

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA

By

SIR GEORGE ANDERSON, C.S.I., C.I.E.,

FORMERLY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, PUNJAB

and

THE RT. REV. HENRY WHITEHEAD, D.D.,

FORMERLY BISHOP OF MADRAS

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NOTE

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnote references :—

- i. Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India (Lindsay Commission) . L.R.
- ii. Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (Linlithgow Commission) A.R.
- iii. Report of the Indian Military College Committee (Chetwode Committee) I.M.C.R.
- iv. Review of the Growth of Education in British India by the Auxiliary Committee appointed by the Indian Statutory Commission (Hartog Committee) H.R.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE main purpose of this book is to discuss the part that the Christian Church can usefully and legitimately play at the present time in Indian education. We are not concerned with ideals for a distant future, but with the practical needs of our own time. We have to take into account the fact that Christian education in India, especially in its higher branches, is mainly supported by missionary societies in Great Britain, the continent of Europe and America, whose resources are limited and whose main objective in all mission-fields is the establishment of indigenous Churches. It is not primarily their business to educate the peoples of India. They are concerned with education only so far as it subserves their chief purpose.

The subject has recently been inquired into by two important Commissions sent to India

by the missionary societies of Great Britain and America. One of these was appointed in 1919, with the Rev. A. G. Fraser, then Principal of Trinity College, Kandy, as chairman, to make a survey of the educational needs of Indian villages; and the other in 1929, with Dr. A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, as chairman, "to review the field of service open to the Christian colleges under present conditions in India and to suggest ways in which the available resources of the Church can be more effectively used for this purpose."

The recommendations of the Fraser Commission have been generally accepted and, so far as funds have been available, largely acted upon. But those of the Lindsay Commission have just been published and are now under discussion. As they deal with questions far more controversial than those with which the Fraser Commission were concerned, they are not likely to be so readily accepted. We have therefore devoted a large portion of this book to a careful examination of the Report and its recommendations.

It will not, we hope, be deemed pre-

sumptuous on our part if, at the outset, we express our sense of the great service that the Commission have done to the missionary cause by their exceedingly lucid and able review both of the revolutionary changes that have taken place during the last fifty years among the intelligentsia in India, and also of the difficulties under which the Christian colleges have in recent years carried on their work. It is a very great gain in discussing the question to have the relevant facts and the problems to be solved clearly stated by so competent an authority.

CHAPTER II

THE PRESENT POSITION

(i) *The genesis of the Commission*

BEFORE discussing the report of the Lindsay Commission, it is important to remember its genesis. The very appointment of the Commission was promoted by the desire of the educational missionaries themselves as expressed in a resolution passed by an influential conference of Indian Christian and missionary educators held at Agra in February, 1929, at which a large majority of the leading Christian colleges were represented. The concluding portion of the resolution ran as follows :—

“ The call¹ of the hour is, therefore, for a prompt, comprehensive, thorough, even radical reconstruction of Christian educational policy in the light of the above situation and of our resources. There must be

¹ L. R., pp. 4-5.

a readiness to pool resources both of personnel and of money, and to sacrifice, for the sake of a grander ultimate achievement, educational institutions which have had a noble history and are still rendering good service. But no sacrifice can be too great if on a far-sighted view this is seen to be the only way in which Christian colleges can retain their leadership in Indian education.

“The policy of co-ordination and concentration which it seems a plain duty to devise and carry out must necessitate sacrifices which will entail so much pain and even heart-break for missionaries more immediately concerned that judicious decisions cannot be hoped for without the assistance of a dispassionate judgment of minds which have no personal interests at stake. This Conference, therefore, records its conviction that a small but weighty Commission should be appointed to make a tour of India next cool season and, in consultation with those engaged in Christian education in India, to make up a scheme of co-ordination and concentration. This would involve a study of colleges and universities, and of high schools so far as a consideration of the latter is essential to an understanding of the main problem.”

It is evident, therefore, that the educational missionaries themselves were already aware of many of the defects recorded in the report, which are due very largely to causes beyond their control; and that they felt outside guidance to be imperative in the task of reviewing the system within which they are working and by which they are chained, and of planning the future of missionary educational enterprise in India. Unfortunately, it was inevitable that the scope of the Commission should have been limited to a review of the Christian colleges, and that a consideration of the other fields of missionary educational enterprise should have been removed from their purview; and thus the task of the missionary societies is wider than was that of the Commission. The Commission have offered most valuable advice by which the colleges may be improved both in efficiency and in scope, but it is for the missionary societies now to survey the whole field of missionary enterprise in India, and to decide the directions in which the available resources can be put to the best purpose.

A reading of the report indicates that there is a widespread feeling of disappoint-

ment in the Christian colleges as now circumstanced, and that the causes of that disappointment are not due to shortcomings on the part of the missionaries themselves, but rather to the fact that, in a time of rapid change, the system within which they are working has proved too much for the attainment of their ideals. We shall now try to summarise the causes of this disappointment.

(ii) *The paucity of Indian Christian tutors and students*

In 1921-22, the C.M.S. delegation commented on the paucity of Christian teachers in their report :—“ The essential¹ thing in mission education is the creation of a Christian atmosphere in its institutions. At the present time, our schools and colleges are so numerous that we have not got, nor can we conceivably get, a sufficiency of Christian teachers, either Indian or English, to create this essential atmosphere.” And this observation applies to the students as well as to the tutors. The account of the Christian colleges given in

¹ Report of Church Missionary Society's Delegation to India (1921-22), p. 38.

the Lindsay Report shows clearly that this fundamental defect is still common to nearly all the arts colleges for men. We have prepared from the figures given in the appendices to the report the following summary, which affords a general idea of the position in the 32 arts colleges for men in India in regard to these important matters.

	Staff.				Students.		
	European.	Indian Christian.	Non-Christian.	Total.	Christian.	Non-Christian.	Total.
North (including Bombay)	77	100	250	427	447	7,642	8,089
South (including Burma)	60	109	143	312	1,159	3,224	4,383
Total	137	209	393	739	1,606	10,866	12,472

The position is thus less unfavourable in the south than it is in the north and in the west, but even in the south the percentage of Christians on the staffs is only 54, and that of Christian students on the rolls only 26. In the north the percentage of Christian students is less than 6, and that of members of the staff only 42. And the paucity of Christian students is far more pronounced in

some of the larger colleges in northern India. "It is easy¹ to see," wrote the Commission, "how difficult it must be for the Christian atmosphere of a college to be maintained when it has only 37 Christians on its rolls out of 1063. This position is made still more difficult when the staff is also preponderatingly non-Christian."

(iii) *Deterioration in educational efficiency*

There is, again, an uneasy feeling that in the matter of educational efficiency the Christian colleges have not the same pre-eminence that they had forty or fifty years ago. The report quotes Dr. Hogg, Principal of the Madras Christian College, on this point. Writing of his own institution, he says: "It² is difficult to resist the impression that there has already been a decline, not to the second-rate, but to a lower relative status than the college formerly occupied." Judged by the scholastic attainments of its best pupils and the percentage of passes in the university examinations, the College "can claim³ no pre-eminence," while in respect of equipment and

¹ L. R., p. 15.

² L. R., p. 80.

³ L. R., p. 81.

the variety of subjects it provides in its curriculum, "it not only lags far behind the Government Presidency College, but has other serious rivals." And Dr. Hogg is of opinion that the Christian colleges as a body are in a similar position. "Under¹ the great pioneers Christian education, besides being Christian, was foremost in educational quality, as it still is in the case of girls. Nowadays, in the men's field it is at the best only a little better in educational quality than what is supplied in non-missionary colleges, and much of it falls far below its best." Professor Corley of the same college, in his answers to the questionnaire of the Commission, said frankly that he did not think that the best use was being made of the "picked men" who form the staffs of the Christian colleges by putting them into college work as things are and as they are likely to be, apart from some definite change of policy. "With² the judgments expressed in these quotations," wrote the Commission, "we entirely agree."

This disappointing state of affairs is not due to any apathy on the part of the staffs,

¹ L. R., p. 81.

² L. R., p. 82.

but rather to the fact that in most, if not in all, of the colleges the staffs are sadly deficient, in numbers and possibly also in the educational qualifications of some of their members. As has been observed by the Commission, the staff of a Christian college has much more work, as well as more exacting work, than that of a purely secular institution; and there are a number of activities outside the classroom in which the Christian tutors in particular should engage themselves. It is necessary to bear in mind the demand that these activities make not only on the time of the Christian tutors, but also on their moral and spiritual energies. It is through these activities that the Christian witness has to be borne in the face of indifference, inertia and latent antagonism, if not of active opposition. If this work is to be done well, it imposes a great strain on the Christian staff. If it is not done well, it is not worth doing at all. Moreover, in present conditions this extra burden falls upon half, or less than half, of the tutors, as in the larger number of men's colleges the proportion of non-Christian tutors varies from 40 to 60 per cent. In view of these considera-

tions, the proposal¹ of the Commission that there should be on an average one tutor for every twelve students does not seem to be in any way over-generous, but the figures show that in the north the present proportion is one tutor to every nineteen students, and in the south one to every fourteen students. In the whole of India the tutors are in the proportion of one to every seventeen students. It is inevitable that if (as seems likely in a time of financial depression) this proportion becomes even more unfavourable, then the colleges will lose still more in educational prestige. On this ground alone a drastic policy of concentration is clearly indicated.

(iv) *The University connection*

It did not fall strictly within the terms of reference to the Commission to inquire into the fundamental defects of the university system in India, nor would it have been possible for them to undertake this task in the time at their disposal. At the same time, the nature and value of the system of higher education that has grown up during the last

¹ L. R., p. 208.

eighty years under British rule has an important bearing upon the question how far Christian colleges can usefully co-operate with the universities. The Commission dealt briefly with the history and character of the universities in Chapter IV of the Report. But it will be well to consider rather more fully what are the defects of the system with which the colleges are striving to co-operate; and it is all the more important to do so because the report rightly and decisively condemns what is called "the opportunity theory." The missionaries do not regard the secular teaching which they give merely as affording an opportunity for teaching Christian truth to a certain number of the intelligentsia. They have "from the first been concerned with the welfare of Indian higher education, have played a large part in directing it, have given and are giving unstinted service to it for its own sake." And even if (as appears to be the case) many of them do hold "the opportunity theory," "the¹ instrument of opportunities must be something in itself intrinsically worth while. No medical missionary would give

¹ L. R., p. 77.

medical treatment or advice in which he did not believe because more patients would accept bad than would accept good medical treatment, and because he would by denying what he believed as a doctor have more opportunity of teaching what he believed as a Christian. Men cannot go on doing bad educational work because it gives them good Christian opportunities." The question, therefore, as to the value of higher education as now given in India is all-important, and it is unfortunate that the Commission were precluded from discussing it more fully than has been done in the report.

