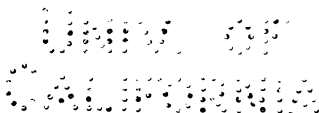


RELIGIONS OF MISSION FIELDS  
" AS VIEWED  
BY PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES

*Ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων  
κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς, ὁρίσας  
προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς  
κατοικίας αὐτῶν, ζητεῖν τὸν θεὸν εἰ ἄρα γε  
ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὗροιεν, καὶ γε οὐ  
μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἐκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα.*

**ACTS xvii. 26, 27.**



**STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT  
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1905**

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1905

TO THE  
STUDENT VOLUNTEER  
MOVEMENT FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

### **III. HINDUISM**

**By REV. C. A. R. JANVIER**

**For Fourteen Years a Missionary to India**

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### III

## HINDUISM

**I. Ancient Hinduism.**—I. *Hinduism's Claim on the Student's Interest.*—Whatever be the religion on which the thoughtful student focuses his attention, its claim on his interest will assume superlative proportions. Hinduism is far from being an exception. Its adherents are numbered not by the million, but by the hundred million. Its age is measured not by centuries, but by millenniums. Brought into peculiarly intimate contact with other great religions, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity, it affords rare opportunity for the comparative study of its doctrines. It is in more intimate alliance with philosophy—not necessarily true philosophy—than any other belief. It is the most tolerant, in theory, of all religions; it has room under its ægis for any doctrine under heaven, provided certain simple conditions be complied with. Its very elusiveness attracts interest. The baffled student returns again and again to his task with new determination to perfectly analyze its subtle thought and fully define its complex system. He is not likely to succeed. No one has yet. But his quest is still worth while. He will be getting the nearer to the heart of two hundred millions of his fellow men; he will be fitting himself to present to them more wisely and sympathetically that truth which has been found

to meet man's deepest need, all man's need, everywhere and always.

2. *To be Studied Historically.*—Hinduism has no central figure whom to know would be to know approximately the religion itself. It has not now, nor ever has had, any generally accepted exponent. Not only is it in no sense the product of a single mind, even in its earliest traceable phases, but it is not to be fully learned from any sacred book or library of sacred books, partly because there is no final authority to decide what is sacred, and partly because there is so much of it, in its practical aspects, that is to be found in no book. It is a religio-philosophical congeries to which many peoples with many creeds have through many centuries contributed their varying parts. In order to understand it at all, therefore, some knowledge of the stages through which it has passed is essential.

3. *Its Sacred Books.*—These stages being marked in part by the successive sacred books, it is well to take time at this point for a brief enumeration and description of these books. They are divided into two classes, the more authoritative called Śruti ("that which has been heard," i. e., from the Divine voice) and the less authoritative, called Smṛiti ("that which is remembered").

(a) *The Śruti.*—To the former or higher class belong the Vedas alone. They are four in number: Ṛig-veda, Sāma-veda, Yajur-veda and Atharva-veda; and their composition probably covers a thousand years or more, beginning with the period—not earlier than 2000 B. C.—when the Aryans first invaded and overspread the plains of the Indus. The four Vedas are

not contemporaneous of course, nor yet are they strictly successive; for the earlier portions of one are in most cases more ancient than the later portions of its predecessor. Each Veda consists of three divisions: Hymns, Saṃhitā, or Mantra; Ritual, Brāhmaṇa; and Philosophical Treatises, Upanishad, included with Āraṇyaka, or "Forest Treatises." The Saṃhitās are the oldest portion of each Veda and consist of versified prayers and praises; the Brāhmaṇas come next and are commentaries, mostly in prose, explaining how the Saṃhitās are to be used in the performance of religious rites; and last come the Āraṇyakas and Upanishads, consisting of philosophical inquiries on religious themes, ostensibly based on the Saṃhitās. The term Veda is sometimes applied exclusively to the Hymns; and yet, as Dr. Murdoch well says,—“Letter to Mahārāja of Darbhanga,” p. 19,—“Not only are the Brāhmaṇas and Upanishads as much Śruti as the Mantras (Saṃhitā), but the Upanishads are practically the only Veda studied by thoughtful Hindus of the present day.”

(b) *The Smṛiti*.—This term is more elastic, its content varying with the viewpoint of the individual sect of Hindus, but it may be said to include among other books the following:

*The Darśanas*, or systematized “exhibitions” of the philosophy of the Upanishads. These are six in number, each serving as the basis of a separate philosophical sect: Nyāya, Vaiśeshika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mimāṃsā, and Vedānta. Their date it is impossible to fix with exactness, further than to say that probably they originally belong to the period immediately preceding and including the rise of Buddhism, but did not take

their present form much before the Christian era. The Sāṅkhya, Yoga, and Vedānta have been the three most influential schools of thought, the last the most influential of all.

