doorstep again. We were clearly after that thousand rupees, and she would have none of us. In the same village there was a little Brahman child who often tried to speak to us, but never was allowed. One day she risked capture and its consequences, and ran across the narrow stream which divides the Brahman street from the village, and spoke to one of our Band in a hurried little whisper. "Oh, I do want to hear about Jesus!" And she told how she had learnt at school in her own town, and then she had been sent to her mother-in-law’s house in this jungle village, "that one," pointing to a house where they never had smiles for us; but her mother-in-law objected to the preaching, and had threatened to throw her down the well if she listened to us. Just then a hard voice called her, and she flew. Next time we went to that village she was shut up somewhere inside.

Often as one passes one sees shy faces looking out from behind the little pillars which support the verandahs, and one longs to get nearer. But it does not do to make any advance unless one is sure of one’s ground. It only results in a sudden startled scurrying into the house, and you cannot follow them there. To try to do so would be more than rude—it would be considered pollution.

Only yesterday we were trying to get to the women who live in the great house of the village behind the bungalow. This photo shows you the door we stood facing for ten minutes or more, first waiting, and then pleading with the old mother-in-law to let us in to the little dark room in which you may see a woman's form hiding behind the door. But we could not go to them, and they could not come to us. There were only two narrow rooms between, but the second of the two had brass water-vessels in it. If we had gone in, those vessels and the water in them would have been defiled. The women were not allowed to come out, the mother-in-law saw well to that; never was one more vigilant. She stood like a great fat hen at the door, with her white widow's skirts outspread like wings, and guarded her chickens effectually. "Go! go by the way you have come!" was all she had to say to us. The friendly old man of the house was out. A friendly young man came in with some rice, and began to measure it. He invited us to sit down, which we did, and he measured the rice in little iron tumblers, counting aloud as he did so in a sing-song chant. He was pleased that we should watch him, and it was interesting to watch, for he did it exactly as the verse describes, pressing the rice down, shaking the iron measure, heaping up the rice till it was running over, and yet counting this abundant tumblerful only as one; then he handed the basketful of rice to a child who stood waiting, and asked what he could do for us. We told him how much we wanted to see the women of the house, but he did not relish the idea of tackling the vigorous old mother-in-law, so we gave up the attempt, and went out. As we passed the wall at the back which encloses the women's quarters, we saw a girl look over the wall as if she wanted to speak to us, but she was instantly pulled back by that tyrannical dame, and a dog came jumping over, barking most furiously, which set a dozen more yelping all about us, and so escorted we retired. This house is in the Village of the Merchant, not five minutes from our gate, but the women in it are far enough from any chance of hearing. The men let us in that day to take the photograph, and we hoped thereby to make friends; but though there are six families living there (for the house is large; the photograph only shows one end of the verandah which runs down its whole length), we have never been once allowed to speak to one of the women; the mother-in-law of all the six takes care we never get the chance. One of the children, a dear little girl, follows us outside sometimes, but she is only seven, and not very courageous; so, though she evidently picks up some of the choruses we sing, she is afraid of being seen listening, and never gets much at a time.

These are some of the practical difficulties in the way of reaching the women. There are others. Suppose you do get in, or, what is more probable in pioneer work, suppose you get a verandah, even then it is not plain sailing by any means. For, first of all, it is dangerously hot. The sun beats down on the street or courtyard to within a foot or two of the stone ledge you are sitting upon, and strikes up. Reflected glare means fever, so you try to edge a little farther out of it without disturbing anyone's feelings, explaining minutely why you are doing it, lest they should think your design is to covertly touch them; and then, their confidence won so far, you begin perhaps with the wordless book, or a lyric set to an Indian tune, or a picture of some parable—never of our Lord—or, oftener still, we find the best way is to open our Bibles, for they all respect a Sacred Book, and read something from it which we know they will understand. We generally find one or two women about the verandahs, and two or three more come within a few minutes, and seeing this, two or three more. But getting them and keeping them are two different things. It is not easy to hold people to hear what they have no special desire to hear. But we are helped; we are not alone. It is always a strength to remember that.

Once fairly launched, interruptions begin. You are in the middle of a miracle, perhaps, and by this time a dozen women have gathered, and rejoice your heart by listening well, when a man from the opposite side of the street saunters over and asks may he put a question, or asks it forthwith. He has heard that our Book says, that if you have faith you can lift a mountain into the sea. Now, there is a mountain, and he points to the pillar out on the plain, standing straight up for five thousand feet, a column of solid rock. There is sea on the other side, he says; cast it in, and we will believe! And the women laugh. But one more intelligent turns to you, "Does your Book really say that?" she asks, "then why can’t you do it, and let us see?" And the man strikes in with another remark, and a woman at the edge moves off, and you wish the man would go.

Perhaps he does, or perhaps you are able to detach him from the visible, and get him and those women too to listen to some bit of witnessing to the Power that moves the invisible, and you are in its very heart when another objection is started: "You say there is only one true God, but we have heard that you worship three!" or, "Can your God keep you from sin?" And you try, God helping you, to answer so as to avoid discussion, and perhaps to your joy succeed, and some are listening intently again, when a woman interrupts with a question about your relations which you answered before, but she came late, and wants to hear it all over again. You satisfy her as far as you can, and then, feeling how fast the precious minutes are passing, you try, oh so earnestly, to buy them up and fill them with eternity work, when suddenly the whole community concentrates itself upon your Tamil sister. Who is she? You had waived the question at the outset, knowing what would sequel it, but they renew the charge. If she is a "born Christian," they exclaim, and draw away for fear of defilement—"Low-caste, low-caste!" and the word runs round contemptuously. If she is a convert, they ask questions about her relations (they have probably been guessing among themselves about her Caste for the last ten minutes); if she does not answer them, they let their imagination run riot; if she does, they break out in indignation, "Left your own mother! Broken your Caste!" and they call her by names not sweet to the ear, and perhaps rise up in a body, and refuse to have anything more to do with such a disgraceful person. Or perhaps you are trying to persuade some of them to learn to read, knowing that, if you can succeed, there will be so much more chance of teaching them, but they assure you it is not the custom for women in that village to read, which unhappily is true; or it may be you are telling them, as you tell those you may never see again, of the Love that is loving them, and in the middle of the telling a baby howls, and all the attention goes off upon it; or somebody wants to go into the house, and a way has to be made for her, with much gathering together and confusion; or a dog comes yelping round the corner, with a stone at its heels, and a pack of small boys in full chase after it; or the men call out it is time to be going; or the women suggest it is time to be cooking; or someone says or does something upsetting, and the group breaks up in a moment, and each unit makes for its separate hole, and stands in it, looking out; and you look up at those dark little doorways, and feel you would give anything they could ask, if only they would let you in, and let you sit down beside them in one of those rooms, and tell them the end of the story they interrupted; but they will not do that. Oh, it makes one sorrowful to be so near to anyone, and yet so very far, as one sometimes is from these women. You look at them, as they stand in their doorways, within reach, but out of reach, as out of reach as if they were thousands of miles away. . . .

Just as I wrote those words a Brahman woman came to the door and looked in. Then she walked in and sat down, but did not speak. Can you think how one’s heart bounds even at such a little

thing as that? Brahman women do not come to see us every day. She pulled out a book of palm-leaf slips, and we read it. It told how she was one of a family of seven, all born deaf and dumb; how hand in hand they had set off to walk to Benares to drown themselves in the Ganges; how a Sepoy had stopped them and taken them to an English Collector; how he had provided for the seven for a year, then let them go; how they had scattered and wandered about, visiting various holy places, supported by the virtuous wherever they went; and how the bearer would be glad to receive whatever we would give her. . . . She has gone, a poor deaf and dumb and wholly heathen woman; we could not persuade her to stay and rest. She is married, she told us by signs; her husband is deaf and dumb, and she has one blind child. She sat on the floor beside us for a few minutes and asked questions—the usual ones, about me, all by signs; but nothing we could sign could in any way make her understand anything about our God. And yet she seems to know something at least about her own. She pointed to her mouth, and then up, and then down and round, to show the winding of a river, and signed clearly enough how she went from holy river to holy river, and worshipped by each, and she pointed up and clasped her hands. There we were, just as I had been writing, so near to her, yet so far from her. But the greatest difficulty of all in reaching the women is that they have no desire to be reached. Sometimes, as on that afternoon when the child came and wanted to hear, we find one who has desire, but the greater number have none; and except in the more advanced towns and villages, where they are allowed to learn with a Bible-woman, they have hardly a chance to hear enough to make them want to hear more.

Then, as if to make the case doubly hard (and this law applies to every woman, of whatever Caste), she is, in the eyes of the law, the property of her husband; and though a Christian cannot by law compel his Hindu wife to live with him, a Hindu husband can compel his Christian wife to live with him; so that no married woman is ever legally free to be a Christian, for if the husband demanded her back, she could not be protected, but would have to be given up to a life which no English woman could bear to contemplate. She may say she is a Christian; he cares nought for what she says. God help the woman thus forced back!

But, believing a higher Power will step in than the power of this most unjust law, we would risk any penalty and receive such a wife should she come. Only, in dealing with the difficulties and barriers which lie between an Indian woman and life as a free Christian, it is useless to shut one’s eyes to this last and least comprehensible of all difficulties, "an English law, imported into India, and enforced with imprisonment," an obsolete English law!

We have no Brahman women converts in our Tamil Mission. We hear of a few in Travancore; we know of more in the North, where the Brahmans are more numerous and less exclusive; but there is not a single bonâ fide Brahman convert woman or child in the whole of this District. There was one, a very old woman; but she died two years ago. We may comfort ourselves with the thought that surely some of those who have heard have become secret believers. But will a true believer remain secret always? We may trust that many a dear little child died young, loving Jesus, and went to Him. But what about those who have not died young? I know that a brighter view may be taken, and if the sadder has been emphasised in these letters, it is only because we feel you know less about it. For more has been written about the successes than about the failures, and it seems to us that it is more important that you should know about the reverses than about the successes of the war. We shall have all eternity to celebrate the victories, but we have only the few hours before sunset in which to win them. We are not winning them as we should, because the fact of

the reverses is so little realised, and the needed reinforcements are not forthcoming, as they would be if the position were thoroughly understood. Reinforcements of men and women are needed, but, far above all, reinforcements of prayer. And so we have tried to tell you the truth—the uninteresting, unromantic truth—about the heathen as we find them, the work as it is. More workers are needed. No words can tell how much they are needed, how much they are wanted here. But we will never try to allure anyone to think of coming by painting coloured pictures, when the facts are in black and white. What if black and white will never attract like colours? We care not for it; our business is to tell the truth. The work is not a pretty thing, to be looked at and admired. It is a fight. And battlefields are not beautiful. But if one is truly called of God, all the difficulties and discouragements only intensify the Call. If things were easier there would be less need. The greater the need, the clearer the Call rings through one, the deeper the conviction grows: it was God’s Call. And as one obeys it, there is the joy of obedience, quite apart from the joy of success. There is joy in being with Jesus in a place where His friends are few; and sometimes, when one would least expect it, coming home tired out and disheartened after a day in an opposing or indifferent town, suddenly—how, you can hardly tell—such a wave of the joy of Jesus flows over you and through you, that you are stilled with the sense of utter joy. Then, when you see Him winning souls, or hear of your comrades’ victories, oh! all that is within you sings, "I have more than an overweight of joy!"

1.09.18. Book 9: 19. "Attracted by the Influence"

CHAPTER XIX "Attracted by the Influence"

"It seems to have been a mistake to imagine that the Divine Majesty on high was too exalted to take any notice of our mean affairs. The great minds among us are remarkable for the attention they bestow upon minutiæ . . . 'a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without your Father.'"

David Livingstone, Africa.

WE have now left Dohnavur, on the West, and returned to our old battlefield on the East. The evening after our arrival one of those special things happened, though only a little thing some will say—a little child was brought. This is not Pearl-eyes. Pearl-eyes is tinier, and has more sparkle; but the Caste is the same, and as we have not got Pearl-eyes, we put this small girl here.

There is a temple in the Hindu village near us. We have often tried to reach the temple women, poor slaves of the Brahmans. We have often seen the little girls, some of them bought as infants from their mothers, and trained to the terrible life. In one of the Mission day schools there is a child who was sold by her "Christian" mother to these Servants of the gods; but though this is known it cannot be proved, and the child has no wish to leave the life, and she cannot be taken by force.

Sometimes we see the little girls playing in the courtyards of the houses near the temple, gracious little maidens, winsome in their ways, almost always more refined in manner than ordinary children, and often beautiful. One longs to help the little things, but no hand of ours can stretch over the wall and lift even one child out.

Among the little temple girls in the Great Lake Village was a tiny girl called Pearl-eyes, of whom we knew nothing; but God must have some purpose for her, for He sent His Angel to the house one afternoon, and the Angel found little Pearl-eyes, and he took her by the hand and led her out, across the stream, and through the wood, to a Christian woman's house in our village. Next morning she brought her to us. This is what really happened, I think; there is no other way to account for it. No one remembers such a thing happening here before.

I was sitting reading in the verandah when I saw them come. The woman was looking surprised. She did not know about the Angel, I expect, and she could not understand it at all. The little child was chattering away, lifting up a bright little face as she talked. When she saw me she ran straight up to me, and climbed on my knee without the least fear, and told me all about herself at once. I took her to the Iyer, and he sent for the Pastor, who sent a messenger to the Village of the Lake, to say the child was here, and to inquire into the truth of her story.

"My name is Pearl-eyes," the child began, "and I want to stay here always. I have come to stay." And she told us how her mother had sold her when she was a baby to the Servants of the gods. She was not happy with them. They did not love her. Nobody loved her. She wanted to live with us. But why had she run away now? She hardly seemed to know, and looked puzzled at our questions. The only thing she was sure about was that she had "run and come," and that she

"wanted to stay." Then the Ammal came in, and she went through exactly the same story with her.

We felt, if this proved to be fact, that we could surely keep her; the Government would be on our side in such a matter. Only the great difficulty might be to prove it.

Meanwhile we gave her a doll, and her little heart was at rest. She did not seem to have a fear. With the prettiest, most confiding little gesture, she sat down at our feet and began to play with it.

We watched her wonderingly. She was perfectly at home with us. She ran out, gathered leaves and flowers, and came back with them. These were carefully arranged in rows on the floor. Then another expedition, and in again with three pebbles for hearthstones, a shell for a cooking pot, bits of straw for firewood, a stick for a match, and sand for rice.

She went through all the minutiæ of Tamil cookery with the greatest seriousness. Then we, together with her doll, were invited to partake. The little thing walked straight into our hearts, and we felt we would risk anything to keep her. Our messenger returned. The story was true. The women from whose house she had come were certainly temple women. But would they admit it to us, and, above all, would they admit they had obtained her illegally?—a fact easy to deny. Almost upon this they came; and to the Iyer’s question, "Who are you?" one said, "We are Servants of the gods!" I heard an instructive aside, "Why did you tell them?" "Oh, never mind," said the one who had answered, "they don’t understand!" But we had understood, and we were thankful for the first point gained.

They stood and stared and called the child, but she would not go, and we would not force her. Then they went away, and we were left for an hour in that curious quiet which comes before a storm. Our poor little girl was frightened. "Oh, if they come again, hide me!" she begged. One saw it was almost too much for her, high-spirited child though she is. The next was worse. A great crowd gathered on the verandah, and an evil-faced woman, who seemed to have some sort of power over Pearl-eyes, fiercely demanded her back. When we refused to make her go, the evil-faced woman, whose very glance sent a tremble through the little one, declared that Pearl-eyes must say out loud that she would not go with her, "Out loud so that all should hear." But the poor little thing was dumb with fear. She just stood and looked, and shivered. We could not persuade her to say a word.

Star was hovering near. She had been through it all herself before, and her face was anxious, and our hearts were, I know. It is impossible to describe such a half-hour’s life to you; it has to be lived through to be understood. The clamour and excitement, and the feeling of how much hangs on the word of a child who does not properly understand what she is accepting or refusing. The tension is terrible.

I dared not go near her lest they should think I was bewitching her. Any movement on my part towards her would have been the signal for a rush on theirs; but I signed to Star to take her away for a moment. The bewilderment on the poor little face was frightening me. One more look up at that woman, one more pull at the strained cord, and to their question, "Will you come?" she might as likely say yes as no.

Star carried her off. Once out of reach of those eyes, the words came fast enough. Star told me she clung to her and sobbed, "Oh, if I say no, she will catch me and punish me dreadfully

afterwards! She will! I know she will!" And she showed cuts in the soft brown skin where she had been punished before; but Star soothed her and brought her back, and she stood—such a little girl—before them all. "I won't! I won't!" she cried, and she turned and ran back with Star. And the crowd went off, and I was glad to see the last of that fearful face, with its evil, cruel eyes. But they said they would write to the mother, who had given her to them. We noted this—the second point we should have to prove if they lodged a suit against us—and any day the mother may come and complicate matters by working on the child's affections. Also, we have heard of a plot to decoy her away, should we be for a moment off guard; so we are very much on the watch, and we never let her out of our sight. By this time—it is five days since she came—it seems impossible to think of having ever been without her. Apart from her story, which would touch anyone, there is her little personality, which is very interesting. She plays all day long with her precious dolls, talking to them, telling them everything we tell her. Yesterday it was a Bible story, to-day a new chorus. She insisted on her best-beloved infant coming to church with her, and it had to have its collection too. Everything is most realistic.

Tamil children usually hang their dolls up by their limbs to a nail in the wall, or stow them away on a shelf, but this mite has imagination and much sympathy. In thinking over it, as, bit by bit, her little story came to light, we have been struck by the touches that tell how God cares. The time of her coming told of care. Some months earlier, the temple woman who kept her had burnt her little fingers across, as a punishment for some childish fault, and Pearl-eyes ran away. She knew what she wanted—her mother; she knew that her mother lived in a town twenty miles to the East. It was a long way for a little girl to walk, "but some kind people found me on the road, and they were going to the same town, and they let me go with them, so I was not afraid, only I was very tired when we got there. It took three days to walk. I did not know where my mother lived in the town, and it was a very big town, but I described my mother to the people in the streets, and at last I found my mother." For just a little while there was something of the mother-love, "my mother cried." But the temple woman had traced her and followed her, and the mother gave her up.

Then comes a blank in the story; she only remembers she was lonely, and she "felt a mother-want about the world," and wandered wearily—

"As restless as a nest-deserted bird Grown chill through something being away, though what It knows not."

Then comes a bit of life distinct in every detail, and told with terribly unchildish horror. She heard them whisper together about her; they did not know that she understood. She was to be "married to the god," "tied to a stone." Terrified, she flew to the temple, slipped past the Brahmans, crossed the court, stood before the god in the dim half-darkness of the shrine, clasped her hands,—she showed us how,—prayed to it, pleaded, "Let me die! Oh, let me die!" Barely seven years old, and she prayed, "Oh, let me die!"

She tried to run away again; if she had come to our village then, she could not have been saved. We were in Dohnavur, and there was no one here who could have protected her against the temple people. So God kept her from coming then.

About that time, one afternoon one of our Tamil Sisters, whom we had left behind to hold the fort, passed through the Great Lake Village, and the temple women called the child, and said, "See! It

is she! The child-stealing Ammal! Run!" It was only said to frighten her, but it did a different work. One day, the day after we returned, the thought suddenly came to her, "I will go and look for that child-stealing Ammal"; and she wandered away in the twilight and came to our village, and stood alone in front of the church, and no one knew.

There one of our Christian women, Servant of Jesus by name, found her some time afterwards, a very small and desolate mite, with tumbled hair and troubled eyes, for she could not find the one she sought, that child-stealing Ammal she wanted so much, and she was frightened, all alone in the gathering dark by this big, big church; and very big it must have looked to so tiny a thing as she.

Servant of Jesus thought at first of taking the little one back to her home, but mercifully it was late (another touch of the hand of God), and so instead she took her straight to her own little house, which satisfied Pearl-eyes perfectly. But she would not touch the curry and rice the kind woman offered her. She drew herself up to her full small height and said, with the greatest dignity, "Am I not a Vellala child? May you ask me to break my Caste?" So Servant of Jesus gave her some sugar, that being ceremonially safe, and Pearl-eyes ate it hungrily, and then went off to sleep.

Next morning, again the woman's first thought was to take her to her own people. But the child was so insistent that she wanted the child-catching Ammal, that Servant of Jesus, thinking I was the Ammal she meant (for this is one of my various names), brought her to me, as I have said, and oh, I am glad she did!

Nothing escapes those clear brown eyes. That morning, in the midst of the confusion, one of the temple women called out that the child was a wicked thief. This is an ordinary charge. They think it will compel submission. "We will make out a case, and send the police to drag you off to gaol!" they yell; and sometimes there is risk of serious trouble, for a case can be made out cheaply in India. But this did not promise to be serious, so we inquired the stolen sum. It came to fourpence halfpenny, which we paid for the sake of peace, though she told them where the money was, and we found out later that she had told the truth.