As has been pointed out in the report, there is a strong feeling that the university machinery by which collegiate work is regulated has an injurious effect. The university regulations in themselves are felt to be hampering and restrictive. Some twelve years ago, the Calcutta University Commission, of which Sir Michael Sadler was chairman, observed with some truth that "since¹ one of the primary duties of a university of this (the affiliating) type is to make regulations, these tend to

¹ L. R., p. 91.

become extremely elaborate, and the freedom of the teacher tends to be proportionately restricted"; and they stigmatised the University of Calcutta as having "achieved a dead level of uniformity unknown elsewhere in the world, certainly outside India." The Calcutta Commission went on to contend that the hands of the better colleges are needlessly and mischievously tied, and that there is a tendency to make all the affiliated colleges "wooden models turned out to a pattern in accordance with the regulations of the university."

There is much difference of opinion as to the extent of the evil caused by these regulations, but the position varies very much in the different universities. In a small university such as Delhi or Nagpur a Christian college still has a large voice in determining the university regulations, and a college tutor working in one of these universities has described the regulations as "on the whole helpful." On the other hand, in the larger affiliating universities such as Calcutta or Madras the Christian colleges have far less influence, and their work is apt to be regulated in accordance with the limited capacity of the weaker colleges.

It is easy to exaggerate the mischief done by these regulations in restricting the freedom of the tutors. The long lists of optional subjects prescribed for the several university examinations indicate that there is available to students a wide (possibly too wide) selection of subjects of study; and it is scarcely open to argument that wise methods of teaching are actually forbidden or prevented by the regulations. The universities cannot do much more in this respect than to try and prevent (possibly without success) inordinately large classes in the colleges, and to insist on a reasonable minimum of accommodation and equipment. University inspection, again, is usually carried out in a somewhat perfunctory manner, and the constant reiteration of the same recommendations in successive reports suggests that the colleges are not unduly exercised in mind by the criticisms of the university. Indeed, a large number of the valuable suggestions made by the Commission could be carried out at once without any fear of contravening the regulations.

(v) *The enslavement of the tutors and students*

The truth is that the root of the evil lies far deeper than in the regulations. By far the greatest and the most pernicious of the limitations imposed by the system is not due to the regulations of the universities, but to the character, the outlook and the aims of the great mass of the students. We reproduce below a memorandum by an experienced and judicious college tutor, which was laid before the Commission :—

“ The limitations¹ in the way of our realising more ideal methods are to be found not so much in anything imposed by the University or by Government, as in the character of our students and staff and the limitations of financial support.

“ The poverty of the average student and the economic pressure upon him result in a concentration on the aim of passing an examination in the shortest possible time. An educational institution must provide the means for this—unless it is to cater only for the idle rich—and will be judged by

¹ L. R., p. 90.

results. Hence the lectures, the dictated notes, the ready-made answers to examination questions, and all the other stock-in-trade of the 'successful teacher'; and students who learn to do little and to think little for themselves.

"It is only gradually, and by patient effort, that this can be changed; and it must be changed not merely in a few isolated mission schools and colleges, but through the influence of these in the raising of the general level.

"The chief need is not for protests against restrictions, but for a financial support and a supply of qualified men which will make it possible for the institutions to restrict the numbers of their students (being largely independent of fee-income, which at present we are not), and to strengthen the staff in proportion."

There will be much agreement with the Commission that this memorandum is "on¹ the whole the fairest statement of the position"; and it graphically describes conditions which are only too familiar to all who have had personal experience of college work in India.

¹ L. R., p. 90.

It is this "enslavement of the teachers" that is the fundamental and fatal vice of Indian universities as at present constituted. It is not the universities that demoralise the minds of the students, but rather the minds of the students that vitiate the universities; and this is far more difficult to cure than any defects in the machinery of the universities. However good the machinery, it cannot bring forth good results so long as it works on this slave mentality. No wonder that, as the Commission observe, "many¹ of the teachers in our colleges feel that they are asked to take part in a system which has little educational value, which does not encourage the life of learning but kills it, which is so dominated by a desire for individual advancement that those who are taught in it cannot possibly listen to the teachings of the Gospel."

We are ourselves convinced that there is an urgent need of concentration of effort with a view to ensuring a greater efficiency in a smaller number of colleges, but at the same time we are compelled to go further and to ask ourselves the question whether, in these

¹ L. R., p. 88.

depressing circumstances, the colleges could make much headway even if their staffs were enlarged and improved and even if additional financial support were forthcoming.

(vi) *Inefficiency of the Schools*

It would be interesting to know why so many students who, as little boys, had shown brightness, intelligence and initiative, have become shrouded by this slave mentality, why they depend so much on the dictated notes and on memorised information, and why they have so limited and so material an outlook on life that an appointment to some minor post in Government service has become to the large majority the be-all and the end-all of university education.

The Indian boy suffers from the most serious handicaps through his lack of good schooling. On many occasions, and by many people who are competent to express an opinion, have these distressing limitations been brought to light. Some twelve years ago, the Calcutta University Commission painted a lurid picture of the secondary schools in Bengal and showed how the unsatisfactory condition of those

schools rendered extremely difficult the task of improving the University of Calcutta. In more recent years the Hartog Committee, while recognising that there had been progress in some of the Indian secondary schools, notably in the average capacity of the body of teachers, in their improved conditions of service and training, and in the attempts to widen the general activities of school life, were yet of opinion that “there¹ are grave defects of organisation. The whole system of secondary education is still dominated by the ideal that every boy who enters a secondary school should prepare himself for the university; and the immense number of failures at Matriculation and in the university examinations indicate a great waste of effort. Such attempts as have been made to provide industrial and vocational training have little contact with the educational system and are largely infructuous.”

Even more recently still, the Indian Military College Committee voiced similar opinions :—

“The financial² resources of the schools are often inadequate; the schools are

¹ H. R., p. 345.

² I. M. C. R., p. 4.

sometimes overcrowded by boys who are unable to benefit by the training, as shown by the large proportion of failures at Matriculation (which is a lenient test); the pupils are overstrained by being expected from an early age to study an excessive number of languages; and the use of English as a medium of instruction is a very serious handicap to a proper understanding of the subjects of study and to a quickening of the intelligence of the pupils, while even in the collegiate stage many students are so deficient in English that they are unable to follow the lectures which are delivered in that language."

With regard to the final remarks made in this extract, it is beyond the scope of this book to discuss the controversial questions of language teaching in the whole system of higher education in India, but it is pertinent to the present issue to question the wisdom of overburdening young boys in the schools with a large number of language subjects, and, still more, of teaching them through the medium of a foreign language. In any case, the results of these peculiar practices are far from satisfactory.

Unfortunately, the Lindsay Commission had perforce to confine themselves to a consideration of high school questions only in so far as they were related to particular college policies, and they “made¹ no detailed study of the problem of secondary education.” But they “found universal agreement in the opinion that the education provided by the missions for Christian boys is far inferior to that which they provide for Christian girls. This is particularly true in the case of the schools for those boys who are qualified by upbringing and ability to become leaders in the Church or community.” They went on to contend that “if it² be true, and we think it to be true, that the Christian colleges have been to a considerable extent enslaved to the educational machine, we think that there can be no doubt that it is even more true of the Christian city high schools. We have not been able to make a close enough study of the problem to deal with it in any detail, but we think it right that the attention of the Board should be drawn to what seems to us a very serious weakness in the present missionary

¹ L. R., p. 256.

² L. R., p. 257.

educational practice." Though, therefore, they felt themselves precluded from offering definite opinions on the subject, it is apparent that they did not think highly of the educational machine; and it is not unreasonable to expect that had they been able to devote more time to the matter, they would have arrived at opinions similar to those which have been quoted above.

There seems, therefore, to be very general agreement that the universities, of which the Christian colleges form a part, are based on a most insecure and unsatisfactory foundation of school education. The large majority of the schools are miserably financed and are dependent almost entirely on the fee-receipts with the result that there is serious overcrowding and a sad loss of teaching efficiency. The buildings are often inadequate; libraries and equipment are starved; the facilities for the training of teachers in many of the provinces are inadequate to meet the demand; the teachers are often poorly paid and their conditions of service are insecure; and opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation are often non-existent.

(vii) *The lure of Matriculation*

The root evil, however, lies still deeper. We are ourselves in agreement with the Hartog Committee in their belief that "the whole system of secondary education is still dominated by the ideal that every boy who enters a secondary school should prepare himself for the university." It is for this reason that the schools are overcrowded and their purpose blunted by the presence of large numbers of boys who are unfitted for this form of training, and who, by their continuance in the schools, must inevitably swell the volume of middle-class unemployment (a phenomenon which has exercised the minds of more than one Government and which is rapidly increasing in intensity), and also dislocate the teaching and other arrangements of the schools.

Why is it that the Matriculation makes so strong an appeal? There can be little doubt that the main attraction of the Matriculation and of the college life beyond to Indian boys who have no taste for academic studies and insufficient capacity for pursuing them, is the

insistence by Government and other employers on a university qualification as a passport to service even in a very minor post. This is the lure which tempts boys to pursue the time-honoured and formerly profitable path of climbing to academic heights which have now become barren. So long as this unfortunate practice continues, there is little hope that the present outlook of the students will be altered or that the schools can be improved to any marked degree. Is it too much to expect that, with the assistance of the Public Service Commission, Government will find it possible to make more suitable arrangements for Service recruitment and will depend far less than they now do on the university examinations? It should not be difficult to institute an examination other than Matriculation which would be the test of admission to the minor and clerical posts, and also to arrange separate and suitable courses of training for the boys who desire to pass that examination and to start their careers in Government service in a minor capacity. It is one thing for a boy to strive to obtain that equipment of a good general education

which is the essential foundation of a university education, but it is another thing for a boy to strive to gain the necessary technique and qualities which go to make a good clerk; but in the present system both these objects are jumbled up together with the result that the universities rarely get good students and the Government rarely gets good clerks.