*The Laws of Manu*, or Mānava Dharma Śāstra, a treatise on religious jurisprudence, bearing somewhat the same relation to the Brāhmaṇa as the Darsāna do to the Upanishad, and belonging probably to the period between 500 and 300 B. C.

*The Epic poems* Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, which include legends of a remote age, but may in their present form safely be placed in the early centuries of the Christian era.

*The eighteen Purāṇas*, a kind of versified encyclopedia of religion, philosophy, science, and history, belonging in their collated form to the period between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries, A. D.

*The Tantras*, somewhat similar to the Purāṇas, but belonging probably to a slightly later period, and setting forth the principles of the obscene Śakti worship.

4. *Successive Stages of Progress of Hinduism.*—Following in general the lines indicated in the above enumeration of Hinduism's sacred books, its initial stage, as reflected in the Saṃhitā of the Ṛig-veda, is by common consent named, (a) *Vedic Hinduism*. There are to be found in this period suggestive traces of an original monotheism<sup>1</sup> as, for instance, in the name of

<sup>1</sup>The fourth and sixth lines of the following extract from the *Ṛig-veda* (X. 129, Muir's translation) give a hint of monotheistic thought already passing into pantheism:

"Then there was neither aught nor naught, no air nor sky beyond.

What covered all? Where rested all? In watery gulf profound?



one of the gods of the Ṛig-veda, Dyaus-pitar, in connection with whom Max Müller says: "If I were asked what I consider the most important discovery which has been made during the nineteenth century with respect to the ancient history of mankind, I should answer by the following short line: Sanskrit, *Dyaush Pitar* = Greek, *Zeus Pater* = Latin, *Jupiter* = Old Norse, *Tyr*. Think what this equation implies! It implies not only that our own ancestors and the ancestors of Homer and Cicero spoke the same language as the people of India,—this is a discovery which, however incredible it sounded at first, has long ceased to cause any surprise,—but it implies and proves that they all had once the same faith, and worshipped for a time the same supreme Deity under exactly the same name — name which meant Heaven-Father."

*The actual religion of the period* itself may, however, be described as polytheistic nature worship. Sacrifice and offering were common. Some of the more prominent of the "thrice eleven" deities — in Ṛig-veda 3d, 9, 9 we have a much larger number — were Varuṇa, (*Οὐρανός*) "Encompassing Firmament," Indra, the Rain-god, Agni, the Fire-god, Sūrya, the Sun-god, etc.

(b) *Brahmanic, or Ritualistic Hinduism*.—As the centuries passed the number of the gods steadily increased. Bloody sacrifices were enormously multi-

Nor death was then, nor deathlessness, nor change of night  
nor day;

That one breathed calmly, self-sustained; naught else be-  
yond it lay.

Gloom hid in gloom existed first — one sea, eluding view;  
That one, a void in chaos wrapt by inward fervor grew."

plied. Under the influence, probably of the grosser religious ideas of the aborigines with whom the Āryans mingled, the element of fear became more conspicuous. Religion began to be stereotyped. Success in dealing with supernatural powers depended upon the proper selection of Mantras and absolute accuracy in their repetition. Formulas superseded worship, and the influence of those who learned and repeated them increased proportionately. The thought of this period is mirrored in the Brāhmaṇas of the Vedas and in its later phases in the Code of Manu; and its most marked fruit was the development of the caste system, with the priest class, or Brāhmans, at its head.

(c) *Philosophic Hinduism* came as the inevitable reaction from all this formalism. Men sought relief from empty ritual, endless sacrifices, and priestly pretensions in the philosophic speculations which produced first the Upanishads of the Vedas; and then the six Darśanas professedly based on them. Atheism, polytheism, and even monotheism may be traced in these writings, though the prevailing thought of the period was pantheistic.<sup>1</sup> One religious feature of this time deserves special attention. In the Brahmanic period the way of deliverance had been the karma-mārg or "path of works, or ritual;" in the philosophic it was the jñāna-mārg or "way of knowledge." To

<sup>1</sup> Whether pantheism precedes or follows polytheism is a question of no small interest. Hinduism's history would seem to give pantheism the later place, and it seems fair to ask whether pantheism is not the philosopher's protest against, and explanation of, polytheism—man's blundering attempt to get back to that from which polytheism has fallen. Is not Plato a case in point?

know one's identity<sup>1</sup> with the true, infinite, and eternal self, this was salvation. Transmigration of souls had come now to be an essential feature of Hindu thought,<sup>2</sup> and the one idea of salvation was that of deliverance from endless re-births — 8,400,000 is the popular conception. The six systems professing to set forth this way of deliverance, though all appealing to the Vedas and all accepted to this day as wholly orthodox, were utterly opposed one to another. The Bhagavad-gītā, that remarkable production which comes as an obvious interpolation in the great epic, the Mahābhārata, is an attempt to harmonize three of these systems, and belongs properly to Philosophic Hinduism, though in a later stage of development.