I never thought she would remember it—the excitements of the day crowded it out of my mind—but weeks afterwards, when I was teaching her the text, "Not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," and explaining how much Jesus had paid for us, she interrupted me with the remark, "Oh yes, I understand! I know how much you paid for me—fourpence halfpenny!" And now to turn from small-seeming things to large. Ragland, Tamil missionary, is writing to a friend in 1847. He is trying to express astronomically the value of a soul. He asks, "How does the astronomer correct the knowledge of the stars which simple vision brings him? First, having discovered that the little dot of light is thousands of miles distant, and having discerned by the telescope that it subtends at the eye a sensible angle, and having measured that angle, a simple calculation shows him the size of the object to be greater perhaps than that of the huge ball which he calls his earth." Then, "Take the soul of one of the poorest, lowest Pariahs of India, and form it by imagination into, or suppose it represented by, a sphere. Place this at the extremity of a line which is to represent time. Extend this line and move off your sphere, farther and farther ad infinitum, and what has become of your sphere? Why, there it is, just as before. . . . It is still what it was, and this even after thousands of years. In short, the disc appears undiminished, though viewed from an almost infinite distance. Oh, what an angle of the mind ought that poor soul to

subtend!" The letter goes on to suggest another parallel between things astronomical and things spiritual. He supposes an objector admits the size as proved, but demurs as to the importance of these heavenly bodies. "They are, perhaps, only unsubstantial froth, mere puffs of air, vapoury nothings." But the astronomer knows their mass and weight, as well as their size: "Long observation has taught him that planets in the neighbourhood of one given heavenly body have been turned out of their course, how, and by what, he is at first quite at a loss to tell but he has guessed and reasoned, has found cause for suspecting the planet. He watches, observes, and compares; and after a long sifting of evidence, he brings it in guilty of the disturbance. If it be so, it must have a power to disturb, a power to attract; and if so, it is not a mere shell, much less a mere vapour. It has mass and it has weight, and he calculates and determines from the disturbances what that weight is. Just so with the Pariah's soul. Oh, what a disturbance has it created! What a celestial body has it drawn out from its celestial sphere! Not a star, not the whole visible heavens, not the heaven of heavens itself, but Him Who fills heaven and earth, by Whom all things were created. Him did that Pariah's soul attract from heaven even to earth to save it. Oh that we would thence learn, and learning, lay to heart the weight and the value of that one soul." And just as the majesty of the glory of the Lord is shown forth nowhere more majestically than in the chapter which tells us how He feeds His flock like a shepherd, and gathers the lambs with His arm, and carries them in His bosom, so nowhere, I think, do we see the glory of our God more than in chapters of life which show Him bending down from the circle of the earth, yea rather, coming down all the way to help it, "attracted by the influence" of the need of a little child.

1.09.20. Book 9: 20. The Elf

CHAPTER XX The Elf

"You remember what I said once, that you could not, perhaps, put a whole crown on the head of Jesus—that is, bring a whole country to be His—but you might put one little jewel in His crown."

Bishop French, India and Arabia.

PEARL-EYES, otherwise the Elf, because it exactly describes her, was very good for the first few weeks, after which we began to know her. She is not a convert in any sense of the term. She is just a very wilful, truthful, exasperating, fascinating little Oriental. When she is, as she expresses it, "moved to sin," nobody of her own colour can manage her. "You are only me grown up," is her attitude towards them all. She is always ready to repent, but, as Pearl sorrowfully says, "before her tears are dry, she goes and sins again," and then, quite unabashed, she will trot up to you as if nothing had happened and expect to be lavishly petted.

I never saw anyone except the Elf look interesting when naughty. She does look interesting. She is a rather light brown, and any emotion makes the brown lighter; her long lashes droop over her eyes in the most pathetic manner, and when she looks up appealingly she might be an innocent martyr about to die for her faith.

We have two other small girls with us; the Imp—but her name is a libel, she reformed some months ago—and Tangles, who ties herself into knots whenever she makes a remark. These three have many an argument (for Indian children delight in discussion), and sometimes the things that are brought to me would shock the orthodox. This is the last, brought yesterday:

"Obedience is not so important as love. Orpah was very obedient. Her mother-in-law said, 'Go, return,' and she did as she was told. But Ruth was not obedient at all. Four times her mother-in-law said, 'Go,' and yet she would not go. But God blessed Ruth much more than Orpah, because she loved her mother-in-law. So obedience is not so important as love." Only the day before I had been labouring to explain the absolute necessity for the cultivation of the grace of obedience; but now it was proved a secondary matter, for Ruth was certainly disobedient, but good and greatly blessed. The Elf's chief delinquencies at present, however, spring from a rooted aversion to her share in the family housework (ten minutes' rubbing up of brass water-vessels); an appetite for slate pencils—she would nibble them by the inch if we would let her—"they are so nice to eat," she says; and, most fruitful of all in sad consequences, a love of being first. As regards sin No. 1, I hope it will soon be a thing of the past, for she has just made a valuable discovery: "Satan doesn't come very close to me if I sing all the time I'm rubbing the brasses. He runs away when he hears me sing, so I sing very loud, and that keeps him away. Satan doesn't like hymns." And I quite agree, and strongly advise her to persevere.

Sin No. 2 is likely to pass, as she hates the nasty medicine we give her to correct her depraved proclivities; but No. 3 is more serious. It opens the door, or, as she once expressed it, it "calls so

many other sins to come,"—quarrelling, pride, and several varieties of temper, come at the "call" of this sin No. 3.

She is a born leader in her very small way, and she has not learned yet, that before we can lead we must be willing to be led. "I will choose the game," she remarks "and all of you must do as I tell you." Sometimes they do, for her directions, though decisive, are given with a certain grace that wins obedience; but sometimes they do not, and then the Elf is offended, and walks off. But she is the life of the game, and they chase her and propitiate her; and she generally condescends to return, for solitary dignity is dull. If any of the seniors happen to see it, it is checked as much as possible, but oftener we hear of it in that very informing prayer, which is to her quite the event of the evening; for she takes to the outward forms of religion with great avidity, and the evening prayer especially is a deep delight to her. She counts up all her numerous shortcomings carefully and perfectly truthfully, as they appear to her, and with equal accuracy her blessings large and small. She sometimes includes her good deeds in the list, lest, I suppose, they should be forgotten in the record of the day. All the self-righteousness latent in human nature comes out, or used to, in her earlier days, in the evening revelations. Here is a specimen, taken at random from the first month's sheaf. She and the Imp had come to my room for their devotions, preternaturally pious, both of them, though quite unregenerate. It was the Elf's turn to begin. She settled herself circumspectly, sighed deeply, and then began.

First came the day's sins, counted on the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the fourth finger. "Once," and down went the little finger on the palm, "I was cross with L." (L. being the Imp, nine and a half to the Elf's seven and a half, but most submissive as a rule.) "I was cross because she did not do as I told her. That was wrong of me; but it was wrong of her too, so it was only half a sin. Twice," and the third finger was folded down, "when I did not do my work well. That was quite all my fault. Three times," and down went the middle finger, "when I caught a quarrel with those naughty little children; they were stupid little children, and they would not play my game, so I spoiled unity. But they came running after me, and they said, 'Please forgive us,' so I forgave them. That was very good of me, and I also forgave L.; so that is three bad things and two good things to-day."

I stopped her, and expatiated on the sin of pride, but her mind was full of the business in hand.

"Then there were four blessings—no, five; but I can't remember the fifth. The Ammal gave me a box for my doll, and you gave me some sweets; and I found some nice rags in your waste-paper basket"—grubbing in rag-bags and waste-paper baskets is one of the joys of life; rags are so useful when you have a large family of dolls who are always wearing out their clothes—"and I have some cakes in my own box now. There are four blessings. But I forget the fifth."

I advised her to leave it, and begin, for the Imp was patiently waiting her turn. She, good child, suggested the missing fifth must be the soap—the Ammal had given each of them a piece the size of a walnut. Yes, that was it apparently, for the Elf, contented, began—

"O loving Lord Jesus! I have done three wrong things to-day" (then followed the details and prayer for forgiveness). "Lord, give L. grace to do what I want her to do; and when she does not do it, Lord, give me grace to be patient with her. I thank Thee for causing me to forgive those little children who would not play the game I liked. Oh make them good, and make me also good; and

next time we play together give me grace to play patiently with them. And oh, forgive all the bad things I have done to-day; and I thank Thee very much for all the good things I have done, for I did them by Thy grace." Praise for mercies followed in order: the cardboard box, the lump of sugar-candy, the spoils from the waste-paper basket, those sticky honey-cakes—which, to my disquietude, I then understood were secreted in her seeley box—and that precious bit of soap. Then—and this is never omitted—a fervently expressed desire for safe preservation for herself and her friends from "the bites of snakes and scorpions, and all other noxious creatures, through the darkness of the night, and when I wake may I find myself at Thy holy feet. Amen." No matter how sleepy she is, these last phrases, which are quite of her own devising, are always included in the tail-end of her prayer. She would not feel at all safe on her mat, spread on the ground out of doors in hot weather, unless she had so fortified herself from all attacks of the reptile world. And when, one day, we discovered a nest of some few dozen scorpions within six yards of her mat, not one of which had ever disturbed her or any of her "friends," we really did feel that funny little prayer had power in it after all.

You cannot interrupt in the middle of those rather confusing confessions, she is far too much engaged to be disturbed, but when the communication is fairly over, and she cuddles on your knee for the kissing and caressing she so much appreciates, you have a chance of explaining things a little.

She listened seriously that evening, I remember, then, slipping down off my knee, she added as a sort of postscript, very reverently, "O Lord Jesus, I prayed it wrong. I was naughtier than L., much naughtier. But indeed Thou wilt remember that she was naughty first. . . . Oh, that’s not it! It was not L., it was me! And I was impatient with those little children. But . . . but they caused impatience within me." Then getting hopelessly mixed up between self-condemnation and self-justification, she gave it up, adding, however, "Next time we play together, give them more grace to play patiently with me," which was so far satisfactory, as at first she had scouted the idea that there could be any need of patience on the other side.

Sometimes she brings me perplexities not new to most of us. "This morning I prayed with great desire, ’Lord, keep me to-day from being naughty at all,’ and I was naughty an hour afterwards; I looked at the clock and saw. How was it I was naughty when I wanted to be good? The naughtiness jumped up inside me, so"—(illustrating its supposed action within), "and it came running out. So what is the use of praying?"

Once the difficulty was rather opposite.

"Can you be good without God’s grace?"

I told her I certainly could not.

"Well, I can!" she answered delightedly. "I want to pray now."

"Now? It is eight o’clock now. Haven’t you had prayer long ago?" (We all get up at six o’clock.)

"No. That’s just what I meant. I skipped my prayer this morning, and so of course I got no grace; but I have been helping the elder Sisters. Wasn’t that right?"

"Yes, quite right."

"And yet I hadn’t got any grace! But I suppose," she added reflectively, "it was the grace over from yesterday that did it." As a rule she is not distinguished for very deep penitence, but at one time she had what she called "a true sense of sin" which fluctuated rather, but was always hailed, when it appeared in force, as a sign of better things. After a day of mixed goodness and badness the Elf prayed most devoutly, "I thank Thee for giving me a sense of sin to-day. O God, keep me from being at all naughty to-morrow. But if I am naughty, Lord, give me a true sense of sin!"

We value this photo exceedingly, it was so hard to get. We were in a big heathen village when we saw this Ugly Duckling, in fact she was one of the most tiresome of the "rabbits" mentioned in Chapter I. She saw us, and darted off and climbed a wall and made faces at us in a truly delightful manner. We thought we would take her, and tried. As well try to pick up quicksilver; she would not be caught. The deed was finally done when she had not the least idea of it, and the camera gave a triumphant click as it snapped her unawares. "What do they want her for?" inquired a grown-up bystander, who had observed our little game. "Look at her hair," said another, "they never saw hair like that in England, that’s what they want her for!"

Professor Drummond speaks of our whole life as a long-drawn breath of mystery, between the two great wonders—the first awakening and the last sleep. I often think of that as I listen to the little children talking to each other and to us. They are always wondering about something. One day it was, "Do fishes love Jesus?" followed by "What is a soul?" The conclusion was, "It’s the thing we love Jesus with." When they first come to us they invariably think that mountains grow like trees: "Stones are young mountains, aren’t they? and hills are middle-aged mountains." Later on, every printed thing on a wall is a text. We were in a railway station, on our way to the hills: "Look! oh, what numbers and numbers of texts! But what queer pictures to have on texts!" One was specially perplexing; it was a well-known advertisement, and the picture showed a monkey smoking a cigar. What could that depraved animal have to do with a text? When we got to the hills the first amazement was the sight of the fashionable ladies wearing veils. "Don’t they like to look at God’s beautiful world? Do they like it better spotty?"

Tangles has another name; it is the "Ugly Duckling," and it is extremely descriptive; but Ugly Duckling or not, she is of an inquiring turn of mind, and one Saturday afternoon, after standing under a tree for fully five minutes lost in thought, she came to me with a question: "What are the birds saying to each other?" I looked at the Ugly Duckling, and she twisted herself into a note of interrogation, in the ridiculous way she has, but her face was full of anxiety for enlightenment about the language of the sparrows. "There," she said, pointing vigorously to the astonished birds, which instantly flew away, "that little sparrow and this one are making quite different noises. What are they saying? I do want to know so much!" As I imagined the birds in question had just been having supper, I told her what I thought they were probably saying. Next day, in the sermon, there was something about the praise all creation offers to God, and I saw Tangles knotting her hands together and going into the queerest contortions in appreciation of the one bit of the sermon she could understand. The Imp’s questions were various. "What is that?"—pointing to a busy-bee clock—"is it an English kind of insect? Don’t its legs get tired going round? Oh! is it dead now?" (when it stopped). "Who made Satan?" was an early one. "Why doesn’t God kill him immediately, and stamp on him?" One day I was trying to find and touch her heart by telling her how very sorry Jesus is when we are naughty. She seemed subdued, then—"Amma, where was the Queen’s spirit after she died and before they buried her, and what did they give it to eat?"

"Did you see Lot's wife?" was a question which tickled the Bishop when, on his last visitation, he gave himself up to an hour's catechising upon his tour in the Holy Land. They were disappointed that he had to confess he had not. "Oh, I suppose the salt has melted," was the Elf's comment upon this.

Tangles is distinctly inclined to peace. The Elf, I grieve to say, is not. Yesterday she announced a quarrel: "I feel cross!" Tangles objected to quarrel. "I do feel cross!" and the Elf apparently showed corroborative symptoms. Then Tangles looked at her straight: "I'm not going to quarrel. The devil has arrived in the middle of the afternoon to interrupt our unity, and I won't let him!" which so touched the Elf that she embraced her on the spot; and then, in detailing it all in her prayer in the evening, this incorrigible little sinner added, with real emotion, "Lord, I am not good. I spoiled unity with L." (the Imp), "and Thou didst feel obliged to remove her to a boarding-school. Now do help me not to spoil unity with P." (who is Tangles), "lest Thou shouldst feel obliged to remove her also to a boarding-school,"—a view of the Imp's promotion which had not struck me before.

Tangles and she belong to the same Caste, and Tangles has the character of that Caste as fully developed as the Elf, and can hold her own effectually. Also she is a little older and taller, and being the Elf's "elder sister," is, therefore, entitled to a certain measure of respect. All those small things tend to the discipline of the Elf, who is very small for her age, and who would have preferred a junior, of a meek and mild disposition, and whose constant prayer is this: "O Lord, bring another little girl out of the lion's mouth, but, O Lord, please let her be a very little girl!" Shortly after this prayer began, a very little girl was brought; but she was a vulgar infant, and greatly tried the Elf, and she was, for various reasons, promptly returned to her parents. After this episode the prayer varied somewhat: "Lord, let her be a suitable child, and give me grace to love her from my heart when she comes." The conversation of these young creatures is often very illuminating, and always most miscellaneous. The Elf's mind especially is a sort of small curiosity shop, and displays many assortments. The Elf, Tangles, and little Delight (Delight is a youthful Christian) are curled up on the warm red sand with their three little heads close together. The Elf is telling a story. I listen, and hear a marvellous muddle of the Uganda Boys and Cyril of North Africa. "He was only six years old, and he stood up and said, 'What you are going to do, do quickly! I am not afraid. I am going to the Golden City!' And they showed him the sword and the fire, and he said, 'Do it quickly!' and they chopped off his arm, and said, 'Will you deny Jesus?' and he said, 'No!' and they chopped off his other arm,"—and so on through all the various limbs in most vivid detail,—"and then they threw him on the fire, and burnt him till he was ashes; and he sang praises to Jesus!" The Elf leans to the tragic. Tangles' mother had a difference of opinion with a friend. The friend snatched at her opponent's ear jewels, and tore the ear. Life with a torn ear was intolerable, so Tangles' mother walked three times round the well, repeated three times, "My blood be on your head!" and sprang in. She rose three times, each time said the same words, and then sank. All this Tangles confided to the Elf, who concocted a game based upon the incident—which, however, we ruthlessly squashed. They are tossing pebbles now, according to rules of their own, and talking vigorously. "The Ammal told me all the people in England are white, and I asked her what they did without servants, and she said they had white servants, white servants!!" and the note of exclamation is intense. The others are equally astonished. White people as servants! The two ideas clash. They have never seen a white servant. In all their extensive acquaintance with white people they have only seen missionaries (who are truly their servants, though they hardly realise it

yet), and occasionally Government officials, whose mastership is very much in evidence. So they are puzzled. They get out of the difficulty, however. "At the beginning of the beginning of England, black people must have gone to be the white people's servants, and they gradually grew white." Yes, that's it apparently; they faded. The conversation springs higher. "Do you know what lightning is? I'll tell you. I watched it one whole evening, and I think it's just a little bit of heaven's light coming through and going back again." This sounds probable, and great interest is aroused. They are discussing the sheet lightning which plays about the sky in the evening before rain. "Of course it isn't much of heaven's light, only a little tiny bit getting out and running down here to show us what it is like inside. One night I shut my eyes, and it ran in and out, in and out, oh so fast! Even if I shut my eyes I saw it running inside my eyes."

"Did you get caned in school to-day?"

"No, not exactly caned," and an explanation follows. "I was standing beside a very naughty little girl, and the teacher meant to cane her, but the cane fell on me by mistake. I wanted to cry, because it hurt, but I thought it would be silly to cry when it hurt me quite by mistake. So I didn't cry one tear!" The Elf hit upon a capital expedient for escaping castigation (which is never very severe). "I found this cane myself. It was lying on the ground in the compound, and I am going to take it to the teacher." Chorus of "Why?" "Because," and the Elf looked elfish, "if I give it to him with my own hands, how will he cane my hands with it? His heart will not be hard enough to cane me with the cane I gave him!" and the little scamp looks round for applause. Chorus of admiring "Oh!"

Then they begin again, the Elf as usual chief informant. "I know something!" Chorus, "What?" "A beautiful doll is waiting for me in a box, and I'm going to have it at Ki-rismas!" "What sort of a doll?" is the eager inquiry. "I don't know exactly, but God sent it, of course, so I think it must be something like an angel." Chorus, delightedly, "Ah!" "Yes, if it came from God, then of course it came from heaven, and heaven is the place all the angels come from, and they are white and shining, so I think it will be white and shining like an angel." The doll in question is a negress with a woolly head and a scarlet-striped pinafore. It had not struck me as angelic. It is an experiment in dolls. Will it "take"? Ki-rismas came at last, and the heavenly doll with it, but it did not "take." Grievous were the tears and sobs, and the bitterest wail of all was, "I thought God would have sent me a nicer doll!" We changed it for a "nicer doll," for the poor Elf was not wicked, only broken-hearted, and Star, who is supposed to be much too old for dolls, begged for the despised black beauty; because, as the Elf maliciously remarked as she hugged her white dolly contentedly, "That black thing has a curly head, just like Star's!" The habit of praying about everything is characteristic of the Elf, and more than once her uninstructed little soul has grieved over the strange way our prayers are sometimes answered. One day she came rushing in full of excitement. "Oh, may I go and be examined? The Government Missie Ammal is going to examine our school! Please let me go!" The Government Missie Ammal, a great celebrity who only comes round once a year, was staying with us, and I asked her if the child might have the joy of being examined even though she had not had nearly her year at school. She agreed, for the sake of the little one's delight—for an Indian child likes nothing better than a fuss of any kind—to let her come into the examination room, and take her examination informally. We knew she was sure of a pass. An hour or two afterwards a scout came flying over to tell us the awful news. The Elf had failed, utterly failed, and she was so ashamed she wouldn't come back, "wouldn't come back any more." I

went for her, and found her a little heap of sobs and tears, outside the schoolroom. I gathered her up in my arms and carried her home, and tried to comfort her, but she was crushed. "I asked God so earnestly to let me pass, and I didn't pass! And I thought He had listened, but now I know He didn't listen at all!"

I was puzzled too, though for a different reason. I knew she should easily have passed, and I could only conclude her wild excitement had made her nervous, for with many tears she told me, "I did not know one answer! not even one!" And again she came back to the first and sorest, "Oh, I did think God was listening, and He wasn't listening at all!" At last I got her quieted, and explained, by means of a rupee and an anna, how sometimes God gives us something better than we ask for; we ask for an anna, and He gives us a rupee. A rupee holds sixteen annas. She grew interested: "Then my passing that examination was the anna. But what is the rupee?" Now the Elf, as you may have observed, is not weighted with over much humility, so I told her I thought the rupee must be humility. She considered a while, then sliding off my knee, she knelt down and said, with the utmost gravity and purpose, "O God! I did not want that kind of answer, but I do want it now. Give me the rupee of humility!" Then springing up with eyes dancing with mischief, "Next time I fall into pride you will say, 'Oh, where is that rupee?'" When the school examinations were over, and the Missie Ammal came back to rest, I asked her about the Elf. "She really did very badly, seemed to know nothing of her subjects; should not have gone in, poor mite!" It suddenly struck me to ask what class she had gone into. "The first," said the Missie Ammal. "But she is in the infants'!" Then we understood. The Elf had only been at school for a few months, and had just finished the infant standard book, and had been moved into the first a day or two before, as the teacher felt she was well able to clear the first course in the next six months and take her examination in the following year, two years' work in one. But it was not intended she should go in for the Government examination, which requires a certain time to be spent in preparation; so when, in the confusion of the arrangement of the classes, she stood with her little class-fellows of two days only, the mistake was not noticed. No wonder the poor Elf failed! We never told her the reason, not desiring to raise fresh questions upon the mysterious ways of Providence in her busy little brain; and to this day, when she is betrayed into pride, she shakes her head solemnly at herself, and remembers the rupee.