(viii) *Short duration of School Life*

It may be argued, perhaps, that in the past many Indians have fought against these difficulties and have won through to eminence in the world, and that the Christian colleges could make a wise selection so that only those boys who seem likely to profit by university education shall be admitted to the colleges. Unfortunately, apart from the fact that the colleges are compelled to admit boys who are unsuitably qualified by the fear that a reduction in the fee-receipts would soon land them in bankruptcy, this avenue of approach is largely frustrated by the very early age at which the brighter boys now pass Matriculation. The

Indian Military College Committee touched on this point in their report :—

“ There¹ does not seem to us a sufficient guarantee that boys have always received an adequate schooling in what are usually considered to be the basic subjects of school education. Such general education should be given in a good and well-regulated school, but we observe that many boys pass Matriculation at the early age of fifteen (or even younger) and then proceed to a college. They thus lose the bracing stimulus of school life, and are denied suitable training in those qualities which are so valuable to success in life. However beneficial it may be in other directions, a college education is no substitute for good school education (with its school discipline, its school games, and its school methods of work) for boys who are on the threshold of professional study.”

In short, the number of students in the colleges has rapidly increased; a very large proportion of them are unfitted for university education; a large proportion of the remainder

¹ I. M. C. R., p. 4.

are as yet too young and immature to receive university education; others, again, are ill at ease in an urban environment; and all are handicapped by an inferior type of school education. Moreover, the very improvements which have been made in the schools have resulted in the brighter boys passing Matriculation at an earlier age than they would have done some years back. The enslavement of the students and, consequently, of the tutors, is the inevitable result. The students are incapable of receiving instruction by university methods; and the unwieldy numbers prevent the adoption of school methods of teaching, apart from the fact that it would be difficult to introduce school methods into a college.

In a word, the enslavement of the student must continue until such time as good schools have been created, until the brighter boys are retained in those schools up to a later age in life, and until large numbers of the boys now enrolled in the secondary schools have been provided with more suitable training elsewhere in a more suitable environment.

(ix) *Dissociation*

Another serious evil of the present system of education is that it is almost entirely out of touch with the lives, the needs and the thoughts of the mass of the people. Indeed, it is also out of touch with the family and social life of the communities in the towns. There is much force in the contention of Mr. A. I. Mayhew that "the efficiency of any system of education depends not only on the nature of its aims, but also on the character of the community to which it is to be applied. That community ought to be inspired, vaguely and subconsciously perhaps, by the same aims and ideas as the controlling and responsible agents of the system."

This is certainly not the case in India. From an educational point of view, one of the most serious evils of the whole system of university education and of the high school education which precedes it is the dissociation which it produces among the great mass of the students between their college life and their home life. The founders of the

system had confident expectation that in a few years the ideals of the universities and the schools would become the ideals of the communities from which the students came; but that hope has not been fulfilled. Higher education has created a wide gulf between the intelligentsia and the mass of the people, a gulf that has grown wider and wider as the years go by. How to reverse the process, how to bridge the gulf, is perhaps the most important question that educationists in India have to face.

(x) *A duality of purpose*

Another serious defect of the Christian colleges, largely arising out of the enslavement of the students, is their duality of purpose. A college cannot serve two masters. In order to be efficient, it must have a unified purpose. The college authorities should have a clear vision of what they are aiming at, and should be free to adopt what they consider to be the best means of achieving that end; and (a very important consideration) the students should approve both the means and the end. The main purpose of the Christian

colleges in India is to make the students good Christians, to build up their lives on the basis of the Way, the Truth and the Life revealed in Jesus Christ, or to prepare the way for Christ; but they are not free to adopt the methods best calculated to achieve this end. The universities, of which they form a part and to which they are subordinate, have no such purpose. They are completely indifferent and neutral as regards religion.

Ideally, the secular teaching and the religious training should have the same purpose; and they had the same purpose in the days of Dr. Duff. But at the present time, according to the report, there is "a real¹ diversity between the educational and the missionary purpose of the Christian colleges." Dr. Miller described the Scriptures as the "spear-head" and all other knowledge as "the well-fitted handle" of his system; but, in practice, in the minds of the students the two are separate spears, and to the large majority the secular knowledge is the effective instrument and the Scriptures a broken reed. Even in the minds of the Christian tutors

¹ L. R., p. 87.

themselves there is a "real diversity" between the two purposes. "Most¹ colleges," say the Commission, "in so far as they have any clear conception of what they are doing, are working on 'the opportunity theory.' The educational work of the colleges is done because it provides the Christian tutors with the opportunity of religious teaching and influence."

The Commission urge that it is essential for the colleges to recover their singleness of aim if they are to make their full contribution to the Indian universities. This is true; but from the missionary point of view it is even more important to emphasise the fact that this singleness of aim is essential if the colleges are to play their part in the building up of Christian students in Christian life and character or in preparing the way of the Lord in the minds and hearts of Hindus and Moslems. It is true that in spite of this duality of purpose the Christian colleges do, and have done, much good to individual students and to the universities themselves; but so long as it remains, it is and must be a fatal hindrance to the fulfilment of their main purpose.

¹ L. R., p. 87.

(xi) *Lack of contact with the Indian Church*

A final defect noticed in the report is that “the ¹ colleges have too long been out of relation with the Indian Church.” The system of Christian colleges and high schools was started a hundred years ago by Dr. Duff with a view to the conversion of Hindus and Moslems to faith in Christ; and that has been their main objective ever since. But the confident expectations of Dr. Duff and his immediate successors that the system would lead to the speedy conversion of large numbers to Christianity was not fulfilled. And thus in the days of Dr. Miller, during the latter part of the last century, the idea of converting students to faith in Christ gave way to the idea of preparing the way for the Gospel in the minds of the non-Christian intelligentsia, and of leading them to take a Christian view of the world and of human life, apart from a definite faith in Christ. But owing to the rapid growth of the Christian Church, especially in the villages, during the last fifty years a new objective has loomed on the horizon. “There are now,” says the report, “all over India,

¹ L. R., p. 112.

and especially in the south, colleges whose manifest duty is in the first place to the Christian population round about them." And in these "special¹ attention must be given to the care of Christians. It is fully recognised nowadays that there is nothing that matters so much for the future of Christianity in this land as the health of the Church."

One of the subjects, therefore, upon which the judgment of the Commission was expressly requested in their terms of reference was "the extent to which the colleges are contributing to the upbuilding and strengthening of the Churches." "This has always been recognised," says the report, "as one of the main objectives." But Dr. Miller and others viewed it "as² secondary, as almost a by-product of its work for non-Christians." Dr. Miller was afraid that "educational advancement and the higher position to which education leads" would become "the sole or chief object of the desire to be Christian." This danger undoubtedly exists, and necessarily must exist in institutions where the large majority of the students are enslaved to a narrow utilitarian-

¹ L. R., p. 112.

² L. R., p. 113.

ism. But the Commission urge that this danger must be faced. "There is¹ no function that the Christian college performs at the present time in India that is more important, nor any that has more significance for the coming of the Kingdom of God to that land, than this of strengthening the fibre of the Christian people, in serving them in all their highest interests, of inspiring and equipping them for their calling as witnesses to India of what Christ is and what He can do for men."

(xii) *Conclusion*

Such then, in our opinion, is the present position of the Christian colleges in India; and such are the tremendous difficulties by which they are now faced. Some of these difficulties, it is true, may be overcome by patient effort and by liberal financial support; but we are firm in our belief that the root cause of the present discontents, the enslavement of the students, cannot be removed by such means alone. The vital question which we would ask is whether missionary societies

¹ L. R., p. 114.

should continue to bolster up the very system by which the young men of India are being enslaved, or whether they should seek other and better means of rescuing them from their enslavement. In the next chapter we shall discuss the proposals of the Commission; and in the following chapter we shall offer our own proposals.

CHAPTER III

THE PROPOSALS OF THE COMMISSION

(i) *The work of extension and research*

THE study of the defects of the existing university system and of the present work of the Christian colleges as subordinate parts of this system forced on the Commission the following questions :—

(a) How¹ are we to counter the effect of pressure of examinations on the most carefully chosen curriculum ?

(b) How are we to give to our colleges the power of initiative and experiment, without which their co-operation in the Indian university system may easily distort their distinctive purpose ?

(c) How are we to work out in the concrete for Indian purposes the principles which should inspire education in a Christian college ?

¹ L. R., p. 159.

The Commission were of opinion that these questions would more easily be answered by asking two more questions :—

(a) How are we to give the teachers in our colleges a sphere where they may use to the full their zest for discovery and their power of initiative ?

(b) How are we to cure that other defect of the Christian colleges, their isolation from most of the work of the Christian Church ?

In attempting to answer these further questions, the Commission pointed out that whereas “ the ¹ picked men in the colleges have to work under conditions where many of their gifts, their special knowledge, their power of research find no scope,” the Christian Church is “ continually ² faced with religious, social, economic and political problems which its workers are dealing with separately in comparative isolation and with little knowledge of what is being done elsewhere. It has recently begun, as we have seen, to build up what might be called organs of research and dissemination of knowledge. It has organ-

¹ L. R., p. 160.

² L. R., p. 161.

ised a system of theological seminaries and colleges, but it is doing all this largely without reference to the mission colleges." Their answer to the questions, therefore, was: "We¹ can do so by giving the teachers in our colleges new functions independent of their prescribed university tasks, and by uniting them more closely with the rest of the Christian enterprise. These functions we designate for convenience as those of extension and research."