It is to the early part of this same period that the *rise of Buddhism* belongs. It was the logical outcome of certain phases of the thought of the time, as exhibited especially in the Sāṅkhya school, and like philosophic Hinduism in general, it was a protest against the preceding empty formalism and the arrogant pretensions of the priesthood.

**II. Modern Hinduism.**—It would possibly be more accurate to interpose another division, Puranic Hinduism, between the Philosophic and the Modern, but for the purposes of this sketch it is safe to date back modern Hinduism to the early centuries of the

<sup>1</sup>The two "great sentences" were Brahmasmi, "I am Brahma," and Tattvam asi, "It thou art."

<sup>2</sup>There can be little or no question that this doctrine was taken by Buddha from Hinduism, not by the latter from Buddhism, as is sometimes stated. See "Hinduism, Past and Present," pp. 50, 132; De la Fosse's "History of India," p. 28; Tisdall's "India: Its History, Darkness and Dawn."

Christian era, from the time when it began to recover from what had promised to be its death-blow and to gain the mastery over its lusty child, Buddhism. During the half millennium of Buddhist supremacy, the Hinduism of the masses, partly under the increased influence of the Dravidian cults of southern India, partly perhaps through the deliberate purpose of the Brāhmanas to offset the power of the dominant religion by popularizing Hinduism along evil lines, made rapid progress in the direction of a grosser polytheism, and at the same time adapted itself to Buddhistic thought by putting sacrifice into the background and inculcating a great regard for animal life.

1. *Religious Thought of the Modern Period.*—As reflected in and molded by the two great Epics, the eighteen Purāṇas, and the Tantras, this presents, among others, the following salient features :

(a) Overtopping the reputed 330,000,000 divinities there comes into prominence the triad of Gods, or Trimūrti, *Brahmā*, *Vishnu*, *Śiva*, the manifestation of *Brahm*, the great original IT. The sacred monosyllable Om, whose proper utterance is supposed to bring incalculable benefits, is made up of the letters representing these three names. *Brahmā* somehow fell into disrepute, and *Vishṇu* soon became more popular than *Śiva*, especially in the North.

(b) Another new and conspicuous feature is the doctrine of *incarnation*. Ten incarnations, all of *Vishṇu*, are usually accepted. The seventh, eighth, and ninth were respectively *Rāma-chandra*, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Kṛishṇa*, the hero of the *Mahābhārata*, including the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and *Buddha*, cunningly

adopted as a sop to his followers. The tenth, it is said, is yet to come.

(c) A third feature is the introduction of *bhakti*, i. e., adoring worship of divinity, as an alternative "path" to deliverance from re-births, thus adding the *bhakti-mārg* to the *jñāna* of the Philosophic and the karma of the Brahmanic period. The most popular object of this *bhakti* was *Kṛishṇa*; it is in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that *bhakti* first appears, and it was partly at least owing to the evil character of that incarnation that a thought so true soon became low and gross.

(d) A fourth feature of this period is the idea — which Dr. Mitchell traces to 200 B. C.—of *sacred places*, especially rivers, and of pilgrimages thereto. First the Indus, then the *Sarasvatī*, then the Ganges; among cities, *Prayāga* (*Allahābād*), *Kāśī* (*Benares*), *Dvārikā*, *Bindraban*. These are a few of the hundreds of *tīrthas* — sacred places — which gradually came into prominence as merit-bestowing points of pilgrimage.

(e) One other characteristic demands reluctant notice, the *Śakti-worship* of the *Tantras*. *Śakti* means power, the power of the gods, personalized as the wives of the gods, especially of the great Triad. The rites connected with this worship, especially among the "left-hand" devotees, are obscene and horrible beyond belief.