She has lately been staying with the Missie Ammals, "my very particular friends," as she calls them, at the C.E.Z. House, in Palamcottah. She returned to us full of matter, and charged with a new idea. "I am no more going to spend my pocket money upon vanities. I am going to save it all up, and buy a Gee-lit Bible." This gilt-edged treasure is a fruitful source of conversation. It will take about six years at the rate of one farthing a week to save enough to buy exactly the kind she desires. "I don't want a common Bible. It must be gee-lit, with shining gee-lit all down the leaves on the outside, and the name on the back all gee-lit too. That's the kind of Bible I want!" Just as I wrote that, she trotted in and poured three half-annas in small change upon the table. "That's all I've got, and it's six weeks' savings. Six years is a long, long time!" She confided to me that she found "the flesh wanted to persuade" her to spend these three half-annas on cakes. "It is the flesh, isn't it, that feeling you get inside, that says 'sweets and cakes! sweets and cakes!' in a very loud voice? I listened to it for a little, and then I wanted those sweets and cakes! So I said to myself, If I buy them they will all be gone in an hour, but if I buy that Gee-lit Bible it will last for years and years. So I would not listen any more to my flesh." Then a sudden thought struck her, and she

added impressively, "But when you give me sweets and cakes, that is different; the feeling that likes them is not ’flesh’ then. It is only ’flesh’ when I’m tempted to spend my Gee-lit Bible money on them." This was a point I was intended thoroughly to understand. Sweets and cakes were not to be confused with "flesh" except where a Gee-lit Bible was concerned. She seemed relieved when I agreed with her that such things might perhaps sometimes be innocently enjoyed, and with a sudden and rather startling change of subject inquired, "Do they never have holidays in hell?"

1.09.21. Book 9: 21. Deified Deviltry

CHAPTER XXI

Deified Devilry

"Next to the sacrificers, they (the temple women) are the most important persons about the temple. That a temple intended as a place of worship, and attended by hundreds of simple-hearted men and women, should be so polluted, and that in the name of religion, is almost beyond belief; and that Indian boys should grow up to manhood, accustomed to see immorality shielded in these temples with a divine cloak, makes our hearts grow sick and faint."

Mrs. Fuller, India.

EXCUSE the title of this chapter. I can write no other. Sometimes the broad smooth levels of life are crossed by a black-edged jagged crack, rent, as it seems, by an outburst of the fiery force below. We find ourselves suddenly close upon it; it opens right at our very feet.

Two girls came to see us to-day; sisters, but tuned to different keys. One was ordinary enough, a bright girl with plenty of jewels and a merry, contented face. The other was finer grained; you looked at her as you would look at the covers of a book, wondering what was inside. Both were married; neither had children. This was the only sorrow the younger had ever had, and it did not seem to weigh heavily. The elder looked as if she had forgotten how to smile. Sometimes, when the other laughed, her eyes would light for a moment, but the shadow in them deepened almost before the light had come; great soft brown eyes, full of the dumb look that animals have when they are suffering.

I knew her story, and understood. She was betrothed as a baby of four to a lad considerably older; a lovable boy, they say he was, generous and frank. The two of course belonged to the same Caste, the Vellalar, and were thoroughly well brought up. In South India no ceremony of importance is considered complete without the presence of "the Servants of the gods." These are girls and women belonging to the temple (that is, belonging to the priests of the temple), who, as they are never married, "except to the god who never dies," can never become widows. Hence the auspiciousness of their presence at betrothals, marriages, feasts of all sorts, and even funerals. But this set of Vellalars had as a clan risen above the popular superstition, and the demoralising presence of these women was not allowed to profane either the betrothal or marriage of any child of the family. So the boy and girl grew up as unsullied as Hindus ever are. They knew of what happened in other homes, but their clan was a large one, and they found their society in it, and did not come across others much.

Shortly before his marriage the boy went to worship in the great temple near the sea. He had heard of its sanctity all his life, and as a little lad had often gone with his parents on pilgrimage there, but now he went to worship. He took his offering and went. He went again and again. All that he saw there was religion, all that he did was religious. Could there be harm in it?

He was married; his little bride went with him trustfully. She knew more of him than most Indian brides know of their husbands. She had heard he was loving, and she thought he would be kind to her. A year or two passed, and the child's face had a look in it which even the careless saw, but she never spoke about anything to give them the clue to it. She went to stay in her father's house for a few weeks, and they saw the change, but she would not speak even to them.

Then things got worse. The girl grew thin, and the neighbours talked, and the father heard and understood; and, to save a scandal, he took them away from the town where they lived, and made every effort to give them another start in a place where they were not known. But the coils of that snake of deified sin had twisted round the boy, body and soul; he could not escape from it.

They moved again to another town; it followed him there, for a temple was there, and a temple means that.

Then the devil of cruelty seized upon him; he would drink, a disgraceful thing in his Caste, and then hold his little wife down on the floor, and stuff a bit of cloth into her mouth, and beat her, and kick her, and trample upon her, and tear the jewels out of her ears. The neighbours saw it, and told.

Then he refused to bring money to her, and she slowly starved, quite silent still, till at last hunger broke down her resolute will, and she begged the neighbours for rice. And he did more, but it cannot be told. How often one stops in writing home-letters. The whole truth can never be told.

She is only a girl yet, in years at least; in suffering, oh, how old she is! Not half is known, for she never speaks; loyal and true to him through it all. We only know what the neighbours know, and what her silent dark eyes tell, and the little thin face and hands.

She was very weary and ill to-day, but she would not own it, brave little soul! I could see that neuralgia was racking her head, and every limb trembled when she stood up; but what made it so pathetic to me was the silence with which she bore it all. I have only seen her once before, and now she is going far away with her husband to another town, and I may not see her again. She was too tired to listen much, and she knows so little, not nearly enough to rest her soul upon. She cannot read, so it is useless to write to her. She is going away quite out of our reach; thank God, not out of His.

We watched them drive off in the bullock cart, a servant walking behind. The little pale face of the elder girl looked out at the open end of the cart; she salaamed as they drove away. Such a sweet face in its silent strength, so wondrously gentle, yet so strong, strong to endure. Do you wonder I call this sort of thing a look deep down into hell? Do you wonder we burn as we think of such things going on in the Name of God? For they think of their god as God. In His Name the temples are built and endowed, and provided with "Servants" to do devil's work. Yes, sin is deified here. And the shame of shames is that some Englishmen patronise and in measure support the iniquity. They attend entertainments at which these girls are present to sing and dance, and see nothing disgraceful in so doing. As lately as 1893, when the Indian Social Reformers of this Presidency petitioned two notable Englishmen to discountenance "this pernicious practice" (the institution of Slaves of the gods) "by declining to attend any entertainment at which they are invited to be present," these two distinguished men, representatives of our Queen, refused to take action in the matter. Surely this is a strange misuse of our position as rulers of India.[2]

There are so many needs everywhere that I hardly like to speak of our own, but we do need someone to work among these temple women and girls. There is practically nothing being done for them; because it is impossible for any of us to work among them and others at the same time. The nearest Home to which we could send such a one is four hundred miles away. Someone is needed, old enough to have had experience of this kind of work, and yet young enough to learn the language.

Many of these Slaves of the gods were bought, or in some other way obtained, when they were little innocent girls, and they cannot be held responsible for the terrible life to which they are doomed by the law of the Hindu religion. Many of them have hardened past any desire to be other than they are; but sometimes we see the face of a girl who looks as if she might have desire, if only she had a chance to know there is something better for her. Can it be that, out of the many at home, God has one, or better, two, who can come with Him to this South Indian District to do what must always be awful work, along the course of that crack? If she comes, or if they come, let them come in the power of the Holy Ghost, baptised with the love that endures!

This, then, is one look into Hinduism, this ghastly whitened sepulchre, within which are dead men’s bones.

FOOTNOTES:

[2] For details, see The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood, by Mrs. Fuller.

1.09.22. Book 9: 22. Behind the Door

CHAPTER XXII

Behind the Door

"When any person is known to be considering the new Religion, all his relations and acquaintances rise en masse; so that to get a new convert is like pulling out the eye-tooth of a live tiger."

Adoniram Judson, Burmah.

EVERY missionary who has despaired of hitting upon an illustration vivid enough to show you what the work is really like among Mohammedans and Caste Hindus will appreciate this simile. After our return from Dohnavur we found that the long-closed villages of this eastern countryside had opened again, and the people were willing to allow us to teach the girls and women. For two months this lasted, and then three boys, belonging to three different Castes, became known as inquirers. Instantly the news spread through all the villages. It was in vain we told them we (women-workers) had never once even seen the boys, had in no way influenced them; the people held to it that, personally responsible or not, the book we taught to the girls was the same those boys had read (an undeniable fact); that its poison entered through the eyes, ascended to the brain, descended to the heart, and then drew the reader out of his Caste and his religion; and that therefore we could not be tolerated in the streets or in the houses any more, and so we were turned out.

"It took me such a long time to learn to draw nicely," said Victory when she saw this photo; "I used to go to the Brahman street every morning and practise it there." A design is drawn with a piece of chalk on the ground in front of every house each morning during part of December and January, in memory of a goddess who used to amuse herself by drawing these patterns and planting flowers in them. All sorts of geometrical designs are drawn by the women and children, and the regular morning drawing is part of the day’s work. In one village where many of the relations of one of these three lads live, the tiger growled considerably. One furious old dame called us "Child-snatchers and Powder-mongers," and white snakes of the cobra species, and a particular genus of lizard, which when stamped upon merely wriggles, and cannot be persuaded to die (this applied to our persistence in evil), and a great many other things. The women stood out in the street in defiant groups and would not let us near enough to explain. The men sat on the verandah fronts and smiled, blandly superior to the childish nonsense the women talked, but they did not interfere.

Villages like this—and Old India is made up of such villages—are far removed from the influence of the few enlightened centres which exist. Madras is only a name to them, distant four hundred miles or so, a place where Caste notions are very lax and people are mixed up and jumbled together in a most unbecoming way.

Education, or "Learning," as they call it, they consider an excellent thing for boys who want to come to the front and earn money and grow rich. But for girls, what possible use is it? Can they pass examinations and get into Government employ? If you answered this question you would only disgust them. Then there is a latent feeling common enough in these old Caste families, that it is rather infra dig. for their women to know too much. It may be all very well for those who have no pretensions to greatness, they may need a ladder by which to climb up the social scale, but we who are already at the top, what do we want with it? "Have not our daughters got their Caste?" This feeling is passing away in the towns, but the villages hold out longer. In that particular village we had some dear little girls who were getting very keen, and it was so hard to move out, and leave the field to the devil as undisputed victor thereon, and I sent one of our workers to try again. She is a plucky little soul, but even she had to beat a retreat. They will have none of us.

We went on that day to a village where they had listened splendidly only a week before. They had no time, it was the busy season. Then to a town, farther on, but it was quite impracticable. So we went to our friend the dear old Evangelist there, the blind old man. He and his wife are lights in that dark town. It is so refreshing to spend half an hour with two genuine good old Christians after a tug of war with the heathen; they have no idea they are helping you, but they are, and you return home ever so much the happier for the sight of them. As we came home we were almost mobbed. In the old days mobs there were of common occurrence. It is a rough market town, and the people, after the first converts came, used to hoot us through the streets, and throw handfuls of sand at us, and shower ashes on our hair. In theory I like this very much, but in practice not at all. The yellings of the crowd, men chiefly, are not polite; the yelpings of the dogs, set on by sympathetic spectators; the sickening blaze of the sun and the reflected glare from the houses; the blinding dust in your eyes, and the queer feel of ashes down your neck; above all, the sense that this sort of thing does no manner of good—for it is not persecution (nothing so heroic), and it will not end in martyrdom (no such honours come our way)—all this row, and all these feelings, one on the top of the other, combine to make mobbing less interesting than might be expected. You hold on, and look up for patience and good nature and such like common graces, and you pray that you may not be down with fever to-morrow—for fever has a way of stopping work—and you get out of it all, as quickly as you can, without showing undue hurry. And then, though little they know it, you go and get a fresh baptism of love for them all. But how delighted one would be to go through such unromantic trifles every hour of every day, if only at the end one could get into the hearts and the homes of the people. As it is, just now, our grief is that we cannot. We know of several who want us, and we are shut out from them.

One is a young wife, who saw us one day by the waterside, and asked us to come and teach her. For doing this she was publicly beaten that evening in the open street, by a man, before men; so, for fear of what they would do to her, we dare not go near the house. Another is a widow who has spent all her fortune in building a rest-house for the Brahmans, and who has not found Rest. She listened once, too earnestly; she has not been allowed to listen again. Oh, how that tiger bites!

Next door to her is a child we have prayed for for three years. She was a loving, clinging child when I knew her then, little Gold, with the earnest eyes. That last day I saw her, she put her hands into mine, caring nothing for defilement; "Are we not one Caste?" she said. I did not know it was the last time I should see her; that the next time when I spoke to her I should only see her shadow in the dark; and one wishes now one had known—how much one would have said! But the house

was open then, and all the houses were. Then the first girl convert, after bravely witnessing at home, took her stand as a Christian. Her Caste people burned down the little Mission school—a boys' school—and chalked up their sentiments on the charred walls. They burned down the Bible-woman's house and a school sixteen miles away; and the countryside closed, every town and village in it, as if the whole were a single door, with the devil on the other side of it. But some of the girls behind the door managed to send us messages. Gold was one of these. She wanted so much to see us again, she begged us to come and try. We tried; we met the mother outside, and asked her to let us come. She is a hard old woman, with eyes like bits of black ice, set deep in her head. She froze us, and refused.

Afterwards we heard what the child's punishment was. They took her down to the water, and led her in. She stood trembling, waist deep, not knowing what they meant to do. Then they held her head under the water till she made some sign to show she would give in. They released her then, rubbed ashes on her brow, sign of recantation, and they led her back sobbing—poor little girl. She is not made of martyr stuff; she was only miserable. For some months we saw nothing of her. We used to go to the next house and persuade the people to let us sing to them. We sang for Gold; but we never knew if she heard.

One evening, as two of us came home late from work, a woman passed us and said hurriedly to me, "Come, come quickly, and alone. It is Gold who calls you! Come!" I followed her to the house. "I am Gold's married sister," she explained. "Sit down outside in the verandah near the door and wait till the child comes out." Then she went in, and I sat still and waited.

Those minutes were like heart-beats. What was happening inside? But apparently the mother was away, for soon the door opened softly, and a shadow flitted out, and I knew it must be Gold. She dropped on her knees on the little narrow verandah on the other side of the door and crept along to its farther end, and then I could only distinguish a dark shape in the dark. For perhaps five minutes no one came except the sister, who stood at the door and watched. And for those five minutes one was free to speak as freely as one could speak to a shape which one could barely see, and which showed no sign, and spoke no word. Five whole minutes! How one valued every moment of them! Then a man came and sat down on the verandah. He must have been a relative, for he did not mean to go. I wished he would. It was impossible to talk past him to her, without letting him know she was there; so one had to talk to him, but for her, and even this could not last long. Dusk here soon is dark; we had to go. As we went, we looked back and saw him still keeping his unconscious guard over the child in her hiding-place.

There are no secrets in India. It was known that we had been there, and that stern old mother punished her child; but how, we never knew.

If any blame us for going at all, let it be remembered that one of Christ's little ones was thirsty, and she held out her hand for a cup of cold water. We could not have left that hand empty, I think.

After that we heard nothing for a year; then an old man whom we had helped, and who hoped we intended to help him more, came one evening to tell us he meant to set Gold free. It was all to be secretly done, and it was to be done that night. We told him we could have nothing to do with his plan, and we explained to him why. "But," he objected, "what folly is this? I thought you Christians helped poor girls, and this one certainly wants to come. She is of age. This is the time. If you wait

you will never get her at all." We knew this was more than probable; to refuse his help was like turning the key and locking her body and soul into prison—an awful thought to me, as I remembered Treasure. But there was nothing else to be done; and afterwards, when we heard who he was, and what his real intentions were, we were thankful we had done it. He looked at us curiously as he went, as if our view of things struck him as strange; and he begged us never to breathe a word of what he had said. We never did, but it somehow oozed out, and soon after that he sickened and very suddenly died. His body was burnt within two hours. Post-mortems are rare in India.

Another year passed in silence as to Gold. How often we went down the street and looked across at her home, with its door almost always shut, and that icy-eyed mother on guard. We used to see her going about, never far from the house. When we saw her we salaamed; then she would glare at us grimly, and turn her back on us. Once the whole family went to a festival; but the girl of course was bundled in and out of a covered cart, and seen by no one, not even the next-door neighbours. There was talk of a marriage for her. Most girls of her Caste are married much younger; but to our relief this fell through, and once one of us saw her for a moment, and she still seemed to care to hear, though she was far too cowed by this time to show it.

Then we heard a rumour that a girl from the Lake Village had been seen by some of our Christians in a wood near a village five miles distant. These Christians are very out-and-out and keen about converts, and they managed to discover that the girl in the wood had some thought of being a Christian, and that her being there had some connection with this, so they told us at once. The description fitted Gold. But we could not account for a girl of her Caste being seen in a wood; she was always kept in seclusion. At last we found out the truth. She had shown some sign of a lingering love for Christ, and her mother had taken her to a famous Brahman ascetic who lived in that wood; and there together, mother and daughter stayed in a hut near the hermit’s hut, and for three days he had devoted himself to confuse and confound her, and finally he succeeded, and reported her convinced. This is the tangible brass-bossed door outside of which we so often stand on the stone step and knock, and hear voices from within call, "Everyone is out." The hand-marks are the hand-prints of the Power that keeps the door shut. Once a year, every door and the lintel of every window, and sometimes the walls, are marked like this. That evening, just before dark, the god comes round, they say, and looks for his mark on the door, and, seeing it, blesses all in the house. If there is no mark he leaves a curse. This is the devil’s South Indian parody on the Passover.

We heard all this, and sorrowed, and wondered how it was done. We never heard all, but we heard one delusion they practised upon her, appealing as they so often do to the Oriental imagination, which finds such solid satisfaction in the supernatural. Nothing is so convincing as a vision or a dream; so a vision appeared before her, an incarnation, they told her, of Siva, in the form of Christ. Siva and Christ, then, were one, as they had so often assured her, one identity under two names. Hinduism is crammed with incarnations; this presented no difficulty. Like the old monk, the bewildered child looked for the print of the nails and the spear. Yes, they were there, marked in hands and foot and side. It must be hard to distrust one’s own mother. Gold still trusted hers. "Listen!" said the mother, and the vision spoke. "If the speech of the Christians is true, I will return within twenty-four days; if the speech of the Hindus is true, I will not return." Then hour by hour for those twenty-four days they wove their webs about her, webs of wonderful sophistry which

have entangled keener brains than hers. She was entangled. The twenty-four days did their work. She yielded her will on the twenty-fifth. So the mother and the Brahman won.

These letters are written, as you know, with a definite purpose. We try to show you what goes on behind the door, the very door of the photograph, type of all the doors, that seeing behind you may understand how fiercely the tiger bites.

1.09.23. Book 9: 23. "Pan, Pan is Dead"

CHAPTER XXIII "Pan, Pan is Dead"

"If there is one thing that refreshes my soul above all others, it is that I shall behold the Redeemer gloriously triumphant at the winding up of all things."

Henry Martyn, N. India.

"PARTLY founded upon a well-known tradition, mentioned by Plutarch, according to which, at the hour of the Saviour's Agony, a cry of, 'Great Pan is dead,' swept across the waves in the hearing of certain mariners, and the oracles ceased." So reads the head-note to one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poems. We look up a classical dictionary, and find the legend there. "This was readily believed by the Emperor, and the astrologers were consulted, but they were unable to explain the meaning of so supernatural a voice."

Pan, and with him all the false gods of the old world, die in the day of the death of our Saviour,—this according to the poem—

"Gods, we vainly do adjure you,—

Ye return nor voice nor sign! Not a votary could secure you Even a grave for your Divine; Not a grave, to show thereby, Here these grey old gods do lie.

Pan, Pan is dead." And yet—is he dead? quite dead?

. . . . . .

Night, moonless and hot. Our camp is pitched on the west bank of the river; we are asleep. Suddenly there is what sounds like an explosion just outside. Then another and another,—such a bursting bang,—then a s-s-swish, and I am out of bed, standing out on the sand; and for a moment I am sure the kitchen tent is on fire. Then it dawns on me, in the slow way things dawn in the middle of the night: it is only fireworks being let off by the festival people—only fireworks! But I stand and look, and in the darkness everything seems much bigger than it is and much more awful. There is the gleaming of water, lit by the fires of the crowd on the eastern bank of the river. There are torches waving uncertainly in and out of the vast black mass—black even in the black of night—where the people are. There is the sudden burst and s-s-swish of the rockets as they rush up into the night, and fall in showers of colours on the black mass and the water; and there is the hoarse roar of many voices, mingled with the bleat of many goats. I stand and look, and know what is going on. They are killing those goats—thirty thousand of them—killing them now. Is Pan dead? . . .

Morning, blazing sun, relentless sun, showing up all that is going on. We are crossing the river-bed in our cart. "Don't look!" says my comrade, and I look the other way. Then we separate. She goes among the crowds in the river bed, where the sun is hottest and the air most polluted and the scenes on every side most sickening, and I go up the bank among the people. We have each a

Tamil Sister with us, and farther down the stream another little group of three is at work. In all seven, to tens of thousands. But we hope more will come later on.

We have arranged to meet at the cart at about ten o'clock. The bandy-man is directed to work his way up to a big banyan tree near the temple. He struggles up through a tangle of carts, and finds a slanting standing-ground on the edge of the shade of the tree.

All the way up the bank they are killing and skinning their goats. You look to the right, and put your hands over your eyes. You look to the left, and do it again. You look straight in front, and see an extended skinned victim hung from the branch of a tree. Every hanging rootlet of the great banyan tree is hung with horrors—all dead, most mercifully, but horrible still.

We had thought the killing over, or we should hardly have ventured to come; but these who are busy are late arrivals. One tells oneself over and over again that a headless creature cannot possibly feel, but it looks as if it felt . . . it goes on moving. We look away, and we go on, trying to get out of it,—but thirty thousand goats! It takes a long time to get out of it.

We see groups of little children watching the process delightedly. There is no intentional cruelty, for the god will not accept the sacrifice unless the head is severed by a single stroke—a great relief to me. But it is most disgusting and demoralising. And to think that these children are being taught to connect it with religion! With me is one who used to enjoy it all. She tells me how she twisted the fowls' heads off with her own hands. I look at the fine little brown hands, such loving little hands, and I can hardly believe it. "You—you do such a thing!" I say. And she says, "Yes; when the day came round to sacrifice to our family divinity, my little brother held the goat's head while my father struck it off, and I twisted the chickens' heads. It was my pleasure!"