The Commission gave the following examples of the type of subjects with which the colleges might deal: the methods of stating the Christian message under the new conditions of India; the problems of the teacher and the study of educational problems generally; a combined plan of Christian literature; the economic and social problems of the village community; problems connected with the rise of industrialism and the growing power of finance; the political development of India; art and the drama. It was hoped that this work of extension and research would be the means of establishing co-operation "between² the colleges and the workers in the

¹ L. R., p. 159.

² L. R., p. 163.

field." It was not intended that the scope of this new activity should be limited to the Christian Church, because "there¹ is much work to be done in India for all communities which the Christian Church so equipped can do." The Commission were also definite in the opinion that research into these questions should not be academic, but should be determined "by² the actual needs of the community." The college tutors are to seek "to answer the questions which the community is asking, and their answers should be conveyed to the men who are going to use them and apply them." This does not mean that college tutors should go round giving "extension lectures" to the villagers, but that the pastors and teachers who are doing the work should go to the college teachers, propound their problems, receive the answers, and then go and apply what they have learned in town and village.

This project "to add to the Christian colleges the two new functions of extension and research" is regarded by the Commission as the central part of their plan for

¹ L. R., p. 163.

² L. R., p. 162.

the reform of the colleges, and as such it deserves the most careful examination on the part of the missionary societies and of all who are interested in higher education in India. It is a most attractive ideal, and the Commission have done a great service to the whole Christian Church in India by putting it in the forefront of their scheme and by representing the right development of the Christian Church as the pivot on which all Christian educational activities should turn.

But the question must be asked whether the plan proposed by the Commission will do much to remedy the present defects in the colleges. It may be that the actual teaching of some subjects in the colleges will become more real through this contact with practical problems on the part of the tutors, and that the tutors themselves will have a better understanding of the conditions in which their students live; but will the undertaking of this new work of extension and research alter the hard stubborn facts of the enslavement of the students to examinations and to their own economic needs? And, again, so long as about 80 per cent. or more

of the students are non-Christians, will they be in harmony with the desire to make the Christian colleges "institutions¹ in which scholars and teachers can make their characteristic contribution to the Christian movement in India"?

The few Indian Christian students might be enthusiastic about this ideal, but, while studying for their examinations, they could take little part in the work of extension and research outside the college life. Indeed, the object of this new work, as described in the report, seems designed to cure the dissatisfaction felt by the Christian tutors with their conditions of work and to enable them to make some contribution to the life of the Christian Church rather than to remedy the evils and defects of the colleges themselves. The enslavement of the students, the unsuitability of the curriculum, the duality of purpose would still remain. Indeed, the latter evil would even be intensified by becoming a trinity instead of a duality. Would not the tacking on of these new outside functions to the work of the tutors inside the colleges

¹ L. R., p. 165.

be like putting a patch of new undressed cloth on to an old garment? There is a danger that the two will not agree and that a worse rent will be made.

The further question must be asked whether the Christian colleges can become the means of fulfilling the ideal propounded by the Commission. There can be little doubt that as the Christian Church grows, it greatly needs able and thoughtful leaders who can bring trained minds and sound learning to bear upon the solution of its many problems, but it may reasonably be doubted whether college tutors who are already fully engaged in college work and are resident in towns and cities are the men best fitted to undertake this work. It must be remembered that about 90 per cent. of the Indian Christians are in the villages, not in the towns. The Indian Church is mainly a village Church, its problems of education, economics and industry are almost entirely village problems. The men who have to solve these problems should have an intimate knowledge of village life and conditions, they must know the villagers, understand their ways and modes of life, and sympathise with

their needs and difficulties. A few exceptional men from among the college tutors might be able to acquire this knowledge and sympathy by visits to country districts while devoting their energy and attention to the scholastic work in the colleges; but as a rule the work of thinking out and forming a judgment on the problems of the Church in the villages must be done by men who live among the village folk, speak their language, and thoroughly understand their life and difficulties.

While, therefore, the college tutors could do much useful work for the Christian Church as well as for the non-Christian communities by undertaking social service in the towns or in their vicinity where the colleges are located, and by sharing in the evangelistic work and in the social and religious life generally of the town congregations, it is more than doubtful whether as a body they could usefully undertake this larger and more difficult work which the Commission contemplate. The question, then, that needs anxious consideration is how this larger and wider ideal can best be realised. It would not have a fair chance of success if it were

merely tacked on to a system which has a totally different outlook, a different atmosphere, and a different purpose. We firmly believe that it can be realised, though not in the way that the Commission propose. We shall offer our suggestions in the next chapter.

(ii) *The reform of the colleges*

The Commission have made other proposals and recommendations which deal directly with the life and work of the colleges themselves. Admirable advice is given on matters which concern their religious character and influence, the fostering of a corporate life among the students and teachers, the influence of the witness to Christianity borne by "the¹ relationship of Christian friendship, by the activities of Christian service and by the spiritual rewards that come from Christian devotion." The influence of the college Chapel and of the Scripture teaching is strongly emphasised, and several recommendations are given on these important aspects of college life that will be of great service to the authorities.

With a view to the achievement of these

¹ L. R., p. 179.

objects two important proposals were made by the Commission, which need careful consideration. They recommended, in the first place, that there should be a large increase in the staffs of nearly all the arts colleges for men; and, in the second place, that the proportion of Indian Christian to non-Christian tutors should be largely increased, especially in the colleges of the north and west of India.

In the previous chapter we discussed these important matters and showed by means of a statistical table that the present position in these respects is by no means satisfactory. We would again draw attention to the fact that the proportion of tutors to students in the north is one to nineteen, that in the south one to fourteen, and that in the whole of India one to seventeen. Bearing in mind the additional duties that fall to a Christian staff working in a Christian college, it is evident that large additions to the staffs of nearly all the colleges are essential; and that if the proposals of the Commission in the matter of extension and research are to be carried out, still further additions will be required. The insufficiency of the staffs as a

whole can be remedied by the simple process of appointing more tutors if funds permit (a serious qualification, which will be discussed in a later section of this chapter), but such action would render even more adverse the already small proportion of Indian Christian tutors on the staffs. We would therefore draw attention again to the figures which show that in the north there are only 100 Indian Christian tutors out of a total of 427, and that in the south there are only 109 out of a total of 312. If, therefore, the proportion of Indian Christian tutors to the existing staffs is to be improved, then a larger number of such tutors should be appointed. If, again, the proportion of tutors to students is to be increased (as should be done), then a still larger number of Indian Christian tutors will be required.

But we are here faced by the stubborn fact that well-qualified Indian Christian tutors are not available in such large numbers. Both in north and south, but especially in the north, the college authorities have tried hard for many years past to recruit more Indian Christians on their staffs, but without much success. The fact is that the supply of Christians is

strictly limited. It is little use advising the college authorities, especially in northern India, to recruit a larger number of Indian Christians on their staffs. Try as they may, they cannot create at will the necessary tutors. We therefore cordially agree with the Commission that "quite¹ definite steps be taken to increase the supply. It is not sufficient for the colleges to wait until the supply increases by natural development. They must get together and take concerted action to increase it. Promising students must be selected and enabled to undergo courses of advanced study in the institutions which are best qualified to train them." We also agree with the proposal to institute research or post-graduate studentships as a useful means of retaining for academic work promising students for whom no university post is available immediately on their taking their degree. Similarly, the practice of sending experienced Indian Christian tutors to Britain or America for specialised study is rightly commended. But all this will take time and money; and in the interval the present defects will be intensified.

We have been unable to find in the report any definite recommendation as to what should be the correct percentage of Christian students in a Christian college, but throughout the report there is evident an earnest desire that the colleges shall be "informed¹ with an active spirit of Christian devotion." In their discussion of the women's colleges, however, the definite recommendation was made that the present proportion of Christian to non-Christian students should as far as possible be maintained so that there shall be at least a majority of Christian students. As has already been pointed out, the present percentage of Christian students in the men's colleges is only about 6 in the north and 26 in the south, and about 12 in the whole of India. It may fairly be assumed that the Commission were of opinion that a far larger percentage of Christian students is essential to the fulfilment of the main purpose of the men's colleges. But we are again faced by the stubborn fact that the supply of these students is strictly limited, especially in the north. With a view to finding out whether

¹ L. R., p. 178.

the supply could be increased, the Commission were well-advised in reviewing the conditions in which most of the Indian Christian boys receive their schooling in the large city mission schools. They came to the conclusion, discussed in the previous chapter, that most of these schools are by no means satisfactory and that much better schools should be provided. In other words, a larger supply of well-qualified Indian Christian students cannot be expected in any marked degree until the schools in which they receive their preliminary training have been much improved. This essential reform will again take much time and money to carry out; in the meantime, the main purpose of the colleges will continue to be blunted by the great paucity of Christian students.

Another important recommendation of the Commission was that "the size¹ of the college and the organisation of the college community, the relation of the Christian teachers of the college with their students and with each other, all the occupations and the environment of those who live and work together in

¹ L. R., p. 180.

the college, should be so determined as to give opportunity for Christianity to be demonstrated through action and life. In this way, a Christian atmosphere can be created which will help to make the Christian teaching intelligible and to reveal its reality and significance." For this purpose the smaller colleges should be careful to keep their enrolment below the limit where a real corporate life becomes impossible, and the larger colleges should be organised in smaller units to be called Halls; and each Hall should accommodate from 150 to 200 students, and be itself subdivided into hostels, each accommodating about fifty students. In these proposals the Commission assumed that "the¹ colleges will be mainly residential." But in making this assumption (with which we ourselves are in complete agreement), the Commission seem to have overlooked the fact that at present most of the colleges are mainly non-residential. It is unfortunate that no figures are included in the report to show the number of resident and non-resident students in each college, but our contention can scarcely

¹ L. R., p. 192.

be challenged by the facts and figures. If, therefore, the colleges are to become "mainly residential," then the numbers in most of them must be largely reduced; and the further question arises whether some of the colleges will attract a sufficient number of resident students to render their continuance worth while.

(iii) *Finance*

What will it cost? This is the grim question that must always be asked whenever any new scheme of missionary work is proposed; and at a time of severe financial depression all over the world, when nearly all the missionary societies are faced with heavy deficits, the question becomes all the more insistent. The Commission admit that their plan will be costly, but the facts and statistics contained in the report give only a slight conception of the burden which the missionary societies will have to shoulder if the plan proposed by the Commission is adopted.