2. *Hinduism's Lack of Unity*.—It must not, of course, be understood that all these features of modern Hinduism are to be found in all parts of the country, nor all of them in any one part of the country. All that can be said is that these are points of Hinduism that are conspicuous in some part or other of the country to-day. The fact is that there is no unity of faith

and practice, not even uniformity. Dr. Mitchell well says ("Hinduism," p. 166):

"As to belief, Hinduism includes a quasi-monotheism, pantheism, polytheism, polydemonism, and atheism, or at least agnosticism. As to worship, it includes meditation on Brahm, the One, the All—without external rites or mental homage—image-worship, fetich-worship, ghost-worship, and demon-worship. But, again, a man may be a good Hindu, who avows no belief at all, provided he pays respect to Brāhmans, does no injury to cows, and observes with scrupulous care the rules and customs of his caste." This may well be supplemented by a quotation from Guru Prasād Sen's "Introduction to the Study of Hinduism," pp. 2, 3: "Hinduism is not, and has never been, a religious organization. It is a pure social system, imposing on those who are Hindus the observance of certain social forms, and not the profession of particular religious beliefs. It is perfectly optional with a Hindu to choose from any one of the different religious creeds with which the Śāstras abound; he may choose to have a faith and a creed, if he wants a creed, or to do without one. He may be an atheist, a deist, a monotheist, or a polytheist, a believer in the Vedas or Śāstras, or a sceptic as regards their authority; and his position as a Hindu cannot be questioned by anybody because of his beliefs or unbeliefs, so long as he conforms to social rules."

3. *Pantheism, Idolatry, Caste.*—It is difficult to find any two authorities, especially any two Hindu authorities, who agree in their statement of the essential features of Hinduism. Not only has it been constantly changing through the centuries, as already indicated,

but at no time has it been the same in different parts of India, nor even self-consistent in any one part. Yet two general trends of religious thought — not infrequently found, strangely enough, in the same person — may be traced. Among the more intelligent, on the one hand, the pantheistic philosophy of the Upanishads, especially the Vedānta philosophy, is uppermost, with a constant tendency to develop in one of three directions, toward pantheism, toward agnosticism, or toward theism. Among the ignorant masses, on the other hand, polytheism is uppermost, with an invariable pantheistic background. Pantheism, with its corollary in the transmigration of souls, is thus common to all. As common is idolatry, at least the tendency toward it and apology for it. Pantheism then as a creed, grossest idolatry as the commonest expression of the religious instinct, and caste as a social system, constitute the real triad of Hinduism today.

On the last number of this triad, namely *caste*, a few additional words are necessary. This was beyond doubt primarily a matter of race — as hinted at in the original word for caste, *varṇa*, color. The Āryans, after their invasion of India, separated themselves from the despised non-Āryans and from those of mixed parentage. At the same time they divided themselves according to their occupations, which naturally all tended to become hereditary. Priests or Brahmins, warriors or Kshatriyas, and traders and agriculturists, or Vaiśyas, formed each their own caste. To the non-Āryans, who made up the Śūdra caste, were left all the forms of menial service. Beneath all these are the casteless, called variously in different parts of the country, Pariahs, Mihtars, Chuhars, etc. Not only their

touch, but even contact with their shadow, is counted a pollution by those in caste. They have no social or religious rights that anybody is bound to respect, and their degradation is almost worse than slavery.<sup>1</sup> All of the four castes are formed into many subdivisions. There are said to be 1,866 sub-castes among the Brahmans alone, and the lower castes are still more complex — and even the Outcastes have their own distinctions, as binding among themselves as those in the higher classes.

4. *Hinduism a Religion of Fear.*— No one can fail to be impressed with the omnipresence of the religious touch, not only in the endless intricacies of caste rules, but in almost every detail of the daily life of the people. They eat religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously, and often even sin religiously. In every aspect of the religious life two elements are rarely lacking, the first that of fear. Hinduism is conspicuously a religion of fear rather than of hope. An ever-present thought is that of keeping the gods from working one harm, physical rather than spiritual. They are capricious, vindictive, often malevolent; the one great thing is to keep on the right side of them, even by trickery. A girl was found studying in a boys' school one day. Remonstrated with, the teacher replied in a subdued tone: "That is not a girl, Sāhib! The first boy in that home was taken by the small-pox goddess, so the parents have dressed this one in girl's clothes and call

<sup>1</sup> The writer heard not long ago of a man in the slums who had sunk so low that he "had to reach up to touch bottom"! A more accurate description of the situation of the non-caste people can hardly be conceived!



him by a girl's name to deceive the goddess. She will never think it worth while to carry off a *girl!*"

5. *Power of Custom.*—Almost as potent as fear in the religious life is the regard for custom, "dastūr." For the existence of a thousand practices the only reason which one can extract from the average man is that they have come down through the ages. "Everybody has always done it, and"—with a shrug of the shoulders—"why should not we?"

6. *Merit-making.*—One other tremendously effective motive of action must receive passing notice, the desire to make merit, "puṇya." Brahmans are feasted, pilgrimages are undertaken, beggars are fed, all to amass merit. It is hoped that the fund may be drawn upon in this life, if not, in those to come; and finally in the cutting off of the dreaded re-births.