We go up along the bank; still those crowds, and those goats killed or being killed. We cannot get away from them. At last we reach a tree partly unoccupied, but it is leafless, alas! On one side of it a family party is cheerfully feeding behind a shelter of mats. A little lower down some Pariahs are haggling over less polite portions of the goat's economy. They wrap up the stringy things in leaves and tuck them into a fold of their seeleys. At our feet a small boy plays with the head. We sit down in the band of shade cast by the trunk of the tree, and, grateful for so much shelter, invite the passers-by to listen while we sing. Some listen. An old hag who is chaperoning a bright young wife draws the girl towards us, and sits down. She has never heard a word of our Doctrine before, and neither has the girl. Then some boys come, full of mischief and fun, and threaten an upset. So we pick out the rowdiest of them and suggest he should keep order, which he does with great alacrity, swinging a switch most vigorously at anyone likely to interfere with the welfare of the meeting. My little companion speaks to them, as only one who was once where they are ever can. I listen to her, and long for the flow at her command. "Do you not do this and this?" she says, naming the very things they do; "and don't you say so and so?" They stare, and then, "Oh, she was once one of us! What is her Caste? When did she come? Where are her father and mother? What is her village? Is she not married? Why is she not? And where are her jewels?" Above all, everyone asks it at once, "What is her Caste?" And they guess it, and probably guess right.

You can have no idea, unless you have worked among them, how difficult it is to get a heathen woman to listen with full attention for ten consecutive minutes. They are easily distracted, and to-day there are so many things to distract them, they don't listen very well. They are tired, too,

they say; the wild, rough night has done its work. Yesterday it was different; we got good listeners. Being women, and alone in such a crowd of idolaters, we do not attempt an open-air meeting, but just sit quietly where we can, and talk to any we can persuade to sit down beside us. Hindus are safer far than Mohammedans; they are very seldom rude; but to-day we know enough of what is going on to make us keep clear of all men, if we can. They would not say anything much to us, but they might say a good deal to each other which is better left unsaid. By the time we have gathered, and held, and then had to let go, three or four of such little groups, it is breakfast time, and we want our breakfast badly. So we press through the crowd, diving under mat sheds and among unspeakable messes, heaps of skins on either side, and one hardly knows what under every foot of innocent-looking sand; for the people bury the débris lightly, throwing a handful of sand on the worst, and the sun does the rest of the sanitation. It is rather horrible. At last we reach the cart, tilted sideways on the bank, and get through our breakfast somehow, and rest for a few blissful minutes, in most uncomfortable positions, before plunging again into that sea of sun and sand and animals, human and otherwise; and then we part, arranging to meet when we cannot go on any more. Is Pan dead? . . .

Noon, and hotter, far hotter, than ever. Oh, how the people throng and push, and kill and eat, and bury remains! How can they enjoy it so? What can be the pleasure in it?

We find our way back to that ribbon of shade. It is a narrower ribbon now, because the sun, riding overhead, throws the shadow of a single bough, instead of the broader trunk. But such as it is, we are glad of it, and again we gather little groups, and talk to them, and sing.

Some beautiful girls pass us close, the only girls to be seen anywhere. Only little children and wives come here; no good unmarried girls. One of the group is dressed in white, but most are in vivid purples and crimsons. The girl in white has a weary look, the work of the night again. But most of the sisterhood are indoors; in the evening we shall see more of them, scattered among the people, doing their terrible master's work. These pass us without speaking, and mingle in the crowd.

After an hour in the band of shade, we slowly climb the bank again, and find ourselves among the potters, hundreds and hundreds of them. Every family buys a pot, and perhaps two or three of different sizes; so the potters drive a brisk trade to-day, and have no leisure to listen to us.

It is getting very much hotter now, for the burning sand and the thousands of fires radiate heat-waves up through the air, heated already stiflingly. We think of our comrades down in the river bed, reeking with odours of killing and cooking, a combination of abominations unimagined by me before.

We look down upon a collection of cart tops. The palm-woven mat covers are massed in brown patches all over the sand, and the moving crowds are between. We do not see the others. Have they found it as difficult as we find it, we wonder, to get any disengaged enough to want to listen? At last we reach the long stone aisle leading to the temple. On either side there are lines of booths, open to the air but shaded from the sun, and we persuade a friendly stall-keeper to let us creep into her shelter. She is cooking cakes on the ground. She lets us into an empty corner, facing the passing crowds, and one or two, and then two or three, and so on till we have quite a group, stop as they pass, and squat down in the shade and listen for a little. Then an old lady, with a keen old

face, buys a Gospel portion at half price, and folds it carefully in a corner of her seeley. Two or three others buy Gospels, and all of them want tracts. The shop-woman gets a bit restive at this rivalry of wares. We spend our farthings, proceeds of our sales, on her cakes, and she is mollified. But some new attraction in the gallery leading to the temple disperses our little audience, to collect it round itself. The old woman explains that the Gospel she has bought is for her grandson, a scholar, she tells us, aged five, and moves off to see the new show, and we move off with her.

There, in the first stall, between the double row of pillars, a man is standing on a form, whirling a sort of crackling rattle high above his head. In the next, another is yelling to call attention to his clocks. There they are, ranged tier upon tier, regular "English" busy-bee clocks, ticking away, as a small child remarks, as if they were alive. Then come sweet-stalls, clothes-stalls, lamp-stalls, fruit-stalls, book-stalls, stalls of pottery, and brass vessels, and jewellery, and basket work, and cutlery, and bangles in wheelbarrow loads, and medicines, and mats, and money boxes, and anything and everything of every description obtainable here. In each stall is a stall-keeper. Occasionally one, like the clock-stall man, exerts himself to sell his goods; more often he lazes in true Oriental fashion, and sells or not as fortune decides for him, equally satisfied with either decree. How Indian shopkeepers live at all is always a puzzle to me. They hardly ever seem to do anything but moon. On and on, in disorderly but perfectly good-natured streams, the people are passing up to the temple, or coming down from worship there. All who come down have their foreheads smeared with white ashes. Even here there are goats; they are being pulled, poor reluctant beasts, right to the steps of the shrine, there to be dedicated to the god within. Then they will be dragged, still reluctant, round the temple walls outside, then decapitated.

I watch a baby tug a goat by a rope tied round its neck. The goat has horns, and I expect every moment to see the baby gored. But it never seems to enter into the goat’s head to do anything so aggressive. It tugs, however, and the baby tugs, till a grown-up comes to the baby’s assistance, and all three struggle up to the shrine.

We are standing now in an empty stall, just a little out of the crush. Next door is an assortment of small Tamil booklets in marvellous colours, orange and green predominating. There is an empty barrel rolled into the corner, and we sit down on it, and begin to read from our Book. This causes a diversion in the flow of the stream, and we get another chance. But it grows hotter and hotter, and we get so thirsty, and long for a drink of cocoanut water. It is always safe to drink that. No cocoanuts are available, though, and we have no money. Then a man selling native butter-milk comes working his way in and out of the press, and we become conscious that of all things in the world the thing we yearn for most is a drink of butter-milk. The man stops in front of our stall, pours out a cupful of that precious liquid, and seeing the thirst in our eyes, I suppose, beseeches us to drink. We explain our penniless plight. "Buy our books, and we’ll buy your butter-milk," but he does not want our books. Then we wish we had not squandered our farthings on those impossible cakes. The butter-milk man proposes he should trust us for the money; he is sure to come across us again. He is a kind-hearted man; but debt is a sin; it is not likely we shall see him again. The butter-milk man considers. He is poor, but we are thirsty. To give drink to the thirsty is an act of merit. Acts of merit come in useful, both in this world and the next. He pours out a cupful of butter-milk (he had poured the first one back when we showed our empty hands). We hesitate; he is poor, but we are so very thirsty. The next stall-keeper reads our hearts, throws a halfpenny to the butter-milk man. "There!" he says, "drink to the limit of your capacity!" and we drink. It is a

comical feeling, to be beholden to a seller of small Tamil literature of questionable description; but we really are past drawing nice distinctions. Never was butter-milk so good; we get through three brass tumbler-fuls between us, and feel life worth living again. We give the good bookseller plenty of books to cover his halfpenny, and to gratify us he accepts them; but as he does not really require them, doubtless the merit he has acquired is counted as undiminished, and we part most excellent friends. And now the crowd streaming up to the temple gets denser every moment. Every conceivable phase of devotion is represented here, every conceivable type of worshipper too. Some are reverent, some are rampant, some are earnest, some are careless, awestruck, excited, but more usually perfectly frivolous; on and on they stream.

I leave my Tamil Sister safely with two others at the cart. But the comrade whom I am to meet again at that same cart some time to-day has not turned up. So I go off alone for another try, drawn by the sight of that stream, and I let myself drift along with it, and am caught in it and carried up—up, till I am within the temple wall, one of a stream of men and women streaming up to the shrine. We reach it at last. It is dark; I can just see an iron grating set in darkness, with a light somewhere behind, and there, standing on the very steps of Satan's seat, there is a single minute's chance to witness for Christ. The people are all on their faces in the dust and the crush, and for that single minute they listen, amazed at hearing any such voice in here; but it would not do to stay, and, before they have time to make up their minds what to make of it, I am caught in another stream flowing round to the right, and find myself in a quieter place, a sort of eddy on the outer edge of the whirlpool, where the worship is less intense, and very many women are sitting gossiping.

There, sitting on the ground beside one of the smaller shrines which cluster round the greater, I have such a chance as I never expected to get; for the women and children are so astonished to see a white face in here that they throw all restraint to the winds, and crowd round me, asking questions about how I got in. For Indian temples are sacred to Indians; no alien may pass within the walls to the centre of the shrine; moreover, we never go to the temples to see the parts that are open to view, because we know the stumbling-block such sight-seeing is to the Hindus. All this the women know, for everything a missionary does or does not do is observed by these observant people, and commented on in private. Now, as they gather round me, I tell them why I have come (how I got in I cannot explain, unless it was, as the women declared, that, being in a seeley, one was not conspicuous), and they take me into confidence, and tell me the truth about themselves, which is the last thing they usually tell, and strikes me as strange; and they listen splendidly, and would listen as long as I would stay. But it is not wise to stay too long, and I get into the stream again, which all this time has been pouring round the inner block of the temple, and am carried round with it as it pours back and out. And as I pass out, still in that stream, I notice that the temple area is crowded with all kinds of merchandise, stalls of all sorts, just as outside. Vendors of everything, from mud pots up to jewels, are roaming over the place crying their wares, as if they had been in a market; and right in the middle of them the worship goes on at the different shrines and before the different idols. There it is, market and temple, as in the days of our Lord; neither seems to interfere with the other. No one seems to see anything incongruous in the sight of a man prostrated before a stone set at the back of a heap of glass bangles. And when someone drops suddenly, and sometimes reverently, in front of a stall of coils of oily cakes, no one sees anything extraordinary in it; they know there is a god somewhere on the other side of the cakes. On and out,

through the aisle with its hundred pillars, all stone—stone paving, pillars, roof; on and out, into the glare and the sight of the goats again. But one hardly sees them now, for between them and one's eyes seem to come the things one saw inside—those men and women, hundreds of them, worshipping that which is not God. Is Pan dead? . . .

Pan is dead! Oh, Pan is dead! For, clearer than the sight of that idolatrous crowd, I saw this—I had seen it inside those temple walls:—a pile of old, dead gods. They were bundled away in a corner, behind the central shrine—stone gods, mere headless stumps; wooden gods with limbs lopped off; clay gods, mere lumps of mud; mutilated and neglected, worn-out old gods. Oh, the worship once offered to those broken, battered things! No one worships them now! For full five minutes I had sat and looked at them—

"Gods bereavëd, gods belated, With your purples rent asunder!

Gods discrowned and desecrated, Disinherited of thunder!"

There were withered wreaths lying at the feet of some of the idols near; there were fresh wreaths round the necks of others. There were no wreaths in this corner of dead gods. I looked, and looked, and looked again. Oh, there was prophecy in it! And as I came out among the living people, the sight of that graveyard of dead gods was ever with me, and the triumph-song God's prophetess sang, sang itself through and through me—Pan is dead! Quite dead!

"'Twas the hour when One in Sion Hung for love's sake on a cross; When His brow was chill with dying, And His soul was faint with loss; When His priestly blood dropped downward, And His kingly eyes looked throneward—

Then, Pan was dead.

"By the love He stood alone in, His sole Godhead rose complete, And the false gods fell down moaning, Each from off his golden seat;

All the false gods with a cry Rendered up their deity—

Pan, Pan was dead."

1.09.24. Book 9: 24. "Married to the God"

CHAPTER XXIV "Married to the God"

"One thing one notices very much as a ’freshman’—that is, the unconscious influence which Christianity has over a nation. Go to the most depraved wretch you can find in England, and he has probably got a conscience, if only one can get at it. But here the result of heathenism seems to be to destroy men’s consciences. They never feel sin as such."

Rev. E. S. Carr, India.

"I have heard people say they enjoyed hearing about missions. I often wonder if they would enjoy watching a shipwreck."

Mrs. Robert Stewart, China.

LEAVE this chapter if you want "something interesting to read"; hold your finger in the flame of a candle if you want to know what it is like to write it. If you do this, then you will know something of the burning at heart every missionary goes through who has to see the sort of thing I have to write about. Such things do not make interesting reading. Fire is an uncompromising thing, its characteristic is that it burns; and one writes with a hot heart sometimes. There are things like flames of fire. But perhaps one cares too much; it is only about a little girl.

I was coming home from work a few evenings ago when I met two men and a child. They were Caste men in flowing white scarves—dignified, educated men. But the child? She glanced up at me, smiled, and salaamed. Then I remembered her; I had seen her before in her own home. These men belonged to her village. What were they doing with her?

Then a sudden fear shot through me, and I looked at the men, and they laughed. "We are taking her to the temple there," and they pointed across through the trees, "to marry her to the god."

It all passed in a moment. One of them caught her hand, and they went on. I stood looking after them—just looking. The child turned once and waved her little hand to me. Then the trees came between. The men’s faces haunted me all night. I slept, and saw them in my dreams; I woke, and saw them in the dark. And that little girl—oh, poor little girl!—always I saw her, one hand in theirs, and the other waving to me! And now it is over, the diabolical farce is over, and she is "tied," as their idiom has it, "tied to the stone." Oh, she is tied indeed, tied with ropes Satan twisted in his cruellest hour in hell!

We had to drive through the village a night or two later, and it was all ablaze. There was a crowd, and it broke to let our bullock carts pass, then it closed round two palanquins.

There were many men there, and girls. In the palanquins were two idols, god and goddess, out on view. It was their wedding night. We saw it all as we passed: the gorgeous decorations, gaudy tinsels, flowers fading in the heat and glare; saw, long after we had passed, the gleaming of the coloured lights, as they moved among the trees; heard for a mile and more along the road the

sound of that heathen revelry; and every thud of the tom-tom was a thud upon one's heart. Our little girl was there, as one "married" to that god.

I had seen her only once before. She belonged to an interesting high-caste village, one of those so lately closed; and because there they have a story about the magic powder which, say what we will, they imagine I dust upon children's faces, I had not gone often lest it should shut the doors. But that last time I went, this child came up to me, and, with all the confidingness of a child, asked me to take her home with me. "Do let me come!" she said.

There were eyes upon me in a moment and heads shaken knowingly, and there were whispers at once among the women. The magic dust had been at work! I had "drawn" the little girl's heart to myself. Who could doubt it now? And one mother gathered her child in her arms and disappeared into the house. So I had to answer carefully, so that everyone could hear. Of course I knew they would not give her to me, and I thought no more of it.

I was talking to her grandmother then, a very remarkable old lady. She could repeat page after page from their beloved classics, and rather than let me sing Christian stanzas to her and explain them, she preferred to sing Hindu stanzas to me and explain them. "Consider the age of our great Religion, consider its literature—millions of stanzas! What can you have to compare with it? These ignorant people about us do not appreciate things. They know nothing of the classics; as for the language, the depths of Tamil are beyond them—is it not a shoreless sea?" And so she held the conversation. This is vile enough to look at, but nothing to the reality. If the outer form is this, what must the soul within it be? Yet this is a "holy Brahman;" and if we sat down on that stone verandah he would shuffle past the pillar lest we should defile him. Look at the shadowy shapes behind; they might be spirits of darkness. It is he, and such as he, who have power over little temple flowers.

It was just at this point the child reappeared, and, standing by the verandah upon which we were sitting, her little head on a level with our feet, she joined in the stanza her grandmother was chanting, and, to my astonishment, continued through the next and the next, while I listened wondering. Then jumping up and down, first on one foot, then on the other, with her little face full of delight at my evident surprise, she told me she was learning much poetry now; and then, with the merriest little laugh, she ran off again to play. And this was the child. All that brightness, all that intelligence, "married to a god."

Now I understood the question she had asked me. She was an orphan, as we afterwards heard, living in charge of an old aunt, who had some connection with the temple. She must have heard her future being discussed, and not understanding it, and being frightened, had wondered if she might come to us. But they had taken their own way of reconciling her to it; a few sweets, a cake or two, and a promise of more, a vision of the gay time the magic word marriage conjures up, and the child was content to go with them, to be led to the temple—and left there. But her people were so thoroughly refined and nice, so educated too,—could it be, can it be, possibly true? Yes, it is true; this is Hinduism—not in theory of course, but in practice. Think of it; it is done to-day. A moment ago I looked up from my writing and saw the little Elf running towards me, charmed to find me all alone, and quite at leisure for her. And now I watch her as she runs, dancing gleefully down the path, turning again—for she knows I am watching—to throw kisses to me. And I think of her and her childish ways, naughty ways so often, too, but in their very naughtiness only childish and small, and I shiver as I think of her, and a thousand thousand as small as she, being trained to be

devil’s toys. They brought one here a few days ago to act as decoy to get the Elf back. She was a beautiful child of five. Think of the shame of it!

We are told to modify things, not to write too vividly, never to harrow sensitive hearts. Friends, we cannot modify truth, we cannot write half vividly enough; and as for harrowing hearts, oh that we could do it! That we could tear them up, that they might pour out like water! that we could see hands lifted up towards God for the life of these young children! Oh, to care, and oh for power to make others care, not less but far, far more! care till our eyes do fail with tears for the destruction of the daughters of our people! This photo is from death in life; a carcass, moving, breathing, sinning—such a one sits by that child to-day.

I saw him once. There is a monastery near the temple. He is "the holiest man in it"; the people worship him. The day I saw him they had wreathed him with fresh-cut flowers; white flowers crowned that hideous head, hung round his neck and down his breast; a servant in front carried flowers. Was there ever such desecration? That vileness crowned with flowers!

I knew something about the man. His life is simply unthinkable. Talk of beasts in human shape! It is slandering the good animals to compare bad men to beasts. Safer far a tiger’s den than that man’s monastery. But he is a temple saint, wise in the wisdom of his creed; earthly, sensual, devilish. Look at him till you feel as if you had seen him. Let the photo do its work. It is loathsome—yes, but true.

Now, put a flower in his hand—a human flower this time. Now put beside him, if you can, a little girl—your own little girl—and leave her there—yes, leave her there in his hand.

1.09.25. Book 9: 25. Skirting the Abyss

CHAPTER XXV Skirting the Abyss

"The first thing for us all is to see and feel the great need, and to create a sentiment among Christian people on this subject. One of the characteristics of this great system is its secrecy—its subtlety. So few know of the evils of child-marriage, it is so hidden away in the secluded lives and prison homes of the people. And those of us who enter beyond these veils, and go down into these homes, are so apt to feel that it is a case of the inevitable, and nothing can be done."

Mrs. Lee, India.

I HAVE been to the Great Lake Village to-day trying again to find out something about our little girl. I went to the Hindu school near the temple. The schoolmaster is a friend of ours, one of the honourable men of the village from which they took that flower. He was drilling the little Brahman boys as they stood in a row chanting the poem they were learning off by heart; but he made them stop when he saw us coming, and called us in.

I asked him about the child. It was true. She was in the temple, "married to the stone." Yes, it was true they had taken her there that day.

I asked if the family were poor; but he said, "Do not for a moment think that poverty was the cause. Certainly not. Our village is not poor!" And he looked quite offended at the thought. I knew the village was rich enough, but had thought perhaps that particular family might be poor, and so tempted to sell the little one; but he exclaimed with great warmth, Certainly not. The child was a relative of his own; there was no question of poverty!

We had left the school, and were talking out in the street facing the temple house. I looked at it, he looked at it. "From hence a passage broad, smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell"; he knew it well. "Yes, she is a relative of my own," he continued, and explained minutely the degree of relationship. "Her grandmother, whom you doubtless remember, is not like the ignorant women of these parts. She has learning." And again he repeated, as if desirous of thoroughly convincing me as to the satisfactory nature of the transaction, "Certainly she was not sold. She is a relative of my own." A relative of his own! And he could teach his school outside those walls, and know what was going on inside, and never raise a finger to stop it, educated Hindu though he is. I could not understand it.

He seemed quite concerned at my concern, but explained that for generations one of that particular household had always been devoted to the gods. The practice could not be defended; it was the custom. That was all. "Our custom." A stone’s-throw from his door is another child who is living a strangely unnatural life, which strikes no one as unnatural because it is "our custom." She is quite a little girl, and as playful as a kitten. Her soft round arms and little dimpled hands looked fit for no harder work than play, but she was pounding rice when I saw her, and looked tired, and as if she wanted her mother.

While I was with her a very old man hobbled in. He was crippled, and leaned full weight with both hands on his stick. He seemed asthmatic too, and coughed and panted woefully. A withered, decrepit old ghoul. The child stood up when he came in and touched her neck where the marriage symbol lay. Then I knew he was her husband.

"What, No blush at the avowal—you dared to buy A girl of age beseems your grand-daughter, like ox or ass? Are flesh and blood ware? are heart and soul a chattel?"

Yes! like chattels they are sold to the highest bidder. In that auction Caste comes first, then wealth and position. And the chattel is bought, the bit of breathing flesh and blood is converted into property; and the living, throbbing heart of the child may be trampled and stamped down under foot in the mire and the mud of that market-place, for all anyone cares.