It is necessary first to examine the cost of the colleges at the present time. The statistics given in Appendix III of the report show that,

when they were compiled, the sums received during the current year by all the Christian arts colleges for men and women, including one training college for teachers, were as follows :—

	Rupees.	£. ¹
Government grants	777,976	60,000
Fees	1,630,168	125,000
Grants from Home Boards or Societies in Great Britain and America	1,095,827	84,300
Other sources	321,402	24,700
Total	3,825,373	294,000

¹ At the rate of thirteen rupees to a pound.

It is assumed that “other sources” include donations sent directly to colleges by friends at home, interest on endowments which were originally raised in Europe or America, and smaller amounts given by friends in India. If this assumption is correct, then the total amount supplied annually by the Home Churches and their congregations is rather more than £100,000; and this does not include the interest on the large sum sunk in land, buildings and equipment. It would be very

difficult, if not impossible, to make an estimate of the total capital expenditure in the past. The Commission did not attempt the task. The fact, however, that the authorities of the Madras Christian College have recently made an appeal for £100,000 for the purpose of rebuilding this institution as a residential college on a new site given by Government outside the city of Madras, indicates that the total capital expenditure in the past represents a very large sum of money.

The missionary societies are already faced by the depressing task of considering means whereby even the present annual expenditure shall be reduced; but the new plan of the Commission would add greatly to that expenditure. Large additions to the staffs of nearly every college are already required, and the proposal of the Commission to add to the work in the colleges the new work of extension and research would increase still further this financial burden.

Before even they began this new work, the college tutors would have to acquire a thorough knowledge of a vernacular or vernaculars; and they would also need a sound knowledge

of the life, customs, social conditions and mentality of the village folk in the areas in which they were to carry out their researches. And when we read in Appendix I of the report the list of subjects which these researches should cover, we begin to realise, though dimly, the very large amount of time and energy which these researches would involve. It is very doubtful whether this work could be carried on at all in combination with college work; but it is certain that it could not be done efficiently unless large additions were made to the college staffs for the purpose.

Bearing in mind all these considerations, and bearing in mind also the already urgent need of improving the equipment and libraries of the colleges and the loss of fee-income through a reduced enrolment, it is evident that the future annual expenditure of the colleges which will fall to the agencies at home to meet will amount to £200,000 instead of £100,000 as at present. Indeed, this enhanced figure may well be an under-estimate. In addition, large additional capital expenditure will be involved. According to the Commission, some of the colleges need to be transferred to more

suitable places; others need considerable additions and improvements of their buildings; many of them will require new Halls and other forms of residential accommodation.

Then, again, the Commission endorse the statements of the Sadler Commission discussed above as to the urgent need for a much better type of high school. There will be general agreement with the contention that it is little use to reform and improve the colleges unless there is a corresponding improvement in the schools which prepare boys for admission to the colleges. The Commission refer to Trinity College, Kandy, in Ceylon and to the Baring High School at Batala in the Punjab as illustrations of the type of school needed. "Such¹ schools," add the Commission, "will be expensive, although when established we have little doubt that they can expect a very considerable fee-income." This question of the high schools is very important and needs anxious consideration by the missionary societies. We are only concerned here to point out that the reform of the schools must be dealt with in close connection with the

¹ L. R., p. 262.

reform of the colleges, and that, as the report says, it will be expensive.

Then, again, the Commission have also made the valuable proposal that the missionary societies should engage in the important work of training teachers for service in the high schools. We shall not attempt the task even of suggesting what will be the cost of carrying out this proposal, but again the cost will be considerable.

The impression which this brief review of the financial situation leaves on our minds is that it will be necessary on financial grounds alone to reduce the quantity of university education given in the Christian colleges for men far more drastically than the Commission contemplated.

(iv) *Concentration*

As we read the report, the arguments and discussions would appear to lead inevitably to a drastic policy of concentration. The need of more adequate buildings by many of the colleges, the necessity of making large additions to the staffs, the importance of employing a larger proportion of Indian Chris-

tians on the staffs and the present difficulty of finding suitable recruits from among the members of that community, the paucity of Indian Christian students, the non-residential character of most of the colleges, and above all the sad realities of the present financial situation, all point conclusively to the necessity of carrying out such a policy of concentration. Moreover, the difficult situation in which the several college authorities are now placed through the peculiar and distressing conditions of student life has been faithfully pictured in the report and leads to the same conclusion. If the colleges are to continue, they must be good and therefore expensive. A few good colleges would be of far greater value than a large number of under-staffed and poorly-equipped colleges. It should also be remembered that, in the resolution passed at Agra in 1929, the educational missionaries themselves expressed the deliberate opinion that "the call¹ of the hour is for a prompt, comprehensive, thorough, even radical reconsideration of Christian educational policy . . . and that there must be a readiness to pool

¹ L. R., pp. 4-5.

resources both of personnel and money, and to sacrifice, for the sake of a grander ultimate achievement, educational institutions which have had a noble history and are still rendering good service."

It would appear from the general chapters of the report that the Commission held similar views, but, unfortunately in our opinion, when they came to details their courage seems to have left them. In the chapter of the report which deals with individual colleges, the Commission have recommended the closing of only two colleges in the north and of four in the south, thus leaving a total of 26 colleges for men. We therefore regard this chapter as a *non sequitur* to those which preceded it. Indeed, we would go so far as to urge that this chapter, with its somewhat detailed proposals for each individual college, will prove a great embarrassment to the missionary societies in their difficult task of reviewing the whole range of missionary educational activities and of adjusting their future policy to the stern realities of the present financial position.

The Commission have explained their appar-

ent inconsistency by the discovery that, "while¹ certain economies were possible along this line (of consolidation or transfer of existing institutions), and our plan takes account of them wherever practicable, they were less than we had supposed. It must be remembered that two-thirds of the income of the mission colleges comes from untransferable sources (namely, fees and Government grants); and that when consolidation seems called for, there are unavoidable obligations (*e.g.* provision for a high school or intermediate college, provision for bonuses or pensions for members of the staff, mortgages on buildings which have been erected with Government assistance, etc.) that reduce the amount of probable saving."

It would be interesting to know what inquiries were made by the Commission before they gave this disappointing opinion to the missionary societies. There is no record of any discussions with Government officials as to whether the grants and mortgages are really "untransferable." For example, it is stated in the report that the Director of Public Instruction of the United Provinces brought to

¹ L. R., p. 360.

the notice of the Commission the urgent need of wider facilities for the training of teachers in that province, and that he himself suggested to the Commission the advisability of the missions taking a part in supplying that need. This being the case, it would not be unreasonable to expect that that official would be glad to support the proposal of a missionary society that an arts college should be converted into a training college (with a good school attached), and that the grant now given to the arts college should be transferred (or even enhanced) to the training college or, indeed, to any other approved purpose. It might also have been worth while to inquire whether Government or any other body would be likely to purchase some of the property now used by missions for the purpose of arts colleges. In the Punjab alone in recent years, Government has purchased from religious bodies property at the price of about Rs. 10 lakhs, or nearly £80,000. Again, it is doubtful whether bonuses or pensions would necessarily have to be paid on the closing of an institution to the staffs, as the services of many of them would be required elsewhere;

and the staffs themselves would probably be glad to serve in more effective institutions.

This aspect of the problem deserves far more consideration than it received at the hands of the Commission. We are of opinion that much more money could be saved or even gained by a well-thought-out policy of concentration than the Commission have suggested; and, in any case, it would be of benefit to utilise what can be saved for more effective purposes. Even if it be admitted for the sake of argument that little money could be saved by such a policy, the Commission themselves have urged that many improvements are required in these colleges, but it is only by closing colleges that the money for these essential improvements can be found.

It is also a matter for regret that the Commission have not discussed in the report the question of fees. As there is no statement of fee-rates levied in the several colleges, it is not possible to offer any definite opinion; but it would be worth while considering whether the fees could not be raised, as is being done in many Government and other institutions.

(v) Organisation and administration

The Commission were faced by many difficulties in considering the future organisation and administration of the colleges, and they wisely tried first to establish certain principles which would guide their actual recommendations. In the first place, they pointed out that “the present¹ control of the mission boards in America and in Britain is greater in college education than in any other part of the Christian enterprise”; and they expressed the belief that “it is² essential that the Christian colleges, while retaining their Christian character, should be the expression of Indian thought and should command the loyalty and call forth the responsibility of the Indian Christian teachers.” For this purpose they proposed that “at³ the earliest possible moment the government of the Christian colleges should be transferred from the mission boards to boards of direction functioning in India.” It was suggested, as a general model for the government of a Christian college, that there should be two chief governing bodies.

¹ L. R., p. 194. ² L. R., p. 199. ³ L. R., p. 199.

The first of these was designated a Board of Direction, which would consist mainly of persons not on the staff of the college, but representative of the general Christian enterprise. The Board should include only Christian members, and the number of Indian Christians should be equal at least to the number of non-Indians. The second of these governing bodies was termed the Staff Governing Body, which would consist only of members of the staff, but not of all. In suggesting the composition of this body, the Commission were faced by the difficulty that, in many of the colleges, the number of Indian Christian teachers on the staffs is very small. They had therefore to be content with proposing that, for the present, the number of Indian Christians on each Staff Governing Body should be at least equal to the number of non-Indian Christians, and that the number of non-Christians should never be "more¹ than a small proportion—we suggest one-fifth—of the total membership."

The Commission did not go into detail in defining the powers and duties of these two

¹ L. R., p. 206.

authorities. While the powers of the Staff Governing Body should be mainly "those of initiative," the Board of Direction should have the power of electing and dismissing the Principal, of passing the budget, and of confirming staff appointments; and the administration of the property should be the responsibility of the Board. The Commission felt that it would facilitate these arrangements if the Mission Boards adopted the practice of giving block grants, and left to the Boards of Direction the task of fixing salaries, allowances, etc. Periodical reports on the religious life of the colleges should be prepared by the Principal, and the Board should meet with the Staff Governing Body annually in order to discuss these reports.