**III. Reform Movements.**—No outline of present-day Hinduism would be complete without some mention of reform movements, of which three are especially worthy of note.

1. *Brāhma Samāj.*—Its founder was Ram Mohan Roy, a Brahman of Bengal, who largely through contact with Christianity reached a definitely theistic belief, and in 1830 opened the first Hindu Theistic Church. The most prominent of his associates or successors have been Debendra Nāth Tāgore, Keshab Chandar Sen, and P. C. Mozumdār. It is not easy to state accurately the features of the Brāhma faith, partly because it is broken up into various sub-divisions opposed to one another, and partly because the statements of its leaders have been far from definite. In general it may be said that it is a theistic eclecticism, assuming the truth of all religions, though giving the

highest place to Christianity and Christ. It has comparatively few adherents,—only 4,000 in the census of 1901,—but among them have been a number of men of large influence, who have done much for the social and moral advancement of their countrymen.

2. *The Ārya Samāj*.—This is radically different from the preceding, being a movement started in 1863 and formally organized in 1875 by Dayānand Sarasvatī, a Brāhman from Kathiawar, whose main activities, however, were confined to northern India. The leading tenets of the sect are: (a) Only the Saṃhitā and the four Vedas are inspired; (b) there are three eternal substances, God, Spirit, and Matter; (c) a soul is incorporeally and always perfectly distinct from God; (d) the soul is subject to re-birth in human or animal or vegetable form; (e) “Salvation is the state of emancipation from pain and from subjection to birth and death, and of life, liberty, and happiness in the immensity of God.” The Ārya Samāj is theoretically opposed to the caste system, to idolatry, to child-marriage, and to pilgrimages. Unfortunately, the opposition in most cases is theoretical only. Its positive weaknesses are that it is deistic rather than theistic; it is utterly illogical and vulnerable in its interpretation of the Vedas; and the spirit of its adherents has been narrow, bigoted, and bitter in the last degree. They have devoted themselves to attacks upon Christianity rather than upon the errors of the Hinduism which they profess to reform, appealing to the national and religious pride of the Hindu and requiring no real surrender of caste and of religious custom, while yet making a show of reform and enlightenment. The move-

ment has attracted many followers and is one of the forces to be reckoned with in India to-day.

3. *Theosophy*.— This may perhaps be best described as Hindu pantheism up-to-date. Its prototype is the Yoga system, which differs from the Vedānta mainly in this, that the latter rejects the external universe as illusion (*māyā*), while the former regards it as the manifestation of the universal soul, just as the body is the manifestation of the individual soul. The goal of the theosophist is the apprehension of the identity of the individual self with the World-Self. Transmigration of souls is one of its corollaries. To its modified Yoga system it has added a curious combination of the theory of evolution and an adaptation of the Christian doctrines of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. Doubt as to the reality or permanence of this reform, if reform it can be called, is deepened by the fact that the writings of the discredited Madame Blavatsky are accepted as a part of the authoritative basis of its creed.

**IV. The Strength and the Weakness of Hinduism.**—I. *Strength*.—The fair-minded student is anxious to find out the good points in Hinduism. His task is not altogether an easy one. A friendly writer of prominence has stated that the two great contributions of Hinduism to the body of universal truth are the solidarity of man and the “omni-penetrativeness” of God, both being the fruit of pantheistic thought. Man is one because he is really one with God. God is “omni-penetrative” because all that is is God. While it may be true that there is something suggestive in these thoughts, yet practically the effectiveness of the one has been destroyed by the tyrannical exclusiveness

of the caste system, and the other has found its logical outcome in idolatry of grossest form. Perhaps a fairer statement of the best points in Hinduism would emphasize the following: (a) Its teaching concerning the sanctity of life; (b) its fruitfulness in the line of the passive virtues of patience, gentleness, submissiveness; (c) its introduction of religion into the common things of life. A large part of its strength lies in its hoary antiquity; in its tremendous hold upon the people, through priestly domination and the caste system; and in the laxness of its moral standards, which make it possible for a man to conform to religious standards and yet be personally evil in thought and life. It is hardly necessary to say that these very points of strength are its real weakness.

2. *Its Weaknesses.*—The great evils lying in the system seem to call for a little more definite statement. Pantheism is responsible for most of them. (a) It has *robbed man of a personal God*. Since God is the all and all is God, there is no possibility of a personal God who can be approached and trusted and loved.

(b) It has *robbed man of conscience*. Sin, like all other phenomena, must, if God is all, be either a mode of the Divine manifestation or else illusion. In either case it is nothing to be troubled about. The very distinction between right and wrong is obliterated.