It is not long since a young wife came for refuge to our house. Three times she had tried to kill herself; at last she fled to us. Her husband came. "Get up, slave," he said, as she crouched on the floor. She would not stir or speak. Then he got her own people to come, and then it was as if a pent-up torrent was bursting out of an over full heart. "You gave me to him. You gave me to him." The words came over and over again; she reminded them in a passion of reproach how, knowing what his character was, they had handed her over to him. But we could hardly follow her, the words poured forth with such fierce emotion, as with streaming eyes, and hands that showed everything in gestures, she besought them not to force her back. They promised, and believing them, she returned with them. The other day when I passed the house someone said, "Beautiful is there. He keeps her locked up in the back room now." So they had broken their word to her, and given her back, body and soul, to the power of a man whose cruelty is so well known that even the heathen call him a "demon." What must he be to his wife? And if that poor wife, nerved by the misery of her life, dared all, and appealed to the Government, the law would do as her people did—force her back again to him, to fulfil a contract she never made. Is it not a shame? Oh, when will the day come when this merchandise in children’s souls shall cease? We know that many husbands are kind, and many wives perfectly content, but sometimes we see those who are not, and there is no redress.

Another of our children sold by auction in the Village of the Lake is one who used to be such a pretty little thing, with a tangle of curls, and mischievous, merry brown eyes. But that was five years ago. Then a fiend in a man’s shape saw her, and offered inducements to her parents which ended in his marrying her. She was nine years old.

One year afterwards she was sent to her husband’s home. His motives in marrying her were wholly evil, but the child knew something of right and wrong, and she resisted him. Then he dragged her into an inner room, and he held her down, and smothered her shrieks, and pressed a plantain into her mouth. It was poisoned. She knew it, and did not swallow it all. But what she was forced to take made her ill, and she lay for days so dizzy and sick that when her husband kicked her as she lay she did not care. At last she escaped, and ran to her mother’s house. But the law was on her owner’s side; what could she prove of all this, poor child? And she had to go back to him. After that he succeeded in his devil’s work, and to-day that child is dead to all sense of sin.

Oh, there are worse things far than seeing a little child die! It is worse to see it change. To see the innocence pass from the eyes, and the childishness grow into wickedness, and to know, without

being able to stop it, just what is going on.

I am thinking of one such now. She was four years old when I first began to visit in her grandmother’s house. She is six now—only six—but her demoralisation is almost complete. It is as if you saw a hand pull a rosebud on its stem, crumple and crush it, rub the pink loveliness into pulp, drop it then—and you pick it up. But it is not a rosebud now. Oh, these things, the knowledge of them, is as a fire shut up in one’s bones! shut up, for one cannot let it all out—it must stay in and burn.

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Those who know nothing of the facts will be sure to criticise. "It is not an unknown thing for persons to act as critics, even though supremely ignorant of the subject criticised." But those who know the truth of these things well know that we have understated it, carefully toned it down perforce, because it cannot be written in full. It could neither be published nor read.

It cannot be written or published or read, but oh, it has to be lived! And what you may not even hear, must be endured by little girls. There are child-wives in India to-day, of twelve, ten, nine, and even eight years old. "Oh, you mean betrothed! Another instance of missionary exaggeration!" We mean married.

"But of course the law interferes!" Perhaps you have heard of the law which makes wifehood illegal under twelve. With reference to this law the Hon. Manomoham Ghose of the High Court of Calcutta writes:—"If the Government thinks that the country is not yet prepared for such legislation" (by which he means drastic legislation) "as I suggest, I can only express my regret that by introducing the present Bill it has indefinitely postponed the introduction of a substantial measure of reform, which is urgently called for."

There are men and women in India to whom many a day is a nightmare, and this fair land an Inferno, because of what they know of the wrong that is going on. For that is the dreadful part of it. It is not like the burning alive of the widows, it is not a horror passed. It is going on steadily day and night. Sunlight, moonlight, and darkness pass, the one changing into the other; but all the time they are passing, this Wrong holds the hours with firm and strong hands, and uses them for its purpose—the murder of little girls. Meanwhile, what can be done by you and by me to hasten the day of its ending? Those who know can tell what they know, or so much as will bear the telling; and those who do not know can believe it is true, and if they have influence anywhere, use it; and all can care and pray! Praying alone is not enough, but oh for more real praying! We are playing at praying, and caring, and coming; playing at doing—if doing costs—playing at everything but play. We are earnest enough about that. God open our eyes and convict us of our insincerity! burn out the superficial in us, make us intensely in earnest! And may God quicken our sympathy, and touch our heart, and nerve our arm for what will prove a desperate fight against "leaguèd fiends" in bad men’s shapes, who do the devil’s work to-day, branding on little innocent souls the very brand of hell.

I have told of one—that little child who is now as evil-minded as a little child can be; she is only one of so many. Let a medical missionary speak.

"A few days ago we had a little child-wife here as a patient. She was ten or eleven, I think, just a scrap of a creature, playing with a doll, and yet degraded unmentionably in mind. . . . But oh, to think of the hundreds of little girls! . . . It makes me feel literally sick. We do what we can. . . . But what can we do? What a drop in the ocean it is!" Where the dotted lines come, there was written what cannot be printed. But it had to be lived through, every bit of it, by a "scrap of a creature of ten or eleven."

Another—these are from a friend who, even in writing a private letter, cannot say one-tenth of the thing she really means.

"A few days ago the little mother (a child of thirteen) was crying bitterly in the ward. 'Why are you crying?' 'Because he says I am too old for him now; he will get another wife, he says.' 'He' was her husband, 'quite a lad,' who had come to the hospital to see her." The end of that story which cannot be told is being lived through this very day by that little wife of thirteen. And remember that thirteen in India means barely eleven at home.

"She was fourteen years old," they said, "but such a tiny thing, she looked about nine years old in size and development. . . . The little mother was so hurt, she can never be well again all her life. The husband then married again . . . as the child was ruined in health. . . ." And, as before, the dots must cover all the long-drawn-out misery of that little child who "looked about nine."

"There is an old, old man living near here, with a little wife of ten or eleven. . . . Our present cook's little girl, nine years old, has lately been married to a man who already has had two wives." In each of these cases, as in each I have mentioned, marriage means marriage, not just betrothal, as so many fondly imagine. Only to-day I heard of one who died in what the nurse who attended her described as "simple agony." She had been married a week before. She was barely twelve years old.

We do not say this is universal. There are many exceptions; but we do say the workings of this custom should be exposed and not suppressed. Question our facts; we can prove them. To-day as I write it, to-day as you read it, hundreds and thousands of little wives are going through what we have described. But "described" is not the word to use—indicated, I should say, with the faintest wash of sepia where the thing meant is pitch black.

Think of it, then—do not try to escape from the thought—English women know too little, care too little—too little by far. Think of it. Stop and think of it. If it is "trying" to think of it, and you would prefer to turn the page over, and get to something nicer to read, what must it be to live through it? What must it be to those little girls, so little, so pitifully little, and unequal to it all? What must it be to these childish things to live on through it day by day, with, in some cases, nothing to hope for till kindly death comes and opens the door, the one dread door of escape they know, and the tortured little body dies? And someone says, "The girl is dead, take the corpse out to the burning-ground." Then they take it up, gently perhaps. But oh, the relief of remembering it! It does not matter now. Nothing matters any more. Little dead wives cannot feel.

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I wonder whether it touches you? I know I cannot tell it well. But oh, one lives through it all with them!—I have stopped writing again and again, and felt I could not go on.

Mother, happy mother! When you tuck up your little girl in her cot, and feel her arms cling round your neck and her kisses on your cheek, will you think of these other little girls? Will you try to conceive what you would feel if your little girl were here?

Oh, you clasp her tight, so tight in your arms! The thought is a scorpion's sting in your soul. You would kill her, smother her dead in your arms, before you would give her to—that.

Turn the light down, and come away. Thank God she is safe in her little cot, she will wake up to-morrow safe. Now think for a moment steadily of those who are somebody's little girls, just as dear to them and sweet, needing as much the tenderest care as this your own little girl.

Think of them. Try to think of them as if they were your very own. They are just like your own, in so many ways—only their future is different.

Oh, dear mothers, do you care? Do you care very much, I ask?

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We passed the temple on our way home from the Village of the Lake. The great gate was open, and the Brahmans and their friends were lounging in and out, or sitting in the porch talking and laughing together. They were talking about us as we passed. They were quite aware of our object in coming, and were pleased that we had failed.

Government officials, English-speaking graduates, educated Hindus like our old friend the schoolmaster, all would admit in private that to take a child to the temple and "marry her" there was wrong. But very few have much desire to right the shameful wrong.

There are thousands of recognised Slaves of the gods in this Presidency. Under other names they exist all over India. There are thousands of little child-wives; fewer here than elsewhere, we know, but many everywhere. I do not for a moment suggest that all child-wives are cruelly handled, any more than I would have it thought that all little girls are available for the service of the gods. Nor would I have it supposed that we see down this hell-crack every day. We may live for years in the country and know very little about it. The medical workers—God help them!—are those who are most frequently forced to look down, and I, not being a medical, know infinitely less of its depths than they. But this I do know, and do mean, and I mean it with an intensity I know not how to express, that this custom of infant marriage and child marriage, whether to gods or men, is an infamous custom; that it holds possibilities of wrong, such unutterable wrong, that descriptive words concerning it can only "skirt the abyss," and that in the name of all that is just and all that is merciful it should be swept out of the land without a day's delay.

We look to our Indian brothers. India is so immense that a voice crying in the North is hardly heard in the South. Thank God for the one or two voices crying in the wilderness. But many voices are needed, not only one or two. Let the many voices cry! Every man with a heart and a voice to cry, should cry. Then all the cries crying over the land will force the deaf ears to hear, and force the dull brains to think and the hands of the law to act, and something at last will be done. But "crying" is not nearly enough. We look to you, brothers of India, to do. Get convictions upon this subject which will compel you to do. Many can talk and many can write, and more will do both, as the years pass, but the crux is contained in the doing.

God alone can strengthen you for it. He who set His face as a flint, can make you steadfast and brave enough to set your faces as flints, till the bands of wickedness are loosed, and the heavy burdens are undone, and every yoke is broken, and the oppressed go free.

It will cost. It is bound to cost. Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood. It is only sham battles that cost something less than blood. Everything worth anything costs blood. "Reproach hath broken My heart." A broken heart bleeds. Is it the reproach of the battle you fear? This fear will conquer you until you hear the voice of your God saying, "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings. . . . Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?" This book is meant for our comrades at home, but it may come back to India, and so we have spoken straight from our hearts to our Indian brothers here. Oh, brothers, rise, and in God’s Name fight; in His power fight till you win, for these, your own land’s little girls, who never can fight for themselves! And now we look to you at home. Will all who pity the little wives pray for the men of India? Pray for those who are honestly striving to rid the land of this shameful curse. Pray that they may be nerved for the fight by the power of God’s right arm. Pray for all the irresolute. "A sound of battle is in the land, . . . the Lord hath opened His armoury." "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." Pray for resolution and the courage of conviction. It is needed. And to this end pray that the Spirit of Life may come upon our Mission Colleges, and mightily energise the Missionary Educational Movement, that Hindu students may be won to out-and-out allegiance to Christ while they are students, before they become entangled in the social mesh of Hinduism. And pray, we earnestly plead with you, that the Christian students may meet God at college, and come out strong to fight this fiend which trades in "slaves and souls of men"—and in the souls of little girls.

1.09.26. Book 9: 26. From a Hindu Point of View

CHAPTER XXVI From a Hindu Point of View

"The Lord preserve us from innovations foreign to the true principles of the Protestant Church, and foreign to the principles of the C.M.S. Pictures, crosses, and banners, with processions, would do great harm. The Mohammedan natives would say, 'Wah! you worship idols as the Hindus do, and have taziyas (processions) as well as the Mohammedans!' And our Christians would mourn over such things."

Rev. C. B. Leupolt, India.

I AM sitting in the north-west corner of the verandah of a little mission bungalow, on the outskirts of a town sixteen miles south of our Eastern headquarters. This is the town where they set fire to the schoolroom when Victory came. So far does Caste feeling fly. As you sit in the corner of this verandah you see a little temple fitted between two whitewashed pillars, roughly built and rudely decorated, but in this early morning light it looks like a picture set in a frame. It is just outside the compound, so near that you see it in all its detail of colour; the sun striking across it touches the colours and makes them beautiful.

There is the usual striped wall, red and white; the red is a fine terra-cotta, the colour of the sand. The central block, the shrine itself, has inlays of green, red, and blue; there is more terra-cotta in the roof, some yellow too, and white. Beyond on either side there are houses, and beyond the houses, trees and sky.

It is all very pretty and peaceful. Smoke is curling up in the still air from some early lighted fire out of doors; there are voices of people going and coming, softened by distance. There is the musical jingle of bullock bells here in the compound and out on the road, and there is the twitter of birds. In front of that temple there are three altars, and in front of the altars a pillar. I can see it from where I am sitting now, rough grey stone. Upon it, there is what I thought at first was a sun-dial, and I wondered what it was doing there. Then I saw it had not a dial plate; only a strong cross-bar of wood, and the index finger, so to speak, was longer than one would expect, a sharp wooden spike. As I was wondering what it was a passer-by explained it. It is not a sun-dial, it is an impaling instrument. On that spike they used to impale alive goats and kids and fowls as offerings to the god Siva and his two wives, the deities to whose honour the three altars stand before the little shrine. The pillar on which stands this infernal spike has three circles scored into it, sign of the three divinities.

"The impaling has stopped," say the people, greatly amused at one's horror and distress, for at first I thought perhaps they still did it. "Now we do not impale alive; the Government has stopped it." Thank God for that! But oh, let all lovers of God's creatures pray for and hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! Government may step in and stop the public clubbing to death of buffaloes, and the impaling of goats and fowls in sacrifice, but it cannot stop the private cruelty, and the still wider-spread indifference on the part of those who are not themselves cruel; only the coming of

Christ the Compassionate can do that.

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There was the sound of voices just then, as I wrote, many voices, coming nearer, shrill women's voices, cutting through one's thoughts, and I went out to see what was going on. On the other side of the road, opposite our gate, there is a huge old double tree, the sacred fig tree of India, intertwined with another—a religious symbol to this symbol-loving people. Underneath is a stone platform, and on it the hideous elephant-god. On the same side is a little house. A group of women were gathered under the shade near the house, evidently waiting for something or someone. They were delighted to talk.

We spent half an hour under the tree, and they listened; but we were interrupted by some well-dressed Government officials with their coats, sashes, and badges, and one not strictly Governmental got up in a marvellous fashion, and they joined the group and monopolised the conversation. I waited, hoping they would soon go away, and I listened to what they were saying.

"Yes! she actually appeared! She was a goddess." ("A goddess! Oh!" from the women.) "She came forward, moving without walking, and she stood as a tree stands, and she stretched out her arms and blessed the people, and vanished." A woman pointed to me. "Like her? Was she like her?"

"Like her!" and the Government official was a little contemptuous. "Did I not say she was a goddess? Is this Missie Ammal a goddess? Is she not a mere woman like yourselves, only white?"

"She also came from the bungalow," objected the woman rather feebly, feeling public opinion against her.

"You oyster!" said the official politely, "because a Missie Ammal comes from the bungalow, does it prove that the goddess was a Missie Ammal?" The other women agreed with him, and snubbed the ignoramus, who retired from the controversy. The story was repeated with variations, such a mixture of the probable with the improbable, not to say impossible, that one got tangled up in it before he had got half through.

Just then an ancient Christian appeared on the scene and quavered in, in the middle of the marvel, with words to the effect that our God was the true God, and they ought to have faith in Him. It was not exactly à propos of anything they were discussing, but he seemed to think it the right thing to say, and they accepted it as a customary remark, and went on with their conversation. I asked the old worthy if he knew anything about the story, and at first he denied it indignantly as savouring too much of idolatry to be connected with the bungalow, but finally admitted that once in the dim past he had heard that an Ammal in the bungalow, who was ill and disturbed by the tom-toms at night, got up and went out and tried to speak to the people. And the men, listening now to the old man, threw in a word which illumined the whole, "It was a great festival." I remembered that impaling stake, and understood it all. And in a flash I saw it—the poor live beast—and heard its cries. They would wring her heart as she heard them in the pauses of the tom-tom. She was ill, but she got up and struggled out, and tried to stop it, I am sure—tried, and failed.

Seven thousand miles away these things may seem trivial. Here, with that grey stone pillar full in view, they are real.

I came back to the present. The women were still there, and more people were gathering. Something was going to happen. Then a sudden burst of tom-toms, and a banging and clanging of all manner of noise-producers, and then a bullock coach drove up, a great gilded thing. It stopped in front of the little house; someone got out; the people shouted, "Guru! Great Guru! Lord Guru!" with wild enthusiasm. The Guru was not poor. He had two carts laden with luggage—one item, a green parrot in a cage. Close to the cage a small boy was thundering away on a tom-tom, but it did not disturb the parrot. The people seemed to think this display of wealth demanded an apology. "It is not his, it belongs to his followers; he, being what he is, requires none of these things," they said.

I had to go then, and we started soon afterwards on our day's round, and I do not know what happened next; but I had never had the chance of a talk with a celebrity of this description, and in the evening, on my homeward way, I stopped before the little house and asked if I might see him, the famous Guru of one of the greatest of South Indian Castes. The Government officials of the morning were there, but the officialism was gone. No coats and sashes and badges now, only the simple national dress, a scarf of white muslin. The one who in the morning had been an illustration of the possible effect of the mixture of East and West, stood in a dignity he had not then, a fine manly form. The door was open, and they were sentry, for their Guru was resting, they said. "Then he is very human, just like yourselves?" But the strong, sensible faces looked almost frightened at the words. "Hush," they answered all in a breath, "no such thoughts may be even thought here. He is not just like us." And as if to divert us from the expression of such sentiments, they moved a little from the door, and said, "You may look, if you do not speak," and knowing such looks are not often allowed, I looked with interest, and saw all there was to see. The Guru was in the far corner resting; a rich purple silk, with gold interwoven in borders and bands, was flung over his ascetic's dress. At the far end, too, was a sort of altar, covered with red cloth, and on it were numerous brass candlesticks and vessels, and on a little shelf above, a row of little divinities, some brass ornaments, and flowers. To the left of this altar there was a high-backed chair covered by a deer skin; there were pictures of gods and goddesses round the room, especially near the altar, and there were the usual censers, rosaries, and musical instruments, and there was the parrot. The Government official pointed in, and said, with an air of pride in the whole, and a certainty of sympathy too, "There, you see how closely it resembles your churches; there is not so much difference between you and us after all!" Not so much difference! There is a very great difference, I told him; and I asked him where he had seen a Christian church like this. He mentioned two. One was a Roman Catholic chapel, the other an English church.

What could I say? They bear our name; how could he understand the divisions that rend us asunder?—Romanists, Ritualists, and Protestants—are we not all called Christians?

I looked again, and I could not help being struck with the resemblance. The altar with its brasses and flowers and candlesticks, and the little shelf above; the pictures on the walls; the chair, so like a Bishop's chair of state; the whole air of the place heavy with incense, was redolent of Rome.

He went on to explain, while I stood there ashamed. "Look, have you not got that?" and he pointed to the altar-like erection, with the red cloth and the flowers.

"We have nothing of the sort in our church. Come and see; we have only a table," I said; but he laughed and declared he had seen it in other churches, and it was just like ours, "only yours has a cross above it, and ours has images; but you bow to your cross, so it must represent a divinity," and, without waiting for any reply, he pointed next to the pictures.

"They are very like yours, I think," he said, only yours show your God on a cross, stretched out and dying—so"—And he stretched out his arms, and dropped his head, and said something which cannot be translated; and I could not look or listen, but broke in earnestly:

"Indeed, we have no such pictures—at least we here have not; but even if some show such a picture, do they ever call it a picture of God? They only say it is a picture of"—But he interrupted impatiently:

"Do not I know what they say?" And then, with a touch of scorn at what he thought was an empty excuse on my part, he added, "We also say the same" (which is true; no intelligent Hindu admits that he worships idols or pictures; he worships what these things represent). "Your people show your symbols," he continued, in the tone of one who is sure of his ground, "exactly as we show ours. I have seen your God on a great sheet at night; it was shown by means of a magic lamp; and sometimes you make it of wood or brass, as we make ours of stone. The name may change and the manner of making, but the thing's essence is the same."

"The Mohammedans do not show their God's symbol; but we do, and so do the Christians. Therefore between us and the Christians there is more in common than between the Mohammedans and us." This was another Hindu's contribution to the argument. The chair now served as a text. "When your Bishop comes round your churches, does he not sit in a chair like that, himself apart from the people? And in like manner our Guru sits. There is much similarity. Also do not your Christians stand"—and he imitated the peculiarly deferential attitude adopted on such occasions by some—"just in the fashion that we stand? And do not your people feel themselves blessed by the presence of the Great? Oh, there is much similarity!"

I explained that all this, though foolish, was not intended for more than respect, and our Bishops did not desire it; at which he smiled. Then he went on to expatiate upon what he had seen in some of our churches (probably while on duty as Government servant): the display, as it seemed to him, so like this; the pomp, as he thought it, so fine, like this; the bowing and prostrating, and even on the part of those who did not do these things, the evident participation in the whole grand show. And the other men, who apparently had looked in through the open windows and doors, agreed with him.

He is not the first who has been stumbled in the same way; and I remembered, as he talked, what a Mohammedan woman said to a friend of mine about one of our English churches, seen through her husband's eyes. "You have idols in your church," she said, "to which you bow in worship." She referred to the things on or above the Communion table. My friend explained the things were not idols. "Then why do your people bow to them?" Was there nothing in the question?

Often we wonder whether the rapid but insidious increase of ritual in India is understood at home. In England it is bad enough, but in a heathen and Mohammedan land it is, if possible, worse; and the worst is, the spirit of it, or the spirit of tolerance toward it, which is on the increase even in missionary circles. Some of our Tamil people attend the English service in these "advanced"

churches after their own service is over, and thus become familiarised with and gradually acclimatised to an ecclesiastical atmosphere foreign to them as members of a Protestant Society.