The Commission have also drawn attention to the dangers of the present position, in which the several missions and colleges are working too much in isolation and apart from each other; and they have represented the need of central authorities, whose task it would be to co-ordinate educational programmes as between the several centres, to collect information as to available men both in India and

abroad, and to prepare a report of the needs which can only be met through the co-operation of the home authorities. The constitution of such authorities, both in India and overseas, is therefore proposed. In India the co-ordinating authority should be a part of, or directly responsible to, the National Christian Council, and its main duty should be to review and to prepare reports on the whole enterprise of Christian higher education in India. Such an agency would also be invaluable by being in a position to represent the united opinions of the colleges to Government, the universities and the general public on each important question as it arose. The Commission also endorsed the proposal made by a conference held in Bombay towards the end of their inquiry that Provincial Councils should be set up in order to consider the general policy of Christian education in colleges and high schools in each area, and generally to assist the National Christian Council in carrying out the duties proposed for them by the Commission.

In considering the present system of administration now obtaining in Britain and America,

the Commission felt, and rightly, that there are many defects. In view of the fact that missionary administration is now carried out by a number of boards and agencies, a unified appeal either for men or for funds is rendered very difficult; and, in present circumstances, there is no direct way of approach to a large number of people to whom the needs of the Christian people might make a strong appeal. A further defect of the present system is that as the mission colleges form a relatively subordinate part of the total mission programmes, it is difficult for those in charge of mission interests to give to educational matters the concentrated attention which they deserve. As a remedy for these defects, the Commission hoped that the co-ordinating authorities which they proposed in Britain and America would be useful, and that those authorities would provide for "a¹ systematic study of Christian higher education in India by competent and reliable persons."

There will be general agreement with the main principles enunciated by the Commission. It is indeed essential that the colleges should

¹ L. R., p. 352.

become "the expression of the initiative and responsibility of Indian Christians," but at the same time we would repeat the warning that it will be difficult to carry out the proposals of the Commission in this respect until a larger number of Indian Christians are found, who will be competent both to teach and to administer the colleges. There will also be agreement with the criticism passed by the Commission that the colleges work too much in isolation, and that there is a need of reviewing the requirements of India as a whole and of framing a wise and a practical policy of development. This need is by no means confined to missionary activities. The Hartog Committee rightly urged that it is the waste and ineffectiveness of the educational systems in India which are so baffling: "Money¹ is no doubt essential, but even more essential is a well-directed policy carried out by effective and competent agencies determined to eliminate waste of all kinds." And the failure of the secular authorities in India to do so makes it all the more necessary for the missions to formulate for their own needs a well-defined

¹ H. R., p. 346.

policy and to take steps whereby that policy shall be carried out.

At the same time, it is doubtful whether the steps proposed by the Commission are the best calculated to attain these objectives. In the first place, the proposed organisation with its multiplicity of authorities, administrative, executive and advisory, appear to be somewhat cumbrous. There is a danger that, with a complicated machinery, an excessive amount of time and thought will be required before even the best of proposals could be brought to fruition. In the next place, the ultimate responsibility should be fixed on the authorities who find the money. But while the bulk of it is found by the societies, who feel themselves responsible to their constituents for what is done and taught in the colleges, in the plan proposed by the Commission control is to be transferred to the Boards of Direction functioning in India, who find very little of the money. It appears, therefore, that the proposals of the Commission, though well conceived, do not go far enough in the right direction. We shall return to this matter in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

(i) *A re-direction of missionary activities*

WE have indicated our general agreement with the picture which the Commission have drawn of the present position of the colleges, but we are even more pessimistic than they were as to the baneful results arising from the connection of the colleges with the existing system. We have therefore discussed in some detail the causes of that slave mentality, which afflicts the student world in India and which renders it so difficult for the colleges to make any real impress on the hearts and minds of the students. The dictated notes, the memorised information, the material outlook are the symptoms rather than the causes of this serious malady. The root cause, as we have tried to show, lies in the fact not only that the secondary schools are overwhelmed by large numbers of boys who are

unable to benefit by that form of training, but also that practically all the boys in the schools, whatever be their present capacity or their future prospects, make it their sole purpose to prepare themselves for the Matriculation examination. Hence the ever-increasing number of students in the colleges; hence the large proportion of students for whom the dictated notes and so forth are, and can be, the only means of instruction in a college; hence the enslavement!

The Commission were tied very largely by their terms of reference, which limited their inquiry in practice to the present condition of the colleges and to the best means of improving them and of extending their scope. They made a laudable attempt to do so, and have done great service to the cause of Christian education in India by the valuable and stimulating suggestions which they have offered. But there seems little likelihood of finding a satisfactory remedy for the present discontents within the existing system, amid the difficulties and complexities which they themselves have described. It is not unlikely that the Commission would have held a

similar opinion had their scope of inquiry been extended, and had they been able to make a closer examination of the conditions in the schools and of other fields of mission work. It is at least significant that what may well appear to have been their most promising and constructive proposals are contained in the chapter of the report, which deals with matters outside the colleges and is therefore beyond a strict interpretation of their terms of reference.

At the same time, though we are pessimistic in regard to the position and prospects of the men's colleges, we are optimistic in the belief that there now lies before the missionary societies a fertile field of service in India, if only they will seek spheres of activity which are not inextricably entangled in the present system. The Christian missions have done a great service to India in the past by maintaining high schools and colleges, but, as the Commission have shown in an admirable chapter of their report entitled "Changing India," times and conditions are now changing with bewildering rapidity. The economic pressure has become far more severe on the

student community, the growth of the Nationalist Movement has concentrated the interests of students very largely on politics, and their minds have become hardened against religious influences. Moreover, India is now covered with a network of high schools and colleges, with the result that the quantitative expansion of higher education is very great, if not excessive. While we do not advocate a total withdrawal from the field of university education, we are strongly of opinion that the quality of the contribution made by the missionary societies is of far greater importance than the quantity; and it also behoves the societies to make their distinctive contribution in other directions where they will be able to plan and to act with far greater freedom than is now possible.

It is mainly for these reasons that we have been driven irresistibly to three main conclusions :—

(i) For the last fifty years or more, the men's colleges have not fulfilled the purpose for which they were originally established, namely, that of bringing Hindus and Moslems to faith in Christ; nor are they now

in a position effectively to fulfil the purpose either of preparing the minds of non-Christian students for the reception of Christian truth, or of providing an opportunity of teaching them the Gospel of Christ.

(ii) The one purpose for which the colleges, either for men or for women, should be maintained is the building up of the Christian Church; and only so far as they are useful for that purpose can their continuance be justified. A truly Christian atmosphere is therefore essential; and this is not possible unless a very large proportion of tutors and students are Christians. For this reason alone the number of Christian colleges should be very drastically reduced. ✓

(iii) The true line of development is in the villages. The Christian Church has been growing rapidly in the villages during the last seventy years, and it is in the villages that the Church has most need of leadership. The societies should therefore concentrate their resources more and more upon the type of education which is best calculated to provide leaders who will serve the Church in the villages.

(ii) Concentration of colleges

We are keenly anxious that we shall not be interpreted as underrating in any way the importance of college work. There is still a call to the Church to bear the witness of Christian teaching and service to the student world, and the renunciation of the idea that Christian scholarship and learning have a significant and momentous contribution to make to the life and thought of India would be a tragedy. But, to carry out this ideal effectively, the colleges must be strong and well-supported, and, above all, they must be thoroughly Christian.

We therefore suggest that there should be a far more drastic policy of concentration of colleges than has been proposed by the Commission; and that the degree of concentration depends upon a variety of considerations. The number of Christian tutors and students in proportion to the total number of tutors and students should be such as will render possible a truly Christian atmosphere; the proportion of tutors to students should be such as will promote a real efficiency of study

and teaching; the colleges should be mainly residential; and the total expenditure should be within the resources that are likely to be available. In addition, the students in the colleges should be such as give promise of benefiting by university training in a Christian college.

We agree with the Commission that a truly Christian atmosphere cannot be expected in the colleges unless there is a large percentage of Christian tutors and students, and suggest that the percentage of Christian students should be at least 50, and that as far as possible the staffs should be entirely Christian.

The figures attached to the report show that, at the time of compilation, there were 12,472 students on the rolls of the 32 Christian arts colleges for men. The number of Christian students enrolled in these colleges was reported by the Commission to be 1606. Assuming (a big assumption) that all these students were considered suitable for admission to the colleges to be retained, the total number of non-Christian students in the colleges should not be more than 1600. This would give a total enrolment of 3200 students.

In regard to the tutors, the statistics show that there were 346 Christian tutors (Indians and non-Indians combined) out of a total of 739; and we have already expressed agreement with the opinion largely held that it would be difficult at present to expect a much larger number of suitably qualified Indian Christian tutors. If, therefore, the Commission's proposal that tutors and students should be in a proportion of one to twelve is accepted, then the existing number of Christian tutors would be sufficient for about 4000 students, but it should be borne in mind that a large number of Christian graduates will be required to undertake work in the training colleges, and in the improved type of high schools which, as we shall suggest later, are essential to the well-being of the colleges.

On both these grounds the number of students should not exceed 4000 for the present. Thus, the number of arts colleges must inevitably be reduced to about eight in all. Some, such as the Madras Christian College, the Wilson College in Bombay, and the Forman Christian College in Lahore, would exceed an enrolment of 500 students, while

others, notably St. Stephen's, Delhi, would probably prefer to continue the present policy of restricting enrolment very far below that figure.

It is possible, however, in view of future developments, that even this reduced figure of 4000 students may have been pitched too high. If the colleges, as the Commission have suggested, are made mainly residential, this will almost certainly lead to a large reduction in the number of students. Then, again, the adoption of a higher standard of admission will have the same result. And, though it is difficult to forecast the future, there is a growing feeling in India that the recommendation of the Sadler Commission in favour of the transfer of the Intermediate students from the colleges should be carried out. This has only been done so far in a few cases, and not always in favourable circumstances. Should this policy be widely adopted in connection with a reform of the schools, then the effect on the enrolment of the colleges will be very considerable.