(c) It has *robbed man of all true sense of the freedom of the will*. One of its corollaries is the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, with the inexorable out-working of Karma, the deeds of previous existences. Practical fatalism is its result. Man ceases to be a free moral agent, because he is in the remorseless grasp of Karma. He is what he is because he was what he was.

He was what he was because he had been what he had been. His Karma is his fate.

(d) It has led him into *grossest idolatry*. Idolatry is an even more necessary corollary of pantheism than is the transmigration of souls. Since all is God, man is perfectly right in worshipping anything. Apologists have tried to prove that Hindus do not worship the inanimate objects but only God through them. Practical experience does not warrant this notion. Unfortunately even the most advanced Hindus are disposed to apologize for idolatry as a sort of religious kindergarten. The obvious answer to this is that idolatry has never elevated itself or its devotees; it has always degenerated; it has always carried its worshippers to lower depths.

(e) Whether pantheism, with its identification of even the grossest evil with God, be responsible, or whether the present situation be a legacy from aboriginal cults, the fact is that in many phases of Hinduism *lust is enthroned*. The gods themselves are immoral; so are the incarnations, Kṛishṇa especially. There is no need to descend to Tāntric worship, the publication of the details of which would be rendered impossible by the laws for the suppression of obscene literature. A few of the most notorious facts may in passing be alluded to: such as the religious prostitution connected with many holy places; the little girls married to the god Kandhoba and devoted to evil lives; the unspeakable foulnesses connected with the Holi, the most popular of Hindu religious festivals, and the all but universal worship of the linga.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Membrum virile.*

(f) *The caste system* has been too often spoken of to need anything but passing mention. It destroys social life. It cramps industry. It makes broad sympathy impossible, and it engenders a spirit of pride and tyranny which is almost inconceivable. In a recent address the Gaekwar of Baroda, himself of course a Hindu, says of caste, among other things: "Its evils cover the whole range of social life. . . . It intensifies local dissensions and renders the country disunited and incapable of improving its defects. It robs us of our humanity by insisting on the degradation of some of our fellowmen, who are separated from us by no more than accident of birth. It prevents noble and charitable impulses; it is a steady enemy to all reform." The not uncommon suggestion that social distinctions in other lands are not unlike caste distinctions is simply preposterous.

(g) Hinduism has placed *woman in a position of utter degradation*. Whatever she may have been in Vedic times, she is now the slave or the toy of man. Pandita Ramabai<sup>1</sup> thus sums up the duty of the Hindu married woman: "To look upon her husband as a god, to hope for salvation only through him, to be obedient to him in all things, never to covet independence, never to do anything but that which is approved by law and custom." And she well quotes in proof from the great law-giver, Manu (Manu, v. 154), "Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of all good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife." Of Hindu widowhood little need be said. The

<sup>1</sup>"The High-Caste Hindu Woman," p. 58.

wife's condition, however low, is a paradise in comparison, unless indeed the widow be the mother of sons. Says the Gaekwar in the address already alluded to: "We suppress our feelings of humanity and affection and inflict severities on widows to keep their vitality low and make them less attractive. In spite of our harsh measures we fail to preserve even the ordinary standard of morality in this much ill-treated class."

**V. How Best Approach the People in Presenting the Truth?**—It is but a truism to say that the spirit of the missionary must above all be the spirit of love. He is not on the field for the purpose of gaining the mastery, but in order to win men to Christ. He is the messenger of the God who is love, and any spirit inconsistent with such a mission must inevitably bring disaster. It would seem scarcely necessary to say this, were it not that practically it is exceedingly difficult to be gentle and loving and tender, and at the same time be firm and true.

*I. Conciliation without Compromise.*—The first difficulty is to present the truth forcefully and adequately, and yet to present it in such a way as to avoid arousing prejudice. In this regard the position to be taken by the missionary may perhaps best be stated as that of conciliation without compromise. The salient features of the truth must be presented. None of the cardinal doctrines of our faith must be obscured. There can be no compromise, for compromise always means weakness. Yet, on the other hand, those aspects of the truth which arouse antagonism may well be kept to the last; and all truth must be presented, as far as possible, from a favorable viewpoint. An