I remember spending a Sunday afternoon with a worthy pastor and his wife, stationed in the place where the church is in which the "idols are worshipped" according to the Mohammedans. When the bell rang for evening service he began to shuffle rather as if he wanted me to go. But he was too polite to say so, and the reason never struck me till his son came in with an English Bible and Prayer-Book. The old man put up his hand to his mouth in the apologetic manner of the Tamils. "We do not notice the foolish parts of the service. We like to hear the English. For the sake of the English we go."

"He did not turn to the East, but he did not keep quite straight; he just half turned." This from a pastor's wife, about one whom she had been observing during an ordination ceremony in the English cathedral. "He just half turned." It describes the nebulous attitude of mind of many a one to-day. India has not our historical background. It has no Foxe's Book of Martyrs yet. Perhaps that is why its people are so indifferent upon points which seem of importance to us. They have not had to fight for their freedom, in the sense at least our forefathers fought; there is no Puritan blood in their veins; and so they are willing to follow the lead of almost anyone, provided that lead is given steadily and persistently; which surely should make those in authority careful as to those in whose hands that lead is placed. But the natural instinct of the converted idolater is dead against complexity in worship, and for simplicity. He does not want something as like his own old religion as possible, but as different as possible from it; and so we have good building material ready to hand, and a foundation ready laid. "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

I hope this does not sound unkind. We give those who hold different views full credit for sincerity, and a right to their own opinions; but convictions are convictions, and, without judging others who differ, these are ours, and we want those at home who are with us in these things to unite to help to stem the tide that has already risen in India far higher than perhaps they know. Brave men are needed, men with a fuller development of spiritual vertebræ than is common in these easy-going days, and we need such men in our Native Church. God create them; they are not the product of theological colleges. And may God save His Missions in India from wasting His time, and money, and men, on the cultivation of what may evolve into something of no more use to creation than a new genus of jelly-fish. The Government official and his friends were still talking among themselves: "Do we not know what the Christians do? Have we not ears? Have we not eyes? They do it in their way, we do it in ours. The thing itself is really the same. Yes, their religion is just like ours."

They could not see the vital difference between even the most vitiated forms of Christianity and their own Hinduism; there were so many resemblances, and these filled their mental vision at the moment. One could hardly wonder they could not.

They turned to me again, and with all the vigour of language at my command I told them that neither we nor those with us ever went to any church where we had reason to think there would be an exhibition of ecclesiastical paraphernalia. We did not believe it was in accordance with the simplicity of the Gospel; and I told them how simple the Truth really was, but they would not believe me. Those sights they had seen had struck them much as they struck the convert who described the Confirmation service thus: "We went up and knelt down before a stick" (the Bishop's

pastoral staff). They had observed the immense attention paid to all these sacred trifles, and naturally they appeared to them as essential to the whole; part of it, nearly all of it, in fact; and even where the service was in the vernacular, their attention had been entirely diverted from the thing heard by the things seen.

Then I thought of the description of a primitive Christianity service as given in 1 Corinthians. There the idea evidently was that if an outsider came in, or looked in, as Hindus and Mohammedans so often look in here, he should understand what was going on; and being convicted of his sin and need, should be "convinced"; "and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." Compare the effect produced upon the minds of these Hindu men by what they saw of our services, with the effect intended to be produced by the Holy Ghost. Can we say we have improved upon His pattern?

Oh for a return to the simplicity and power of the Gospel of Christ! Then we should not roll stumbling-blocks like these in our Indian brother’s way. Oh for a return to the days of the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, to obscurity, and poverty, and suffering, and shame, and the utter absence of all earthly glory, and the winning of souls of a different make to the type thought sufficiently spiritual now! Oh for more of the signs of Apostleship—scars, and the cross—the real cross—the reproach of Christ the Crucified,—no mitre here, but there the crown!

1.09.27. Book 9: 27. Though ye know Him not

CHAPTER XXVII Though ye know Him not

"I have known cases of young ministers dissuaded from facing the missionary call by those who posed as friends of Foreign Missions, and yet presumed to argue: 'Your spiritual power and intellectual attainments are needed by the Church at home; they would be wasted in the Foreign Field.' 'Spiritual power wasted' in a land like India! Where is it so sorely needed as in a continent where Satan has constructed his strongest fortresses and displayed the choicest masterpieces of his skill? 'Intellectual ability wasted' among a people whose scholars smile inwardly at the ignorance of the average Western! Brothers, if God is calling you, be not deterred by flimsy subterfuges such as these. You will need the power of God the Holy Ghost to make you an efficient missionary. You will find your reputation for scholarship put to the severest test in India. Here is ample scope alike for men of approved spiritual power and for intellectual giants. And so I repeat, if God is calling you, buckle on your sword, come to the fight, and win your spurs among the cultured sons of India."

Rev. T. Walker, India. THE sensation you experience is curious when you rise from the study of Sir Monier William's Brahmanism and Hinduism and go out to your work, and meet in that work someone who seems to be quoting that same book, not in paragraphs only, but in pages. He is talking Tamil, and the book is written in English; that is all the difference. He was standing by the wayside when I saw him: we got into conversation. At first he reminded me of a sea anemone, with all its tentacles drawn inside, but gradually one by one they came out, and I saw what he really was; and I think the great Christian scholar, who laboured so hard to understand and translate into words the intricacies and mysteries of Indian thought, would have felt a little repaid had he known how his work would help in the practical business of a missionary's life. Part of our business is to meet the mind with which we are dealing half-way with quick comprehension. It is in this Sir Monier Williams helps. When once this man felt himself understood, his whole attitude changed. At first, expecting, I suppose, that he was being mistaken for "an ignorant heathen" and worshipper of stocks and stones, he hardly took the trouble to do more than answer, as he thought, a fool according to his folly. The tentacles were all in then. But that passed soon, and he pointed to the shed behind him, where two or three life-size idol horses stood and said how childish he knew it was, foolish and vain. But then, what else could be done? Idols are not objects of worship, and never were intended so to be; their only use is to help the uninitiated to worship Something. If nothing were shown them, they would worship nothing; and a non-worshipping human being is an animal, not a man.

He went on to answer the objections to this means of quickening intelligent worship by explaining how, in higher and purer ways, the thinkers of Hinduism had tried to make the unthinking think. "Look at our temples," he said. "There is a central shrine, with only one light in it. The darkness of the shrine symbolises the darkness of the world, of life and death and being. For life is a darkness, a whirlpool of dark waters. We stand on its edge, but we do not understand it. It is dark, but light

there must be; one great light. So we show this certainty by the symbol of the one light in the shrine, in the very heart of our temples." This led on to quotations from his own books, questioning the validity of such lights, which he finished the moment one began them, and this again led to our Lord's words,—how strong they sounded, and how direct—"I am the Light of the World." But he could not accept them in their simplicity, and here it was that the book I had been reading came in so helpfully. He spoke rapidly and eagerly, and such a mixture of Sanscrit and Tamil that if I had not had the clue I am not sure I could have followed him, and to have misunderstood him then might have driven all the tentacles in, and made it harder for the next one whom the Spirit may send to win his confidence.

He told me that, after much study of many religions, he held the eternal existence of one, Brahma. The human spirit, he said, is not really distinct from the Divine Spirit, but identical with it; the apparent distinction arises from our illusory view of things: there is absolutely no distinction in spirit. Mind is distinct, he admitted, and body is distinct, but spirit is identical; so that, "in a definitely defined sense, I am God, God is I. The so-called two are one, in all essentials of being." And he touched himself and said, "I am Brahma. I myself, my real I, am God."

It sounds terribly irreverent, but he did not for a moment mean it so. Go back to Genesis 2:7, and try to define the meaning of the words, "the breath of life," and you will, if you think enough, find yourself in a position to understand how the Hindu, without revelation, ends as he does in delusion.

But, intertwined with this central fibre of his faith, there were strands of a strange philosophy; he held strongly the doctrine of Illusion, by which the one impersonal Spirit, "in the illusion which overspreads it, is to the external world what yarn is to cloth, what milk is to curds, what clay is to a jar, but only in that illusion," that is, "he is not the actual material cause of the world, as clay of a jar, but the illusory material cause, as a rope might be of a snake"; and the spirit of man "is that Spirit, personalised and limited by the power of illusion; and the life of every living spirit is nothing but an infinitesimal arc of the one endless circle of infinite existence." Of course there are answers to this sort of reasoning which are perfectly convincing to the Western, but they fail to appeal to the Eastern mind. You suggest a practical test as to the reality or otherwise of this "Illusion"—touch something, run a pin into yourself, do anything to prove to yourself your own actuality, and he has his answer ready. Though theoretically he holds that there is one, and only one, Spirit, he "virtually believes in three conditions of being—the real, the practical, and the illusory; for while he affirms that the one Spirit, Brahma, alone has a real existence, he allows a practical separate existence to human spirits, to the world, and to the personal God or gods, as well as an illusory existence. Hence every object is to be dealt with practically, as if it were really what it appears to be." This is only the end of a long and very confusing argument, which I expect I did not half understand, and he concluded it by quoting a stanza, thus translated by Dr. Pope, from an ancient Tamil classic—

"O Being hard to reach, O Splendour infinite, unknown, in sooth I know not what to do!"

"He is far away from me," he said, "a distant God to reach," and when I quoted from St. Augustine, "To Him who is everywhere, men come not by travelling, but by loving," and showed him the words, which in Tamil are splendidly negative, "He is NOT far from every one of us," he eluded the comfort and went back to the old question, "What is Truth? How can one prove what is Truth?"

There is an Indian story of a queen who "proved the truth by tasting the food." The story tells how her husband, who dearly loved her, and whom she dearly loved, lost his kingdom, wandered away with his queen into the forest, left her there as she slept, hoping she would fare better without him, and followed her long afterwards to her father’s court, deformed, disguised, a servant among servants, a cook. Then her maidens came to her, told her of the wonderful cooking, magical in manner, marvellous in flavour and in fragrance. They are sure it is the long-lost king come back to her, and they bid her believe and rejoice. But the queen fears it may not be true. She must prove it, she must taste the food. They bring her some. She tastes, and knows. And the story ends in joy. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good." "If any man will do His Will, he shall know."

We got closer in thought after this. For the Oriental, a story is an illuminating thing. "I have sought for the way of truth," he said, "and sought for the way of light and life. Behind me, as I look, there is darkness. Before me there is only the Unknown." And then, with an earnestness I cannot describe, he said, "I worship Him I know not, the Unknown God." "Whom, therefore, ye worship, though ye know Him not, Him declare I unto you." One could only press home God’s own answer to his words.

One other verse held him in its power before I went: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." With those two verses I left him.

It was evening, and he stood in the shadow, looking into it. There was a tangle of undergrowth, and a heavy grove of palms. It was all dark as you looked in. Behind was the shrine of the demon steeds, the god and his wife who ride out at night to chase evil spirits away. Near by was an old tree, also in shade, with an idol under it. It was all in shadow, and full of shadowy nothings, all dark. But just outside, when I went, there was light; the soft light of the after-glow, which comes soon after the sun has set, as a sign that there is a sun somewhere, and shining. And I thought of his very last words to me,[255] but I cannot describe the earnestness of them, "I worship the Unknown God."

Friends, who worship a God whom you know, whose joy in life is to know Him, will you remember and pray for that one, who to-day is seeking, I think in truth, to find the Unknown God?

1.09.28. Book 9: 28. How Long?

CHAPTER XXVIII

How Long?

"I shivered as if standing in the neighbourhood of hell."

Henry Martyn, India.

I HAVE come home from vainly trying to help another child. She had heard of the children's Saviour, and I think she would have come to Him, but they suffered her not. She was, when I first saw her, sweet and innocent, with eyes full of light, great glancing, dancing eyes, which grew wistful for a moment sometimes, and then filled with a laugh again. She told me her mother lived very near, and asked me to come and see her; so I went. The mother startled me. Such a face, or such a want of a face. One was looking at what had once been a face, but was now a strange spoiled thing, with strange hard eyes, so unlike the child's. There was no other feature fully shaped; it was one dreadful blank. She listened that day, with almost eagerness. She understood so quickly, too, one felt she must have heard before. But she told us nothing about herself, and we only knew that there was something very wrong. Her surroundings told us that.

Before we went again we heard who she was; a relative of one of our most honoured pastors, himself a convert years ago. Then a great longing possessed us to try to save her from a life for which she had not been trained, and especially we longed to save her little girl, and we went to try. This time the mother welcomed us, and told us how our words had brought back things she had heard when she was young. "But now it is all different, for I am different," and she told us her story. . . . "So I took poison, but it acted not as I intended. It only destroyed my face," and she touched the poor remnant with her hand, and went on with her terrible tale. There were people listening outside, and she spoke in a hoarse whisper. We could hardly believe she meant what she said, as she told of the fate proposed for her child. And oh, how we besought her then and there to give up the life, and let us help her, and that dear little one. She seemed moved. Something awoke within her and strove. Tears filled those hard eyes and rolled down her cheeks as we pleaded with her, in the name of all that was motherly, not to doom her little innocent girl, not to push her with her own hands down to hell. At last she yielded, promised that if in one week's time we would come again she would give her up to us, and as for herself, she would think of it, and perhaps she also would give up the life; she hated it, she said.

There was another girl there, a fair, quiet girl of fifteen. She was ill and very suffering, and we tried for her too; but there seemed no hope. "Take the little one; you are not too late for her," the mother said, and we went with the promise, "One more week and she is yours." The week passed, and every day we prayed for that little one. Then when the time came, we went. Hope and fear alternated within us. One felt sick with dread lest anything had happened to break the mother's word, and yet one hoped. The house door was open. The people in the street smiled as we stopped our bandy, got out, and went in. I remembered their smiles afterwards, and understood.

The mother was there: in a corner, crouching in pain, was the girl; on the floor asleep, drugged, lay the child with her little arms stretched out. The mother's eyes were hard.

It was no use. Outside in the street the people sat on their verandahs and laughed. "Offer twenty thousand rupees, and see if her mother will give her to you!" shouted one. Inside we sat beside that mother, not knowing what to say. The child stirred in her sleep, and turned. "Will you go?" said the mother very roughly in her ear. She opened listless, senseless eyes. She had no wish to go. "She wanted to come last week," we said. The mother hardened, and pushed the child, and rolled her over with her foot. "She will not go now," she said.

Oh, it did seem pitiful! One of those pitiful, pitiful things which never grow less pitiful because they are common everywhere. That little girl, and this!

We took the mother's hands in ours, and pleaded once again. And then words failed us. They sometimes do. There are things that stifle words. At last they asked us to go. The girl in the corner would not speak—could not, perhaps she only moaned; we passed her and went out. The mother followed us, half sorry for us,—there is something of the woman left in her,—half sullen, with a lowering sullenness. "You will never see her again," she said, and she named the town, one of the Sodoms of this Province, to which the child was soon to be sent; and then, just a little ashamed of her broken promise, she added, "I would have let her go, but he would not, no, never; and she does not belong to me now, so what could I do?" We did not ask her who "he" was. We knew. Nor did we ask the price he had paid. We knew; fifty rupees, about three pounds, was the price paid down for a younger child bought for the same purpose not long ago. This one's price might be a little higher. That is all.

We stood by the bullock cart ready to get in. The people were watching. The mother had gone back into the house. Then a great wave of longing for that child swept over us again. We turned and looked at the little form as it lay on the floor, dead, as it seemed, to all outward things. Oh that it had been dead! And we pleaded once more with all our heart, and once more failed.

We drove away. We could see them crowding to look after us, and we shut our eyes to shut out the sight of their smiles. The bullock bells jingled too gladly, it seemed, and we shut our ears to shut out the sound. And then we shut ourselves in with God, who knew all about it, and cared. How long, O God, how long? And now we have heard that she has gone, and we know, from watching what happened before, just what will happen now. How day by day they will sear that child's soul with red-hot irons, till it does not feel or care any more. And a child's seared soul is an awful thing.

Forgive us for words which may hurt and shock; we are telling the day's life-story. Hurt or not, shocked or not, should you not know the truth? How can you pray as you ought if you only know fragments of truth? Truth is a loaf; you may cut it up nicely, like thin bread and butter, with all the crusts carefully trimmed. No one objects to it then. Or you can cut it as it comes, crust and all.

Think of that child to-night as you gather your children about you, and look in their innocent faces and their clear, frank eyes. Our very last news of her was that she had been in some way influenced to spread a lie about the place, first sign of the searing begun. I think of her as I saw her that first day, bright as a bird; and then of her as I saw her last, drugged on the floor; I think of her as she must be now, bright again, but with a different brightness—not the little girl I knew—never

to be quite that little girl again.

Oh, comrades, do you wonder that we care? Do you wonder that we plead with you to care? Do you wonder that we have no words sometimes, and fall back into silence, or break out into words wrung from one more gifted with expression, who knew what it was to feel! With such words, then, we close; looking back once more at that child on the floor, with the hands stretched out and the heavy eyes shut—and we know what it was they saw when they opened from that sleep—

"My God! can such things be?

Hast Thou not said that whatsoe’er is done Unto Thy weakest and Thy humblest one, Is even done to Thee?

. . . . . .

Hoarse, horrible; and strong, Rises to heaven that agonising cry, Filling the arches of the hollow sky, How long, O God, how long?"

1.09.29. Book 9: 29. What do we count them worth?

CHAPTER XXIX What do we count them worth?

"If we are simply to pray to the extent of a simple and pleasant and enjoyable exercise, and know nothing of watching in prayer, and of weariness in prayer, we shall not draw down the blessing that we may. We shall not sustain our missionaries who are overwhelmed with the appalling darkness of heathenism. . . . We must serve God even to the point of suffering, and each one ask himself, In what degree, in what point am I extending, by personal suffering, by personal self-denial, to the point of pain, the kingdom of Christ? . . . It is ever true that what costs little is worth little."

Rev. J. Hudson Taylor, China.

SHE picked up her water-vessel, and stood surveying us somewhat curiously. The ways of Picture-catching Missie Ammals were beyond her. Afterwards she sat down comfortably and talked. That was a year ago.

Then in the evening she and all her neighbours gathered in the market square for the open-air meeting. Shining of Life spoke for the first time. "I was a Hindu a year ago. I worshipped the gods you worship. Did they hear me when I prayed? No! They are dead gods. God is the living God! Come to the living God!"

One after the other the boys all witnessed that evening. Their clear boyish voices rang out round the ring. And some listened, and some laughed.

She picked up her water-vessel, and stood surveying us somewhat curiously.

Behind us there was a little demon temple. It had a verandah barred down with heavy bars. Within these bars you could see the form of an idol. Beside us there was a shrine. Someone had put our lanterns on the top of this pyramid shrine. Before us there was the mass of dark faces. Behind us, then, black walls, black bars, a black shape; before us the black meeting, black losing itself in black. Around us light, light shining into the black. That was as it was a year ago. Now we are back at Dohnavur, and almost the first place we went to was this village, where we had taken the light and set it up in the heart of the dark. An earnest young schoolmaster had been sent to keep that light burning there, and we went expectantly. Had the light spread? We went straight to our old friend’s house. She was as friendly as ever in her queer, rough, country way, but her heart had not been set alight. "Tell me what is the good of your Way? Will it fill the cavity within me?" and she struck herself a resounding smack in the region where food is supposed to go. "Will it stock my paddy-pots, or nourish my bulls, or cause my palms to bear good juice? If it will not do all these good things, what is the use of it?"

"If it is so important, why did you not come before?" The dear old woman who asked that lived here, and we searched through the labyrinthic courtyards to find her, but failed. The girl who listened in her pain is well now, but she says the desire she had has cooled. We found two or three who seem lighting up; may God’s wind blow the flame to a blaze! But we came back feeling that

we must learn more of the power of prayer ourselves if these cold souls are to catch fire. We remembered how, when we were children, we caught the sunlight, and focussed it, and set bits of paper on fire; and we longed that our prayers might be a lens to focus the Love-light of our God, and set their souls on fire.

Just one little bit of encouragement may be told by way of cheer. Blessing went off one day to see if the Village of the Warrior were more friendlily inclined, and Golden went to the Petra where they vowed they would never let us in. Before Blessing entered the village she knelt down under a banyan tree, and, remembering Abraham's servant, prayed for a sign to strengthen her faith that God would work in the place. While she prayed a child came and looked at her; then seeing her pray, she said, "Has that Missie Ammal sent you who came here more than a year ago?" Blessing said "Yes." Then the child repeated the chorus we had taught the children that first day. "None of us forget," she said; and told Blessing how the parents had agreed to allow us to teach if ever we should return. The village had been opened. He goeth before.

Golden's experience was equally strengthening to our faith. In the very street where they held a public demonstration to cleanse the road defiled by our "low-caste" presence, twenty houses have opened, where she is a welcome visitor. But all this is only for Love's sake, they say. They do not yet want Christ; so let us focus the light!

Then there is need for the fire of God to burn the cords that hold souls down. There is one with whom the Spirit strove last year when we were here. But a cord of sin was twined round her soul. She has a wicked brother-in-law, and a still more wicked sister, and together they plotted so evil a plot that, heathen though she is, she recoiled, and indignantly refused. So they quietly drugged her food, and did as they chose with her. And now the knot she did not tie, and which she wholly detested at first, seems doubly knotted by her own will. Oh, to know better how to use the burning-glass of prayer!

There may be a certain amount of sentiment, theoretically at least, in breaking up new ground. The unknown holds possibilities, and it allures one on. But in retracing the track there is nothing whatever of this. The broad daylight of bare truth shows you everything just as it is. Will you look once more at things just as they are, though it is not an interesting look. A courtyard where the women have often heard. May we come in? Oh yes, come in! But with us in comes an old fakeer of a specially villainous type. His body is plastered all over with mud; he has nothing on but mud. His hair is matted and powdered with ashes, his face is daubed with vermilion and yellow, his wicked old eyes squint viciously, and he shows all his teeth, crimson with betel, and snarls his various wants. The women say "Chee!" Then he rolls in the dust, and squirms, and wriggles, and howls; and he pours out such unclean vials of wrath that the women, coerced, give him all he demands, and he rolls off elsewhere.

Now may we read to the women? No! Many salaams, but they have no time. Last night there was a royal row between two friends in adjoining courtyards,[266] and family histories were laid bare, and pedigrees discovered. They are discussing these things to-day, and having heard it all before, they have no time to read.