There is also the question of finance. It has already been estimated that the amount

annually provided by the Home Churches, whether directly by grants from the Home Boards or indirectly from "other sources," is a sum which approximates £100,000. It is by no means certain whether, in the present state of financial depression, the Churches will be able to devote this large sum annually to higher education without neglecting work of even greater urgency. But assuming that they are able to do so, the question that must be answered is what amount of college education can be given for this sum? It is difficult to estimate the cost of an efficiently conducted college as the necessary data are not at our disposal. Thus, we can give only rough figures.

At present, the Madras Christian College (with an enrolment of nearly 800 students) receives about Rs. 60,000 or nearly £5000 from the Home Boards and from "other sources." But the staff is at present in a proportion of one to 19 students, and therefore considerable additions are required to restore efficiency; and further sums should be provided for scholarships and stipends to some of the students who will be drafted from

the colleges to be closed, especially to the Christian students. When the additional expenditure involved by a residential college is taken into account, it appears that the support from the Home Churches in one form or another should be a sum not far below £10,000 a year.

The Forman Christian College, Lahore, receives annually from the Home Boards and from "other sources" a sum of Rs. 90,000 or £7000, but the staff is at present in a proportion of one to 23 students. Even if the number of students were reduced from 1063 to a maximum of 800, the present staff would be only in a proportion of one to 17 students and would still need considerable additions, while the fee-income would be reduced. The main reason why in this respect this college compares unfavourably with the Madras Christian College is that it receives in Government grants only Rs. 21,677 as against Rs. 53,114 by the Madras Christian College. It therefore appears that the Forman Christian College would require considerably more than £10,000 a year to be placed on a sound footing.

The Scottish Churches College, Calcutta, re-

ceives from Home and "other sources" nearly Rs. 90,000 or £7000 a year. But the staff is at present in the proportion of less than one to every 37 students. Even if the number of students be reduced from 1305 to a maximum of 800, the proportion will still be only one to 22, while the fee-income would be considerably reduced. It thus appears that the sum required from Home and "other sources" will be nearer £20,000 than £10,000 to place this college in a satisfactory position.

The Wilson College, Bombay, receives about Rs. 76,000 or a little less than £6000 a year from the Home Boards and from "other sources," but the staff is in a proportion of only one to every 46 students, and thus considerable additions involving large additional expenditure are required.

On the other hand, some of the smaller colleges appear to be already in a state of reasonable efficiency. St. Stephen's College, Delhi, with its 312 students, receives about Rs. 40,000 or rather more than £3000 a year from the Home Boards and from "other sources," and its staff of 22 members is in a proportion of one to 15 students. Very

little additional expenditure seems to be required.

The Union Christian College at Alwaye, again, is situated in the midst of the ancient Syrian Christian Churches at Travancore. It “represents¹ an enterprise undertaken by a group of Syrian Christians with the aim of awakening the missionary spirit of these Churches and uniting their members in the service of the nation. The ‘Brotherhood’ who guide this college have set before themselves high ideals of self-dedication and service.” There will be general agreement with the Commission that “the fact that the college is under Indian control and is the result of Indian initiative is a further reason why it should be encouraged in every possible way.” The College receives no Government grant, but is supported by a sum of Rs. 20,321 from “other sources.” It is also assisted by the Church Missionary Society, which maintains a missionary on the staff. There are 337 students with 23 members on the staff, or about one tutor to every 13 students.

¹ L. R., pp. 298-9.

We fully realise that important and human problems such as are involved in the future of Christian colleges in India cannot be decided merely by mathematical calculations, that students and tutors cannot be moved about like pawns on a chessboard, that prospects of furthering the Gospel of Christ should not be lightly abandoned. At the same time, the arguments which we have brought forward appear to be conclusive that, in present circumstances, it is not possible to maintain more than eight good colleges for men in India; and we are convinced that this smaller number of colleges would be infinitely more effective than the continuance of a much larger number of poorly supported colleges. We have not sufficient experience of local conditions throughout India to offer definite opinions as to which of the colleges should be retained and strengthened, but for the purpose of illustration we suggest that the eight colleges should be distributed as equally as possible in the more important linguistic areas. These are Calcutta, Delhi, Lahore, Rangoon, Madras, Bombay, Alwaye and Bezwada.

It will not be an easy task to dispose of

the buildings and property of the colleges which are to be closed, but it should not be as difficult as the Commission appear to have assumed. If a well-devised policy of reconstruction is placed before Government, it is not unreasonable to expect that in many cases the present grants would be placed at the disposal of the missionary societies for the purpose of carrying out that policy. It is possible that some of the buildings could be sold to Government or to other suitable purchasers, but others will be required for other purposes. The first duty of the missionary societies will be to provide that the admirable and promising women's colleges are all properly housed. Indeed, it may well be that more women's colleges should be opened. There is also the future of theological training to be considered. But it is also our contention that even the strengthened colleges will fail in their purpose unless they are supported by some really good schools; and that the schools themselves will also fail unless they are supported by a few training colleges. These new enterprises will require buildings. It is also possible that some of the property situated in the smaller towns

might provide a nucleus for centres of village education, which we describe later.

(iii) *Organisation and administration*

We have already expressed our agreement with the Commission that, as far as possible, the organisation and administration of Christian higher education in India should be transferred to Boards functioning in India, and that the colleges should become more and more "the expression of the initiative and responsibility of Indian Christians"; and also that as there is a danger of the colleges working too much in isolation and separate from each other, there is a need of co-ordinating authorities, which will work out schemes of progress in large areas and which will be in a position to voice the opinions of the colleges as a whole before Government and other authorities. At the same time, the arrangements proposed by the Commission seem unduly cumbrous, and there is also objection to divorcing control from those who are responsible for finding the money. In our opinion, therefore, the Commission did not go far enough in the right direction. It would be better to bring about

a complete severance of the colleges and high schools from the missionary societies and to transfer them to the new Boards which the Commission propose to be set up. There is much force in the contention of the Commission that the appeal for higher education in the mission field might receive good response from many who do not ordinarily contribute towards the other activities of mission work.

But it would be unwise to carry out such a proposal immediately and to transfer the valuable property and all that it means to bodies largely inexperienced in this form of management. It is for the missionary societies first to carry out a policy of concentration such as has been proposed, and to give a new direction to missionary education in India. When once that is done, it may be that the task of organisation and administration will not be as difficult or as complicated as now appears to be the case. In other words, it is difficult to forecast the future until reconstruction has been carried out. That is the next step.

(iv) *The education of women and girls*

We shall now indicate the other directions in which the Church can make its most distinctive contribution to Indian education. In the first place, we are in agreement with the Commission that “there¹ is no more pressing need or more inspiring opportunity in the present educational system in India than that presented by women’s education.” Here, then, is one of the great opportunities which now lie before the missionary societies! The Commission have reported what is generally known and recognised in India, that the small women’s colleges, with their large proportion of Christian teachers, are doing excellent work; that they “owe² their present peculiarly strong position, which enables them to exercise so fine a Christian influence, in large measure to the fact that they have a majority of Christian students on their rolls”; and that the mission schools for Christian girls are immeasurably better than the mission schools for Christian boys.

It is to be trusted that the missionary

¹ L. R., p. 254.

² L. R., p. 252.

societies will be heedful of the Commission's warning that "the resources¹ expended on men's education and on women's education respectively do not at all represent the proportion of the needs and opportunities of men's education and of women's education"; and also of their suggestion that there should be earnest consideration of all possible means of rectifying this disproportion.

(v) *The training of teachers*

There is also a rich field of service in the training of teachers. The Commission were of opinion that "the student² in the college suffers from faulty methods of instruction to which he has been subjected in a high school, and, at a yet earlier stage, from the crude and primitive ways of his teacher in the primary school. The whole framework of education is warped by the incompetence of the unskilled and untrained teachers to whom the children have been entrusted at each stage of their education." They therefore felt that in the training of teachers there is "a field of service which Christian colleges have

¹ L. R., pp. 254-5.

² L. R., p. 263.

hitherto neglected and to which they are summoned by the value of the opportunity which it offers as well as by the urgency of the need.”

That there is a need there can be no doubt. The Commission have alluded to the very low standard of teaching which prevails in most of the mission schools, and they have also expressed the opinion that the teaching of religion in those schools is inferior even to the teaching of almost any other subject. In many provinces, again, the facilities for training are so inadequate that the Christian teachers already find it almost impossible to gain admission to the training institutions. That there is an opportunity is also beyond doubt. It is through the teacher that the missions can best exercise a salutary influence on the whole system of education; and it is in the training of teachers that the missions will find the best opportunity of impressing their influence on the personnel of education.

(vi) *The creation of good schools*

There is another valuable suggestion made by the Commission, which should be discussed

in this connection. In speaking of the schooling of boys who are qualified by upbringing or ability to become leaders in the Church or community, they observed that there are

“provinces¹ where the provision for the education of Christian boys of the type that we have in mind is miserably inadequate, and where the demand for a good residential school in which the Christian boys shall not be a mere small minority in a large non-Christian institution has been insistent for years . . . We do not think that there is any more imperative need in the whole of the Christian enterprise in India than the provision for Indian Christian boys of schools such as Christian parents in the West would feel to be satisfactory for the education and training of their own sons.”

It is significant that the need of good schools of this type is also recognised in other quarters. A few years ago, the late Mr. S. R. Das made an appeal for funds towards the creation in India of a school which was to be conducted on the lines of the English public schools, and we understand that his appeal

¹ L. R., pp. 259-60.

received considerable support. The Indian Military College Committee expressed the hope that "the aims¹ of the late Mr. S. R. Das will soon be realised, and that a school or schools of the type desired by him will be established."

We agree with the Lindsay Commission that care should be taken to prevent such schools developing in the boys who attended them any kind of social exclusiveness, and therefore deprecate any rigid imitation of the great public schools in England. At the same time, as has already been urged, the very improvement of the universities depends on a better school foundation than now exists; and there are other and even more important considerations than the improvement of the universities. India is on the eve of a further development in the direction of self-government. However well-devised may be the scheme of that development, it cannot reach full fruition unless the directing classes of the future are suitably trained and educated. Not only must their training be infinitely better than that which is now given in the schools, but it must also

¹ I. M. C. R., p. 5.

be of longer duration. A college education, however good it may be, is no substitute for a good school education for a boy up to about eighteen years of age.