admirable illustration of the wisest method is to be found in St. Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost when he begins by speaking of our Lord as a "man approved of God" and yet so carries his argument through, that he is able to close his address with these words, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ." There are so many points of contact between Hinduism and Christianity that it is comparatively easy to start from that which the Hindu admits. For instance, sacrifice, and even vicarious sacrifice, is to him a perfectly familiar idea. It is no uncommon thing in case of serious illness for the friends of the sick one to offer a goat as a sacrifice, beseeching the divinity regarded as the cause of that particular disease to accept this offering in place of the intended victim. An illustration of that sort leads naturally by way of Old Testament ritual up to the cross of the Lord Jesus. Incarnation is a familiar doctrine. It is not a difficult matter, starting with Kṛishṇa or Rām, to lead up to the true incarnation. Indeed, no preacher could ask for a better text than that found in the expected tenth incarnation of Viṣṇu, of whom the Purāṇas say that he is to be a sinless incarnation, in significant distinction from all who have preceded him, is to be born of a virgin, and is to come riding on a white horse to destroy all the wicked with the great sword which he wields. Many a time has the writer of this chapter, starting with this story, told a Hindu audience how true was their prophecy and yet how confusing; assuring them that the Sinless Incarnation had already come, born of the virgin in Bethlehem almost 2,000 years ago; that He was indeed to come again on the



white horse, wielding the sword that was to destroy the wicked; but that His first coming had been for the salvation and not for the destruction of sinners and that all who believe in Him might be saved from the judgment which was to follow His second coming. The fact is that with the many-sidedness and vagueness of Hinduism, the difficulty is not more to avoid arousing antagonism than to avoid securing a superficial and meaningless assent. One great point is to catch and hold attention by means of familiar illustrations. These, however, must be used with caution; because the Oriental mind seems to regard an illustration as an argument, and if your illustration can be turned against you, your opponent feels that he has practically answered your argument.

Starting then with accepted doctrine and using illustrations taken from things familiar, *the preacher's great purpose* is to show how the truth as it is in Jesus includes the doctrine that was made a starting point, and not only meets man's uttermost need, but squares with the character of a holy God.

2. *Christian Self-control*.—The second difficulty is a personal and practical one. How is the missionary to keep his own spirit gentle and winsome under the attacks of interrupting opponents? He will be met by blasphemous reflections upon the character of Christ and gross perversions of whatever truth he is trying to present, and often by absolutely irrelevant objections, introduced purely for the purpose of destroying the effect of the address. The missionary needs to be constantly on his guard, constantly in prayer, constantly reminding himself that it is more important to win men than to confute them. In spite of all his

efforts he will often fail, and the best thing he can do is frankly to acknowledge the wrong. The writer remembers one of not a few such experiences when having lost his temper at a preaching station in the great religious fair at Allahābād, he stopped his address and to the astonishment of the crowd and the all but consternation of the Ārya objector apologized to him for his lack of the Master's spirit. The young Ārya was so impressed by this experience that the very next evening he was found in the church in the city and became a regular attendant at the nightly services. No one who has not passed through the experience can understand how severe the provocation often is, and how great is the need for constant prayer that the spirit of Christ may be exemplified in our preaching and in our lives.

**VI. How shall Objections be Met and Weaknesses Pointed out?—**1. *Polite Insincerity.*—When we come to the question of objections urged against Christianity the situation is a somewhat difficult one, because the commonest attitude is, as already hinted, one of easy-going acquiescence. It is hard to know what to say when the audience cordially approves of everything that one says and is outspoken in its assent; but when this only means that there is a willingness to add Christ to the endless list in the Hindu pantheon, or else means merely the polite insincerity of the Oriental, the missionary is compelled to meet the situation by urging the exclusiveness of the claims of Christ. He must quote, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," and "There is none other name under heaven given among men."

2. *Christianity Regarded as Illiberal.*—These texts are apt to bring a plausible arraignment of Christianity as being so much more narrow and illiberal than Hinduism. This situation can only be met by urging, on the one hand, that loyalty to the truth is more important than liberality, and, on the other, by using some illustration which will appeal to the spirit of caution and self-preservation. You may, for instance, say that if a passenger starting for Rangoon from Calcutta were to find two lines of boats professedly sailing for that point and were to hear from the agents of one that it really did not make any difference which line you took, each was good in its way, and from the agent of the other that the one line was absolutely unseaworthy and the other was the only one that could reach Rangoon, the thoughtful, cautious passenger would throw his spirit of liberality to the winds and inevitably select the line which on either testimony was safe and sure. Hinduism says that all religions are sure and lead to a safe haven. Christ claims to be the only way. The mere spirit of self-preservation ought to lead to Christ.

3. *A Mediator Needless.*—Another difficulty that is sometimes raised, though obviously illogical from the standpoint of the worshippers of myriads of lesser gods and godlings, is that when there is a God to whom we can go direct, there is no need of an intermediary, or mediator. An objector once put it thus: "When we can get at a tree itself, what is the use of introducing branches?" To which the answer immediately suggested itself, moving along the line of the Oriental's attitude toward illustrations already alluded to, that if the tree were tall and its trunk smooth the

best way to climb it would be by the help of a down-reaching branch. The turning of the illustration would of course need to be followed by a simple presentation of the truth that if we were sinless there would be no necessity for a mediator; but that sin having come between us and God there was needed one who would undertake the great work of reconciliation.