Another courtyard, more refined; here the fakeer's opposite, a dignified ascetic, sits in silent meditation. "We know it all! You told us before!" But the women are friendly, and we go in; and

after a long and earnest talk the white-haired grandmother touches her rosary. "This is my ladder to heaven." The berries are fine and set in chased gold, but they are only solidified tears, tears shed in wrath by their god, they say, which resolved themselves into these berries. How can tears make ladders to heaven? She does not know. She does not care. And a laugh runs round, but one's heart does not laugh. Such ladders are dangerous.

Another house; here the men are kind, and freely let us in and out. The Way, they say, is very good; they have heard the Iyer preach. But one day there is a stir in the house. One of the sons is very ill. He has been suffering for some time; now he is suddenly getting worse, and suspicions are aroused. Then the women whisper the truth: the father and he are at daggers drawn, and the father is slowly poisoning him—small doses of strychnine are doing the work. The stir is not very violent, but quite sufficient to make an excuse for not wanting to listen well. This sort of thing throws us back upon God. Lord, teach us to pray! Teach us the real secret of fiery fervency in prayer. We know so little of it. Lord, teach us to pray!

"Oh, Amma! Amma! do not pray! Your prayers are troubling me!"

We all looked up in astonishment. We had just had our Band Prayer Meeting, when a woman came rushing into the room, and began to exclaim like this. She was the mother of one of our girls, of whom I told you once before. She is still in the Terrible's den. Now the mother was all excitement, and poured out a curious story.

"When you went away last year I prayed. I prayed and prayed, and prayed again to my god to dispel your work. My daughter's heart was impressed with your words. I cried to my god to wash the words out. Has he washed them out? Oh no! And I prayed for a bridegroom, and one came; and the cart was ready to take her away, and a hindrance occurred; the marriage fell through. And I wept till my eyes well-nigh dissolved. And again another bridegroom came, and again an obstacle occurred. And yet again did a bridegroom come, and yet again an obstacle; and I cannot get my daughter 'tied,' and the neighbours mock, and my Caste is disgraced"—and the poor old mother cried, just sobbed in her shame and confusion of face. "Then I went to my god again, and said, 'What more can I offer you? Have I not given you all I have? And you reject my prayer!' Then in a dream my god appeared, and he said, 'Tell the Christians not to pray. I can do nothing against their prayers. Their prayers are hindering me!' And so, I beseech you, stop your prayers for fourteen days—only fourteen days—till I get my daughter tied!"

"And after she is tied?" we asked. "Oh, then she may freely follow your God! I will hinder her no more!"

Poor old mother! All lies are allowed where such things are concerned. We knew the proposed bridegroom came from a place three hundred miles distant, and the idea was to carry the poor girl off by force, as soon as she was "tied." We have been praying night and day to God to hinder this. And He is hindering! But there is need to go on. That mother is a devotee. She has received the afflatus. Sometimes at night it falls upon her, and she dances the wild, wicked dance, and tries to seize the girl, who shrinks into the farthest corner of the little house; and she dances round her, and chants the chant which even in daylight has power in it, but which at night appeals unspeakably. Once the girl almost gave way, and then in her desperation, hardly knowing the sin of it, ran to the place where poison was kept, drank enough to kill two, straight off, then lay down

on the floor to die. Better die than do what they wanted her to do, she thought. But they found out what she had done, and drastic means were immediately used, and the poison only made her ill, and caused her days of violent pain. So there is need for the hindering prayer. Lord, teach us how to pray! Is India crammed with the horrible? "Picturesque," they call it, who have "done it" in a month or two, and written a book to describe it. And the most picturesque part, they agree, is connected with the temples.

India ends off in a pointed rock; you can stand at the very point of the rock, with only ocean before you, and almost all Asia behind. A temple is set at the end of the point, as if claiming the land for its own. We took our convert boys and girls to the Cape for the Christmas holidays, and one morning some of us spent an hour under an old wall near the temple, which wall, being full of hermit crabs, is very interesting. We were watching the entertaining ways of these degenerate creatures when, through the soft sea sounds, we heard the sound of a Brahman's voice, and looking up, saw this: A little group of five, sitting between the rocks and the sea, giving a touch of life to the scene, and making the picture perfect. There were two men, a woman, a child, and the priest. They were all marked with the V-shaped Vishnu mark. The priest twined the sacred Kusa grass round the fingers of his right hand, and gave each a handful of grass, and they did as he had done. Then they strewed the grass on the sand, to purify it from taint of earth, and then they began. The priest chanted names of God, then stopped, and drew signs on the sand. They followed him exactly. Then they bathed, bowing to the East between each dip, and worshipping; then returned and repeated it all. But before repeating it, they carefully painted the marks on their foreheads, using white and red pigment, and consulting a small English hand mirror—the one incongruous bit of West in this East, but symbolical of the times. The child followed it all, as a child will, in its pretty way. She was a dainty little thing in a crimson seeley and many gold jewels. The elder woman was dressed in dark green; the colouring was a joy to the eye, crimson and green, and the brown of the rock, against the blue of the sea.

It was one of those exquisite mornings we often have in the Tropics, when everything everywhere shows you God; shines the word out like a word illumined; sings it out in the Universe Song; and here in this South niche of Nature's cathedral, under the sky's transparency, these five, in the only way they knew, acknowledged the Presence of one great God, and worshipped Him. There was nothing revolting here, no hint of repulsive idolatry. They worshipped the Unseen. Very stately the Sanscrit sounded in which they chanted their adoration. "King of Immensity! King of Eternity! Boundless, Endless, Infinite One!" It might have been the echo of some ancient Christian hymn. It might have been, but it was not.

They are not worshipping God the Lord. They might be, but they are not. Whose is the responsibility? Is it partly yours and mine? The beauty of the scene has passed from us; the blue of the blue sky is blotted out—

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder, Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings;

Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder, Sadly contented with a show of things.

Then with a rush the intolerable craving Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call:

Oh to save these! To perish for their saving, Die for their life, be offered for them all!" The picture is made of souls—souls to be saved. "Oh to save these! To perish for their saving!" That is what the

picture says. Picture! There is no picture. In the place where it was, there is simply a pain—God's world, and God dishonoured in it! Oh to see these people as souls! Refined or vulgar, beautiful or horrible, or just dull, oh to see them "only as souls," and to yearn over them, and pray for them as souls who must live eternally somewhere, and for whom each of us, in our measure, is responsible to God. Do you say we are not responsible for those particular souls? Who said that sort of thing first? "Where we disavow being keeper to our brother we're his Cain." If we are not responsible, why do we take the responsibility of appealing to them in impassioned poetry?

"Let every kindred, every tribe, On this terrestrial ball, To Him all majesty ascribe, And crown Him Lord of all!"

What is the point of telling people to do a certain thing if we have no concern in whether they do it or not? The angels and the martyrs and the saints, to whom we appealed before, have crowned Him long ago. Our singing to them on the subject will make no difference either way; but when we turn to every kindred and tribe, the case alters. How can they crown Him Lord of all when they do not know about Him? Why do they not know about Him? Because we have not told them. It is true that many whom we have told heard "their one hope with an empty wonder"; but, on the other hand, it is true that the everlasting song rises fuller to-day because of those who, out in this dark heathendom, heard, and responded, and crowned Him King. But singing hymns from a distance will never save souls. By God's grace, coming and giving and praying will. Are we prepared for this? Or would we rather sing? Searcher of hearts, turn Thy search-light upon us! Are we coming, giving, praying till it hurts? Are we praying, yea agonising in prayer? or is prayer but "a pleasant exercise"—a holy relief for our feelings?

We have sat together under the wall by the Southern sea. We have looked at the five as they worshipped Another, and not our God. Now let this little South window be like a little clear pane of glass, through which you may look up far to the North, over the border countries and the mountains to Tibet, over Tibet and away through the vastness of Central Asia, on to China, Mongolia, Manchuria; and even then you have only seen a few of the great dark Northern lands, which wait and wait—for you. And this is only Asia, only a part of Asia. God looks down on all the world; and for every one of the millions who have never crowned Him King, Christ wore the crown of thorns. What do we count these millions worth? Do we count them worth the rearrangement of our day, that we may have more time to pray? Do we count them worth the laying down of a single ambition, the loosening of our hold on a single child or friend? Do we count them worth the yielding up of anything we care for very much? Let us be still for a moment and think. Christ counted souls worth Calvary. What do we count them worth?

1.09.30. Book 9: 30. Two Safe

CHAPTER XXX

Two Safe "God has given me the hunger and thirst for souls; will He leave me unsatisfied? No verily."

James Gilmour, Mongolia.

"That one soul has been brought to Christ in the midst of such hostile influences is so entirely and marvellously the Holy Spirit’s work, that I am sometimes overjoyed to have been in any degree instrumental in effecting the emancipation of one."

Robert Noble, India.

TWO of our boys are safe. They left us very suddenly. We can hardly realise they are gone. The younger one was our special boy, the first of the boys to come, a very dear lad. I think of him as I saw him the last evening we all spent together, standing out on a wave-washed rock, the wind in his hair and his face wet with spray, rejoicing in it all. Not another boy dare go and stand in the midst of that seething foam, but the spice of danger drew him. He was such a thorough boy! The call to leave his home for Christ came to him in an open-air meeting held in his village two years ago. Then there was bitterest shame to endure. His father and mother, aghast and distressed, did all they could to prevent the disgrace incurred by his open confession of Christ. He was an only son, heir to considerable property, so the matter was most serious. The father loved him dearly; but he nerved himself to flog the boy, and twice he was tied up and flogged. But they say he never wavered; only his mother’s tears he found hardest to withstand.

Weeks passed of steadfast confession, and then it came to the place of choice between Christ and home. He chose Christ, and early one morning left all to follow Him. Do you think it was easy? He was a loving boy. Could it have been easy to stab his mother’s heart? When the household woke that morning he was on his way to us. The father gathered his clansmen, and they came in a crowd to the bungalow.

They sat on the floor in a circle, with the boy in their midst, and they pleaded. I remember the throb of that moment now. A single pulse seemed to beat in the room, so tense was the tension, until he spoke out bravely. "I will not go back," he said.

They promised everything—a house, lands, his inheritance to be given at once, a wife "with a rich dowry of jewels"—all a Tamil boy most desires they offered him. And they promised him freedom to worship God; "only come back and save your Caste, and do not break your mother’s heart and disgrace your family."

Day after day they came, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, but the mother never came. They described her in heart-moving language. She neither ate nor slept, they said, but sat with her hair undone, and wept and wailed the death-wail for her son. At last they gave up coming, and we

were relieved, for the long-continued strain was severe; and though he never wavered, we knew the boy felt it. We used to hear him praying for his people, pouring out his heart when he thought no one was near, sobbing sometimes as he named their names. The entreaty in the tone would make our eyes wet. If only he could have lived at home and been a Christian there! But we knew what had happened to others, and we dare not send him back.

Then a year or so afterward we all went to the water together, and he and three others were baptised. The first to go down into the water was the elder boy, Shining of Victory. Shining of Life was second. A few weeks of bright life—those happy days by the sea—and then in the same order, and called by the same messenger—the swift Indian messenger, cholera—they both went down into the other water, and crossed over to the other side.

Shining of Life was well in the morning, dead in the evening. When first the pain seized him he was startled. Then, understanding, he lay down in peace. The heathen crowded in. They could not be kept out. They taunted him as he lay. "This is your reward for breaking your Caste!" they said. The agony of cholera was on him. He could not say much, but he pointed up, "Do not trouble me; this is the way by which I am going to Jesus," and he tried to sing a line from one of our choruses, "My Strength and my Redeemer, my Refuge—Jesus!" His parents had been sent for as soon as it was known that he was ill. They hurried over, the poor despairing mother crying aloud imploringly to the gods who did not hear. He pointed up again; he was almost past speech then, but he tried to say "Jesus" and "Come."

Then, while the heathen stood and mocked, and the mother beat her breast and wailed, and the father, silent in his grief, just stood and looked at his son, the boy passed quietly away. They hardly believed him dead.

Oh, we miss him so much! And our hearts ache for his people, for they mourn as those who have no hope. But God knows why He took him; we know it is all right.

Every memory of him is good. When the first sharp strain was over we found what a thorough boy he was, and in that week by the sea all the life and fun in him came out, and he revelled in the bathing and boating, and threw his whole heart into the holiday. We had many hopes for him; he was so full of promise and the energy of life. And now it is all over for both. Was it worth the pain it cost? Such a short time to witness, was it worth while?

It is true it was very short. Most of the little space between their coming and their going was filled with preparation for a future of service here. And yet in that little time each of the two found one other boy who, perhaps, would never have been found if the cost had been counted too great. And I think, if you could ask them now, they would tell you Jesus’ welcome made it far more than worth while.

1.09.31. Book 9: 31. Three Objections

CHAPTER XXXI Three Objections

"May I have grace to live above every human motive; simply with God and to God, and not swayed, especially in missionary work, by the opinions of people not acquainted with the state of things, whose judgment may be contrary to my own."

Henry Martyn, India.

THESE letters have been put together to help our comrades at home to realise something of the nature of the forces ranged against us, that they may bring the Superhuman to bear upon the superhuman, and pray with an intelligence and intensity impossible to uninformed faith. We have long enough under-estimated the might of the Actual. We need more of Abraham's type of faith, which, without being weakened, considered the facts, and then, looking unto the promise, wavered not, but waxed strong. Ignorant faith does not help us much. Some years ago, when the first girl-convert came, friends wrote rejoicing that now the wall of Caste must give way; they expected soon to hear it had. As if a grain of dust falling from one of the bricks in that wall would in anywise shake the wall itself! Such faith is kind, but there it ends. It talks of what it knows not.

Then, as to the people themselves, there are certain fallacies which die hard. We read, the other day, in a home paper, that it was a well-known fact that "Indian women never smile." We were surprised to hear it. We had not noticed it. Perhaps, if they were one and all so abnormally depressed, we should find them less unwilling to welcome the Glad Tidings. Again, we read that you can distinguish between heathen and Christian by the wonderful light on the Christians' faces, as compared with "the sad expression on the faces of the poor benighted heathen." It is true that some Christians are really illuminated, but, as a whole, the heathen are so remarkably cheerful that the difference is not so defined as one might think. Then, again, we read in descriptive articles on India that the weary, hopeless longing of the people is most touching. But we find that our chief difficulty is to get them to believe that there is anything to long for. Rather we would describe them as those who think they have need of nothing, knowing not that they have need of everything. And again and again we read thrilling descriptions of India's women standing with their hands stretched out towards God. They may do this in visions; in reality they do not. And it is the utter absence of all this sort of thing which makes your help a necessity to us. But none of you can pray in the way we want you to pray, unless the mind is convinced that the thing concerning which such prayer is asked is wholly just and right; and it seems to us that many of those who have followed the Story of this War may have doubts about the right of it—the right, for example, of converts leaving their homes for Christ's sake and His Gospel's. All will be in sympathy with us when we try to save little children, but perhaps some are out of sympathy when we do what results in sorrow and misunderstanding—"not peace, but a sword." So we purpose now to gather up into three, some of the many objections which are often urged upon those engaged in this sort of work, because we feel that they ought to be faced and answered if possible, lest we lose someone's prevailing prayer. The first set of objections may be condensed into a question as to the right or otherwise of

our "forcing our religion" upon those who do not want it. We are reminded that the work is most discouraging, conversions are rare, and when they occur they seem to create the greatest confusion. It is evident enough that neither we nor our Gospel are desired; and no wonder, when the conditions of discipleship involve so much. "We should not like strangers to come and interfere with our religion," write the friends who object, "and draw our children away from us; we should greatly resent it. No wonder the Hindus do!" And one reader of the letters wrote that she wondered how the girls who came out ever could be happy for a moment after having done such a wrong and heartless thing as to disobey their parents. "They richly deserve all they suffer," she wrote. "It is a perfect shame and disgrace for a girl to desert her own people!"

One turns from the reading of the letter, and looks at the faces of those who have done it; and knowing how they need every bit of prayer-help one can win for them, one feels it will be worth while trying to show those who blame them why they do it, and how it is they cannot do otherwise if they would be true to Christ. This objection as to the right or wrong of the work as a whole, leads to another relating to baptism. It is a serious thing to think of families divided upon questions of religion; surely it would be better that a convert should live a consistent Christian life at home, even without baptism, than that she should break up the peace of the household by leaving her home altogether? Or, having been baptised, should she not return home and live there as a Christian?

Lastly—and this comes in letters from those who, more than any, are in sympathy with us—why not devote our energies to work of a more fruitful character? We are reminded of the mass-movement type of work, in which "nations are born in a day"; and often, too, of the nominal Christians who sorely need more enlightenment. Why not work along the line of least resistance, where conversion to God does not of necessity mean fire and sword, and where in a week we could win more souls than in years of this unresultful work?

We frankly admit that these objections and proposals are naturally reasonable, and that what they state is perfectly true. It is true that work among high-caste Hindus all over India (as among Moslems all over the world) is very difficult. It is true that open confession of Christ creates disastrous division in families. It is true there is other work to be done.

Especially we feel the force of the second objection raised. We fully recognise that the right thing is for the convert to live among her own people, and let her light shine in her own home; and we deplore the terrible wrench involved in what is known as "coming out." To a people so tenacious of custom as the Indians are, to a nature so affectionate as the Indian nature is, this cutting across of all home ties is a very cruel thing. And now, only that we may not miss your prayer, we set ourselves to try to answer you. And, first of all, let us grasp this fact: it is not fair, nor is it wise, to compare work, and success in work, between one set of people and another, because the conditions under which that work is carried on are different, and the unseen forces brought to bear against it differ in character and in power. There is sometimes more "result" written down in a single column of a religious weekly than is to be found in the 646 pages of one of the noblest missionary books of modern days, On the Threshold of Central Africa. Or take two typical opposite lives, Moody’s and Gilmour’s. Moody saw more soul-winning in a day than Gilmour in his twenty-one years. It was not that the men differed. Both knew the Baptism of Power, both lived in Christ and loved. But these are extremes in comparison; take two, both missionaries, twin brothers

in spirit, Brainerd of North America and Henry Martyn of India. Brainerd saw many coming to Jesus; Martyn hardly one. Each was a pioneer missionary, each was a flame of fire. "Now let me burn out for God," wrote Henry Martyn, and he did it. But the conditions under which each worked varied as widely spiritually as they varied climatically. Can we compare their work, or measure it by its visible results? Did God? Let us leave off comparing this with that—we do not know enough to compare. Let us leave off weighing eternal things and balancing souls in earthly scales. Only God's scales are sufficiently sensitive for such delicate work as that.

We take up the objections one by one. First, "Why do you go where you are not wanted?"

We go because we believe our Master told us to go. He said, "all the world," and "every creature." Our marching orders are very familiar. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." "All the world" means everywhere in it, "every creature" means everyone in it. These orders are so explicit that there is no room to question what they mean.

All missionaries in all ages have so understood these words "all" and "every." Nearly seven hundred years ago the first missionary to the Moslems found no welcome, only a prison; but he never doubted he was sent to them. "God wills it," he said, and went again. They stoned him then, and he died—died, but never doubted he was sent. Our Master Himself went not only to the common people, who heard Him gladly, but to the priestly and political classes, who had no desire for the truth. "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life," He said, and yet He gave them the chance to come by going to them. The words, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," were spoken to an audience which was not thirsting for the Gospel.

St. Paul would willingly have spent his strength preaching the Word in Asia, especially in Galatia, where the people loved him well; but he was under orders, and he went to Europe, to Philippi, where he was put in prison; to Thessalonica, where the opposition was so strong that he had to flee away by night; to Athens, where he was the butt of the philosophers. But God gave souls in each of these places; only a few in comparison to the great indifferent crowd, but he would tell you those few were worth going for. You would not have had him miss a Lydia, a Damaris? Above all, you would not have had him disobey his Lord's command? So whether our message is welcomed or not, the fact remains we must go to all; and the worse they are and the harder they are, the more evident is it that, wanted or not, it is needed by them.

M. Coillard was robbed by the people he had travelled far to find. "You see we made no mistake," he writes, "in bringing the Gospel to the Zambesi." The second objection is, "Why break up families by insisting on baptism as a sine quâ non of discipleship?" And again we answer, Because we believe our Master tells us to. He said, "Baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." What right have we, His servants, to stop short of full obedience? Did He not know the conditions of high-caste Hindu life in India when He gave this command? Was He ignorant of the breaking up of families which obedience to it would involve? "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division." And then come words which we have seen lived out literally in the case of every high-caste convert who has come. "For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." These are truly awful verses;

no one knows better than the missionary how awful they are. There are times when we can hardly bear the pain caused by the sight of this division. But are we more tender than the Tender One? Is our sympathy truer than His? Can we look up into His eyes and say, "It costs them too much, Lord; it costs us too much, to fully obey Thee in this"? But granted the command holds, why should not the baptised convert return home and live there? Because he is not wanted there, as a Christian. Exceptions to this rule are rare (we are speaking of Caste Hindus), and can usually be explained by some extenuating circumstance. The high-caste woman who said to us, "I cannot live here and break my Caste; if I break it I must go," spoke the truth. Keeping Caste includes within itself the observance of certain customs which by their very nature are idolatrous. Breaking Caste means breaking through these customs; and one who habitually disregarded and disobeyed rules, considered binding and authoritative by all the rest of the household, would not be tolerated in an orthodox Hindu home. It is not a question of persecution or death, or of wanting or not wanting to be there; it is a question of not being wanted there, unless, indeed, she will compromise. Compromise is the one open door back into the old home, and God only knows what it costs when the choice is made and that one door is shut. This ever-recurring reiteration of the power and the bondage of Caste may seem almost wearisome, but the word, and what lies behind it, is the one great answer to a thousand questions, and so it comes again and again. In Southern India especially, and still more so in this little fraction of it, and in the adjoining kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin, Caste feeling is so strong that sometimes it is said that Caste is the religion of South India. But everywhere all over India it is, to every orthodox Hindu, part of his very self. Get his Caste out of him? Can you? You would have to drain him of his life-blood first.

It is the strength of this Caste spirit which in South India causes it to take the form of a determination to get the convert back. Promises are given that they may live as Christians at home. "We will send you in a bandy to church every Sunday!"—promises given to be broken. If the convert is a boy, he may possibly reappear. If a girl—I was going to say never; but I remember hearing of one who did reappear, after seventeen years imprisonment—a wreck. Send them back, do you say? Think of the dotted lines in some chapters you have read; ponder the things they cover; then send them back if you can. The third objection divides into two halves. The first half is, "Why do you not go to the Christians?" To which we answer, we do, and for exactly the same reason as that which we have given twice before, because our Master told us to do so. Our marching orders are threefold, one order concerning each form of service touched by the three objections. The third order touches this, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." So we go, and try to teach them the "all things"; and some of them learn them, and go to teach others, and so the message of a full Gospel spreads, and the Bride gets ready for the Bridegroom. The second half of this last objection is, "Why not do easier work? There are so many who are more accessible, why not go to them?" And there does seem to be point in the suggestion that if there are open doors, it might be better to enter into them, rather than keep on knocking at closed ones.

We do seek to enter the so-called open doors, but we never find they are so very wide open when it is known that we bring nothing tangible with us. Spiritual things are not considered anything by most. Still, work among such is infinitely easier, and many, comparatively speaking, are doing it. The larger number here are working among the Christians, the next larger number among the Masses, and the fewest always, everywhere, among the Classes, where conversion involves such

terrible conflicts with the Evil One, that all that is human in one faints and fails as it confronts the cost of every victory. But real conversion anywhere costs. By conversion we mean something more than reformation; that raises fewer storms. The kind of work, however, which more than any other seems to fascinate friends at home is what is known as the "mass movement," and though we have touched upon it before, perhaps we had better explain more fully what it really is. This movement, or rather the visible result thereof, is often dilated upon most rapturously. I quote from a Winter Visitor: "Christian churches counted by the thousand, their members by the million; whole districts are Christian, entire communities are transformed." And we look at one another, and ask each other, "Where?" But to that question certain would answer joyously, "Here!" There are missions in India where the avowed policy is to baptise people "at the outset, not on evidence of what is popularly called conversion. . . . We baptise them 'unto' the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and not because we have reason to believe that they have received the Spirit's baptism,"—we quote a leader in the movement, and he goes on to say, if it is insisted "that we should wait until this change (conversion) is effected before baptising them, we reply that in most cases we would have to wait for a long time, and often see the poor creatures die without the change." Of course every effort is made by revival services and camp meetings to bring these baptised Christians to a true knowledge of Christ, and it is considered that this policy yields more fruit than the other, which puts conversion first and baptism second. It is certainly richer in "results," for among the depressed classes and certain of the middle Castes, among whom alone the scheme can be carried out, there is no doubt that many are found ready to embrace Christianity, as the phrase goes, sometimes genuinely feeling it is the true religion, and desiring to understand it, sometimes for what they can get.

It must be admitted—for we want to state the case fairly—that a mass movement gives one a splendid chance to preach Christ, and teach His Gospel day by day. And the power in it does lay hold of some; we have earnest men and women working and winning others to-day, fruit of the mass movement of many years ago. But on the whole, we fear it, and do not encourage it here. The dead weight of heathenism is heavy enough, but when you pile on the top of that the incubus of a dead Christianity—for a nominal thing is dead—then you are terribly weighted down and handicapped, as you try to go forward to break up new ground.

So, though we sympathise with everything that tends towards life and light in India, and rejoice with our brothers who bind sheaves, believing that though all is not genuine corn, some is, yet we feel compelled to give ourselves mainly to work of a character which, by its very nature, can never be popular, and possibly never successful from a statistical point of view, never, till the King comes, Whose Coming is our hope.

1.09.32. Book 9: 32. "Show Me Thy Glory!"

CHAPTER XXXII "Show me Thy Glory!"

"Yesterday I was called to see a patient, a young woman who had been suffering terribly for three days. It was the saddest case I ever saw in my life. . . . I had to leave her to die. . . . The experience was such a terrible one that, old and accustomed surgeon as I am, I have been quite upset by it ever since. As long as I live the memory of that scene will cling to me." A Chinese Missionary.

"If we refuse to be corns of wheat falling into the ground and dying; if we will neither sacrifice prospects nor risk character and property and health, nor, when we are called, relinquish home and break family ties, for Christ's sake and His Gospel, then we shall abide alone."

Thomas Gajetan Ragland, India.

"Not mere pity for dead souls, but a passion for the Glory of God, is what we need to hold us on to Victory."

Miss Lilias Trotter, Africa.

WE are all familiar with the facts and figures which stand for so much more than we realise. We can repeat glibly enough that there are nearly one thousand, five hundred million people in the world, and that of these nearly one thousand million are heathen or Mohammedan. Perhaps we can divide this unthinkable mass into comprehensible figures. We can tell everyone who is interested in hearing it, that of this one thousand million, two hundred million are Mohammedans; two hundred million more are Hindus; four hundred and thirty million are Buddhists and Confucianists; and more than one hundred and fifty million are Pagans. But have we ever stopped and let the awfulness of these statements bear down upon us? Do we take in, that we are talking about immortal souls?

We quote someone's computation that every day ninety-six thousand people die without Christ. Have we ever for one hour sat and thought about it? Have we thought of it for half an hour, for a quarter of an hour, for five unbroken minutes? I go further, and I ask you, have you ever sat still for one whole minute and counted by the ticking of your watch, while soul after soul passes out alone into eternity?

. . . I have done it. It is awful. At the lowest computation, sixty-six for whom Christ died have died since I wrote "eternity."

"Oh my God! my God! Men are perishing, and I take no heed!" . . .

Sixty-six more have gone. Oh, how can one keep so calm? Death seems racing with the minute hand of my watch. I feel like stopping that terrible run of the minute hand. Round and round it goes, and every time it goes round, sixty-six people die.

I have just heard of the dying of one of the sixty-six. We knew her well. She was a widow; she had no protectors, and an unprotected widow in India stands in a dangerous place. We knew it, and tried to persuade her to take refuge in Jesus. She listened, almost decided, then drew back; afterwards we found out why. You have seen the picture of a man sucked under sea by an octopus; it was like that. You have imagined the death-struggle; it was like that. But it all went on under the surface of the water, there was nothing seen above, till perhaps a bubble rose slowly and broke; it was like that. One day, in the broad noontide, a woman suddenly fell in the street. Someone carried her into a house, but she was dead, and those who saw that body saw the marks of the struggle upon it. The village life flowed on as before; only a few who knew her knew she had murdered her body to cover the murder of her soul. We had come too late for her.

Last week I stood in a house where another of those sixty-six had passed. Crouching on the floor, with her knees drawn up and her head on her knees, a woman began to tell me about it. "She was my younger sister. My mother gave us to two brothers"—and she stopped. I knew who the brothers were. I had seen them yesterday—two handsome high-caste Hindus. We had visited their wives, little knowing. The woman said no more; she could not. She just shuddered and hid her face in her hands. A neighbour finished the story. Something went wrong with the girl. They called in the barber's wife—the only woman's doctor known in these parts. She did her business ignorantly. The girl died in fearful pain. Hindu women are inured to sickening sights, but this girl's death was so terrible that the elder sister has never recovered from the shock of seeing it. There she sits, they tell me, all day long, crouching on the floor, mute.

All do not pass like that; some pass very quietly, there are no bands in their death; and some are innocent children—thank God for the comfort of that! But it must never be forgotten that the heathen sin against the light they have; their lives witness against them. They know they sin, and they fear death. An Indian Christian doctor, practising in one of our Hindu towns, told me that he could not speak of what he had seen and heard at the deathbeds of some of his patients. A girl came in a moment ago, and I told her what I was doing. Then I showed her the diagram of the Wedge; the great black disc for heathendom, and the narrow white slit for the converts won. She looked at it amazed. Then she slowly traced her finger round the disc, and she pointed to the narrow slit, and her tears came dropping down on it. "Oh, what must Jesus feel!" she said. "Oh, what must Jesus feel!" She is only a common village girl, she has been a Christian only a year; but it touched her to the quick to see that great black blot.

I know there are those who care at home, but do all who care, care deeply enough? Do they feel as Jesus feels? And if they do, are they giving their own? They are helping to send out others, perhaps; but are they giving their own?

Oh, are they truly giving themselves? There must be more giving of ourselves if that wedge is to be widened in the disc. Some who care are young, and life is all before them, and the question that presses now is this: Where is that life to be spent? Some are too old to come, but they have those whom they might send, if only they would strip themselves for Jesus' sake.

Mothers and fathers, have you sympathy with Jesus? Are you willing to be lonely for a few brief years, that all through eternal ages He may have more over whom to rejoice, and you with Him? He may be coming very soon, and the little interval that remains, holds our last chance certainly to suffer for His sake, and possibly our last to win jewels for His crown. Oh, the unworked

jewel-mines of heathendom! Oh, the joy His own are missing if they lose this one last chance!

Sometimes we think that if the need were more clearly seen, something more would be done. Means would be devised; two or three like-minded would live together, so as to save expenses, and set a child free who must otherwise stay for the sake of one of the three. Workers abroad can live together, sinking self and its likes and dislikes for the sake of the Cause that stands first. But if such an innovation is impossible at home, something else will be planned, by which more will be spared, when those who love our God love Him well enough to put His interests first. "Worthy is the Lamb to receive!" Oh, we say it, and we pray it! Do we act as if we meant it? Fathers and mothers, is He not worthy? Givers, who have given your All, have you not found Him worthy?

"Bare figures overwhelmed me," said one, as he told how he had been led to come out; "I was fairly staggered as I read that twenty-eight thousand a day in India alone, go to their death without Christ. And I questioned, Do we believe it? Do we really believe it? What narcotic has Satan injected into our systems that this awful, woeful, tremendous fact does not startle us out of our lethargy, our frightful neglect of human souls?"

There is a river flowing through this District. It rises in the Western Ghauts, and flows for the greater part of the year a placid, shallow stream. But when the monsoon rains overflow the watersheds, it fills with a sudden, magnificent rush; you can hear it a mile away.

Out in the sandy river bed a number of high stone platforms are built, which are used by travellers as resting-places when the river is low. Some years ago a party of labourers, being belated, decided to sleep on one of these platforms; for though the rainy season was due, the river was very low. But in the night the river rose. It swept them on their hold on the stone. It whirled them down in the dark to the sea.

Suppose that, knowing, as they did not, that the rain had begun to fall on the hills, and the river was sure to fill, you had chanced to pass when those labourers were settling down for the night, would you, could you, have passed on content without an effort to tell them so? Would you, could you have gone to bed and slept in perfect tranquillity while those men and women whom you had seen were out in the river bed?

If you had, the thunder of the river would have wakened you, and for ever your very heart would have been cold with a chill chiller than river water, cold at the thought of those you dared to leave to drown!

You cannot see them, you say. You can. God has given eyes to the mind. Think, and you will see. Then listen. It is God Who speaks. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, ’Behold we knew it not,’ doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it, and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?"

Oh, by the thought of the many who are drawn unto death, and the many that are ready to be slain, by the thought of the sorrow of Jesus Who loves them, consider these things! But all are not called to come! We know it. We do not forget it. But is it a fact so forgotten at home that a missionary need press it? What is forgotten surely is that the field is the world.

You would not denude England! Would England be denuded? Would a single seat on the Bishop's bench, or a single parish or mission hall, be left permanently empty, if the man who fills it now moved out to the place which no one fills—that gap on the precipice edge? But suppose it were left empty, would it be so dreadful after all? Would there not be one true Christian left to point the way to Christ? And if the worst came to the worst, would there not still be the Bible, and ability to read? Need anyone die unsaved, unless set upon self-destruction? If only Christians in England knew how to draw supplies direct from God, if only those who cannot come would take up the responsibility of the unconverted around them, why should not a parish here and there be left empty for awhile? Surely we should not deliberately leave so very many to starve to death, because those who have the Bread of Life have a strong desire for sweets. Oh, the spiritual confectionery consumed every year in England! God open our eyes to see if we are doing what He meant, and what He means should continue! But some men are too valuable to be thrown away on the mission field; they are such successful workers, pastors, evangelists, leaders of thought. They could not possibly be spared. Think of the waste of burying brain in unproductive sand! Apparently it is so, but is it really so? Does God view it like that? Where should we have been to-day if He had thought Jesus too valuable to be thrown away upon us? Was not each hour of those thirty-three years worth more than a lifetime of ours?

What is God's definition of that golden word "success"? He looks at Roman Catholic Europe, and Roman and heathen South America, and Mohammedan and heathen Africa and Asia, and many a forgotten place in many a great land. And then He looks at us, and I wonder what He thinks. Ragland, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, after years of brain-burying waste, wrote that He was teaching him that "of all plans for securing success the most certain is Christ's own, becoming a corn of wheat, falling into the ground and dying." If coming abroad means that for anyone, is it too much to ask? It was what our dear Lord did. This brings us to another plea. I find it in the verse that carves out with two strokes the whole result of two lives. "If any man's work abide. . . . If any man's work shall be burned." The net result of one man's work is gold, silver, precious stones; the net result of another man's work is wood, hay, stubble. Which is worth the spending of a life? An earnest worker in her special line of work is looking back at it from the place where things show truest, and she says, "God help us all! What is the good done by any such work as mine? 'If any man build upon this foundation . . . wood, hay, stubble. . . . If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire!' An infinitude of pains and labour, and all to disappear like the stubble and the hay."

Success—what is it worth?

"I was flushed with praise, But pausing just a moment to draw breath, I could not choose but murmur to myself, 'Is this all? All that's done? and all that's gained?

If this, then, be success, 'tis dismaller Than any failure.'" So transparent a thing is the glamour of success to clear-seeing poet-eyes, and should it dazzle the Christian to whom nothing is of any worth but the thing that endures? Should arguments based upon comparisons between the apparent success of work at home as distinguished from work abroad influence us in any way? Is it not very solemn, this calm, clear setting forth of a truth which touches each of us? "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." And as we realise the perishableness of all

work, however apparently successful, except the one work done in the one way God means, oh, does it not stir us up to seek with an intensity of purpose which will not be denied, to find out what that one work is? The same thought comes out in the verse which tells us that the very things we are to do are prepared before, and we are "created in Christ Jesus" to do them. If this is so, then will the doing of anything else seem worth while, when we look back and see life as God sees it?

It may be that the things prepared are lying close at our hand at home, but it may be they are abroad. If they are at home there will be settled peace in the doing of them there; but if they are abroad, and we will not come and do them?—Oh, then our very prayers will fall as fall the withered leaves, when the wind that stirred them falls, yea more so, for the withered leaves have a work to do, but the prayers which are stirred up by some passing breeze of emotion do nothing, nothing for eternity. God will not hear our prayers for the heathen if He means us to be out among them instead of at home praying for them, or if He means us to give up some son or daughter, and we prefer to pray.

Lord save us from hypocrisy and sham! "Shrivel the falsehood" from us if we say we love Thee but obey Thee not! Are we staying at home, and praying for missions when Thou hast said to us "Go"? Are we holding back something of which Thou hast said, "Loose it, and let it go"? Lord, are we utterly through and through true? Lord God of truthfulness, save us from sham! Make us perfectly true!

I turn to you, brothers and sisters at home! Do you know that if God is calling you, and you refuse to obey you will hardly know how to bear what will happen afterwards? Sooner or later you will know, yea burn through every part of your being, with the knowledge that you disobeyed, and lost your chance, lost it for ever. For that is the awful part. It is rarely given to one to go back and pick up the chance he knowingly dropped. The express of one’s life has shot past the points, and one cannot go back; the lines diverge.

"Some of us almost shudder now to think how nearly we stayed at home," a missionary writes. "Do not, I beseech you, let this great matter drift. Do not walk in uncertainty. Do not be turned aside. You will be eternally the poorer if you do."

It may be you are not clear as to what is God’s will for you. You are in doubt, you are honest, but a thousand questions perplex you. Will you go to God about it, and get the answer direct?

If you are puzzled about things which a straightforward missionary can explain, will you buy a copy of Do Not Say, and read it alone with God? Let me emphasise that word "alone." "Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee." "There was a Voice . . . when they stood and had let down their wings."

Oh, by the thought of the Day that is coming, when the fire shall try all we are doing, and only the true shall stand, I plead for an honest facing of the question before it is too late! But this is not our strongest plea. We could pile them up, plea upon plea, and not exhaust the number which press and urge one to write. We pass them all, and go to the place where the strongest waits: God’s Glory is being given to another. This is the most solemn plea, the supreme imperative call. "Not mere pity for dead souls, but a passion for the Glory of God, is what we need to hold us through to victory."

"I am the Lord, that is My Name, and My Glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images." But the men He made to glorify Him take His Glory from Him, give it to another; that, the sin of it, the shame, calls with a low, deep under-call through all the other calls. God's Glory is being given to another. Do we love Him enough to care? Or do we measure our private cost, if these distant souls are to be won, and, finding it considerable, cease to think or care? "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see"—"They took Jesus and led Him away. And He, bearing His cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull . . . where they crucified Him." . . . "Herein is love." . . . "God so loved the world." . . . Have we petrified past feeling? Can we stand and measure now? "I know that only the Spirit, Who counted every drop that fell from the torn brow of Christ as dearer than all the jewelled gates of Paradise, can lift the Church out of her appreciation of the world, the world as it appeals to her own selfish lusts, into an appreciation of the world as it appeals to the heart of God." O Spirit, come and lift us into this love, inspire us by this love. Let us look at the vision of the Glory of our God with eyes that have looked at His love!

We would not base a single plea on anything weaker than solid fact. Sentiment will not stand the strain of the real tug of war; but is it fact, or is it not, that Jesus counted you and me, and the other people in the world, actually worth dying for? If it is true, then do we love Him well enough to care with the whole strength of our being, that to-day, almost all over the world, His Glory is being given to another? If this does not move us, is it because we do not love Him very much, or is it that we have never prayed with honest desire, as Moses prayed, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy Glory"? He only saw a little of it. "Behold there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while My Glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by." And the Glory of the Lord passed, and Moses was aware of something of it as it passed, but "My face shall not be seen," And yet that little was enough to mark him out as one who lived for one purpose, shone in the light of it, burned with the fire of it—he was jealous for the Glory of his God. And we—"We beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"; and we—we have seen "the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"While My Glory passeth by I will . . . cover thee . . . My face shall not be seen." "But we all with open face, reflecting, as in a mirror, the Glory of the Lord, are changed"—Are we? Do we? Do we know anything at all about it? Have we ever apprehended this for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus? Have we seen the Heavenly Vision that breaks us down, and humbles us to hear the Voice of the Lord ask, "Who will go for Us?" and strengthens us to answer, "Here am I, send me," and holds us on to obey if we hear Him saying "Go"?

"I beseech Thee, show me Thy Glory!" Shall we pray it, meaning it now, to the very uttermost? The uttermost may hold hard things, but, easy or hard, there is no other way to reach the place where our lives can receive an impetus which will make them tell for eternity. The motive power is the love of Christ. Not our love for Him only, but His very love itself. It was the mighty, resistless flow of that glorious love that made the first missionary pour himself forth on the sacrifice and service. And the joy of it rings through triumphantly, "Yea, and if I be poured forth . . . I joy and rejoice with you all!"

Yes, God's Glory is our plea, highest, strongest, most impelling and enduring of all pleas. But oh, by the thought of the myriads who are passing, by the thought of the Coming of the Lord, by the

infinite realities of life and death, heaven and hell, by our Saviour’s cross and Passion, we plead with all those who love Him, but who have not considered these things yet, consider them now!

Let Him show us the vision of the Glory, and bring us to the very end of self, let Him touch our lips with the live coal, and set us on fire to burn for Him, yea, burn with consuming love for Him, and a purpose none can turn us from, and a passion like a pure white flame, "a passion for the Glory of God!"

Oh, may this passion consume us! burn the self out[303] of us, burn the love into us—for God’s Glory we ask it, Amen.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing . . . Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him."

1.09.33. Book 9: Appendix. Some Indian Saints

APPENDIX Some Indian Saints

THERE was one—he has joined the company of Indian saints in glory now—the poet of the Mission, and our friend,—one so true in all his ways that a Hindu lad observing him with critical schoolboy eyes, saw in him, as in a mirror, something of the holiness of God, and, won by that look, became a Christian and a winner of souls. Some of the noblest converts of our Mission are the direct result of that Tamil poet's life. There is another; he is old, and all through his many years he has been known as the one-word man, the man of changeless truth. He is a village pastor, whom all the people love. Go into his cottage any time, any day, and you will find one and another with him, and you will see the old man, with his loving face and almost quite blind eyes, bending patiently to catch every word of the story they are telling, and then you will hear him advising and comforting, as a father would his child. For miles round that countryside the people know him, and he is honoured by Hindus and by Christians as India honours saints.

I remember once seeing the poet and the pastor together. They belonged to widely different castes, but that was forgotten now. The two old white heads were bent over the same letter—a letter telling of the defection of a young convert each had loved as a son, and they were weeping over him. It was the ancient East living its life before us: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son, my son!" But what made it a thing to remember in this land of Caste divisions, even among Christians, was the overflowing of the love that made those two men one.

There are others. Money, the place it holds in a man's affections, is supposed to be a fair test of character. We could tell of a lawyer who is losing money to-day rather than touch unrighteous gains; of a doctor who gives to his church till he feels, and travels any distance to help the poor who cannot pay; of a peasant who risks a certain amount of injury to his palms rather than climb them on Sunday; and in many an old-world town and village, dotted about on the wide red plain, we have simple, humble, holy people, of whom the world knows nothing—pastors in lonely out-stations, teachers, and workers, and just ordinary Christians—who do the day's work, and shine as they do it. We think of such men and women when we hear the critic's cry, and we wish he could know them as they are.

It is these men and women who ask us to tell it out clearly how sorely our Indian Church needs your prayers. They have no desire to hide things. They speak straighter than we do, and far more strongly, and they believe, as we do, that if you know more you will pray more.

LONDON: MORGAN AND SCOTT Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

Page 146 was missing in the 1905 edition. The text was replaced from the 1903 edition.

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