In much the same line is the common objection that, assuming the need of intermediaries, each nation has its own, and that while Christ is obviously the right instrumentality for European lands, yet *Rām or Krishna is clearly the Savior for the East*. Two lines of response suggests themselves. God is one; to which even the Hindu will give his consent, not from mere politeness, but from a significant and rarely absent underlying conviction of a supreme God. Not only is God one, but the situation raised by sin is an unspeakably awful one. The very law of economy demands that the supreme instrumentality for the relief of men's need shall be one only, and that that one shall be such a person as God's own Son. On the other hand, it is always good to remind the objector that Christ was neither English nor American. He was a true Oriental, living and dying within the limits of the same continent as the Hindu himself.

4. *The Atonement*.—The most serious objection of all is to the doctrine of atonement. Stated in its boldest form, the objection is that it is wholly unjust and inconceivable that the innocent should suffer instead of, or even in behalf of, the guilty. It is scarcely necessary to say that this is not to be met by a qualifying or paring down of that doctrine. The method of

meeting the objection must of course depend in some measure upon the character of the objector and the surrounding circumstances. In general the following lines may be helpful. The idea of sacrifice is practically universal, and almost everywhere the element of vicarious suffering is included in it. Hinduism itself, as already intimated, has not a few illustrations of this expiatory idea. The fact that such a method is not unjust may be deduced from the laws of suretyship and of the obligation of bondsmen, matters perfectly familiar under British rule and wholly accepted by the people. The undeniable fact is to be adduced that in nature, which is another name for what God does, suffering for one another is the commonest thing in the world,—suffering which is vicarious, the innocent suffering not only with, but to the advantage and even relief of the guilty. The divinity of Christ, with the exalted value that it gives to His sufferings in our behalf, is to be urged. The illustration of the large number of copper coins balanced by a silver coin is a crude one, to be sure, but may often serve to catch the attention and relieve the difficulty of the street group that refuses to believe that the atonement of Christ could avail for the whole world. Finally, it may be shown that while on the one hand the sacrifice of the Lamb of God makes atonement for the sins of the world, on the other hand it meets man's moral need by both attracting him to God and giving him the highest motive for obedience and holiness. It need hardly be added that with the constantly varying aspect of the objection, constant wisdom is needed which can be provided by no skill or suggestions of men. It is a blessed relief to be able to fall back upon the promise,

“ It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.”

5. *Presenting Weaknesses.*—How to present most wisely the weaknesses and evils of Hinduism is a scarcely less important question. In general, this line of approach is to be avoided in public address, and even in private interviews it is to be used with caution. To attack Hinduism is to put the Hindu on the defensive. You can hardly fail to repel him. The experienced missionary often has to curb at this point the zeal of native preachers, especially if they be comparatively recent converts. The proclamation of the positive doctrines of Christianity, of the sinfulness of sin, of the love of God for sinners,—always a new thought to the Hindu,—of the vicarious atonement, and of a future life of personal fellowship with God, will of itself suggest the weaknesses of the old faith. Tirade and invective are never in place. Even in private conversation, the exposure of the evils of Hinduism must be made in a spirit of sympathy and love, and ever as wholly secondary to the positive presentation of the truth.

**VII. How Follow up the Work?—**1. *Private Interviews.*—The allowing of discussion at the time of an address is rarely wise. It almost invariably leads to confusion, if not to bitterness. It may be possible to talk immediately afterward with a few who are obviously interested and who linger to ask questions. More often the best course is to invite anyone interested to visit you and question you next day at your own house, or offer to visit him at his house. If he comes, press the matter above all of personal need and of Christ's power to supply that need. Try to get

him to let you pray with him. If possible, get him to pray himself with you. The one thing is to bring him into personal contact with the Lord Jesus.

2. *Literature.*—If the man interested can read, use literature freely, above all, the Bible. It is never well to give away either tracts—except cheap hand-bills—or Scripture portions in public; but when a man is interested enough to come and see you, this rule may safely be relaxed. Be familiar not only with the most effective Scripture passages, but with the most useful books and tracts. The printed page will say over and over again to the man what you can say only once; and it can say it to his family and friends as well. The writer never went home happier from an evening's preaching than when he had given away hundreds of effective hand-bills, or sold a goodly number of tracts and Gospels.

3. *Prayer.*—One other point need hardly be emphasized. Interviews are to be followed up by prayer. God can follow where you cannot. Results are in His hands. Pray before the interview, pray as you talk, follow it up with prayer. If there is anything that the missionary supremely needs, it is the sense of being in partnership with God.