In the maintenance of a school or schools of this type, educational missionaries would find most congenial and inspiring work. They have themselves benefited by such schooling in the days of their youth, and they have clear ideas as to the way in which such a school should be conducted; they would also find in it ample opportunities for the training of character in accordance with Christian principles. In addition, the Christian boys of capacity would grow in stature, and would have instilled in them that training in leadership which is so essential in what are still the pioneer days of the Christian Church in India.

(vii) *The Church and the Village*

By far the largest field of service, however, is in the villages. Let it be remembered once again that the vast bulk of Indian Christians live in the villages, and that the Indian Church is growing with great rapidity in the countryside.

The increase of the Christian community during the last sixty years has been about 33 per cent. in each decade, but the rate of progress in many of the areas has been by no means uniform. As in trench warfare, great advances are often followed by a period of consolidation. Adults and children have to be educated, teachers have to be trained and pastors provided; and the possibility, or rather the advisability, of rapid advance must often depend upon the grants from home societies for this necessary work. But, looking back over a period of sixty years, the progress all along the line has been very striking.

The Census returns show that, during the period of 1871–1901, the increase in the number of Indian Christians was over 113 per cent. as against an increase of less than 15 per cent. for the whole population. In some parts the progress has been phenomenal. In the central districts of the Punjab, for instance, the number increased by almost 300 per cent. within the short space of twenty years. But the sustained advance of Christianity during the last sixty years in the Telegu country (which forms the north-eastern part of the Madras Presi-

dency and the eastern part of the Hyderabad State) is the best illustration of what can be done in village areas. In 1871, there were, according to the Census, only about 22,000 Christians in that area; in 1901, the number had risen to 222,000; in 1931, they were approaching a million. And this growth has taken place almost entirely in village areas, and is due to the conversion of large numbers of the depressed classes to faith in Christ.

What this rapid development during the last sixty years has involved in the sphere of education is illustrated by the following account of the educational work carried out by the Anglican Church, which was given in an address to the Governor of Madras on the occasion of his visit to a town in the diocese of Dornakal in 1927 :—

“ There are now 1300 day schools and 200 night schools working among the Adi-Andra (the depressed classes) in this diocese. In most cases these schools are being conducted against tremendous odds, yet experience shows that perseverance wins in the end. From these schools have come more than 120 priests, 2000 men and women teachers,

besides others who have entered different professions. In 2000 villages, night after night and on Sunday mornings, Christians may be seen wending their way to their churches and chapels for worship, for instruction, and perhaps for offering their gifts. One of the immediate effects of these services may be seen in the cleanliness of their persons, in the tidiness of their dwellings, the joy of their faces, and the effort to break away from bad habits. Something of what all this means to them may be gauged by the fact that they (about 150,000 Christians) contribute annually more than 100,000 rupees (£7500) for the Church's work."

In more recent years, conversion has not been confined to the depressed classes, but has been extended to the caste Hindus. In a charge recently delivered to the diocesan clergy, the Bishop of Dornakal dwelt upon the need of higher standards of education in the diocese in order to enable the Church to deal wisely and effectively with the new and difficult problems presented by the conversion of large numbers of the caste people to Christianity that is now going rapidly forward.

“ These virile castes,” he said, “ exhibit a moral enthusiasm, an intellectual acuteness, a sturdy independence and a reverence for their spiritual teachers that is new in our experience. These qualities, however, constitute a problem. How is the Church to conserve these desirable characteristics and bring them into the service of the Master? The diocese is called to a new study of the Gospel message and the most intelligible and acceptable way of presenting it to the people with whom we have to deal. . . . Some of us may be familiar with the method of presenting the Christian message to the college student and to the English-educated student. A larger number of us may know how to approach the illiterate animist and the worshipper of village gods. But there is need to-day to study the religious beliefs and ethical conceptions behind the mind of our middle-class Sudra brothers and sisters. . . . The study of our vernacular Hindu brethren, however, can only be made by a very intimate contact with our converts and inquirers and with genuine respect and sympathy for their convictions.”

This and similar needs can only be met by great development of higher education in the

village areas, guided and inspired by men and women who devote their lives to the study of village conditions, and of the life and thought of the village folk. How best to establish and extend among the villages of India this higher type of education and thus help to build up strong, independent, self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating Churches and to provide them with the leadership that they need, is the main problem that confronts the missionary societies working in India at the present time. *

(viii) *The Village and Agriculture*

It should also be remembered that the vast bulk of those who live in the villages are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The recent Commission on Agriculture, of which Lord Linlithgow was the chairman, rightly pointed out that the agriculturist lives a simple life in comparative isolation, and that agriculture, more than any other industry, is indissolubly bound up with the lives of the workers.

The Commission also emphasised the importance of village education in the following words:

“ In¹ no profession is the future of the individual worker, however humble his lot, more dependent upon his own skill and judgment, and in none is the possession of a sound elementary education, and of the balanced and progressive outlook that it imparts more likely to prove of advantage. . . . It is essential to the happiness and efficiency of children in the villages that their upbringing should be in harmony with their environment, and to this end it is most desirable that every element in the education they receive in the village schools should draw strength and inspiration from the life of the countryside.”

(ix) *The limitations of Village Education*

In view of these considerations it is at least unfortunate that village education in India has been very largely neglected in the past, and that even at the present day, in spite of great quantitative advancement, it is still very far from satisfactory. Only a few years back the Hartog Committee reported that—

Throughout² the educational system there is waste and ineffectiveness. In the

¹ A. R., p. 513.

² H. R., p. 345.

primary system, which from our point of view should be designed to produce literacy and the capacity to exercise an intelligent vote, the waste is appalling. So far as we can judge, the vast increase in numbers in primary schools produces no commensurate increase in literacy, for only a small proportion of those who are at the primary stage reach Class IV, in which the attainment of literacy may be expected. . . . It is to be remembered that under present conditions of rural life, and with the lack of suitable vernacular literature, a child has very little chance of attaining literacy after leaving school; and, indeed, even for the literate there are many chances of relapse into illiteracy.”

This is a depressing picture, but unhappily it is also true of a very large number of the Christian schools in the villages.

The Hartog Committee also observed that “the wastage¹ in the case of girls is even more serious than in the case of boys. The disparity in education and literacy between women and men so far from decreasing by the effort made is actually increasing.” It

¹ H. R., p. 345.

is not within the scope of this book to discuss at any length the perplexing problems of girls' education in the villages. Not only are the actual facilities for such education inadequate to a degree, not only is there so often absent the desire on the part of parents to have their girls educated, not only are there influences antagonistic to the education of girls, but the very difficulties of maintaining a girls' school in a village are far greater than those that obtain in the boys' schools. The main difficulty is to find teachers. It is comparatively easy now to recruit a number of girls in the several training institutions, but it is well-nigh impossible to make satisfactory arrangements for their living accommodation in the villages in which they will teach. The only solution is to employ village girls, but very few of these have been able to receive sufficient schooling for the task owing to the inadequacy of the schools in the neighbourhood; and so we go round in a vicious circle.

The missions, with their village settlements, with their powers of kindly supervision, with their intimate experience of village life, are almost the only agencies which can hope to

break the vicious circle by building up in suitable places good schools, and by attaching to those schools small training classes which the village girls can attend after the completion of the school course. With these institutions as a nucleus, there arises an entrancing vista of expanding activities, the women's institutes, the welfare societies, the maternity training, and, indeed, all that will improve the lot of the women in the villages and will lead them to the path of progress.

There is another and even more unfortunate aspect of village education in India. In some of the provinces, notably in Bengal and in Bihar, not only is the teaching in the primary schools most inadequate and ineffective, but the village schools contain so few classes or standards that literacy can scarcely be expected even from the pupils who pass out of the schools. The middle vernacular schools, which should be the prop and stay of the villages, have been allowed to reach such a state of decay and are also so few in number that very many of the children who wish to continue their schooling after the completion

of the primary stage are compelled to leave the village and go elsewhere. Indeed, the primary schools are regarded mainly as the first rungs of the ladder leading up to the high schools and colleges in the towns. In consequence, the universities and the secondary schools are sucking from the countryside its best intellect and initiative, and are dissociating the more promising boys and girls from their home life and its surroundings.

It is true, no doubt, that in England and elsewhere the brighter pupils from the villages, with the assistance of scholarships, are now finding their way to the universities in the towns. But the difference between England and India is that English boys and girls are not so dissociated from their old environment as are Indian boys and girls; and there are also available to English graduates avenues of service to the countryside, which maintain contact between town and country. The English universities give at any rate some return to the villages for what they have taken, in the persons of the village parson, the village squire and the village doctor. But such are the deadening and uncomfortable

conditions of village life in India that once a child has left the village for his education in a town, he rarely, if ever, returns to the village, or even takes an interest in its development; and thus there is little guidance or leadership in the villages except what comes from bureaucratic sources.

The Hartog Committee were therefore on right lines in advocating the retention ¹ in the vernacular system (which should be improved and developed) of many of the pupils who now unwisely transfer themselves to the high schools; and we are confirmed in our belief as to the necessity of such action by the great need of a wider and more sympathetic leadership in the villages. What India needs to-day more than anything is a new and a wider system of education in the villages, a system which will be capable of expansion, which will be in harmony with village conditions and requirements, which will train up boys and girls desirous of remaining a part of the village and of spending lives of service to the progress of the countryside.

In the establishment of such a system the

¹ H. R., p. 107.

Church of Christ should take a lead. In the past it has been a pioneer of English education, and it is still a pioneer in women's education. In the immediate future, it should become a pioneer village of education. Moreover, the Church is peculiarly fitted to take a leading part in this great work, partly because it is perhaps the only community which has an organisation for the purpose with a large body of educational leaders mainly drawn from the villagers themselves; but chiefly because the work to be done is essentially a moral and a spiritual work. Village life cannot be regenerated without a radical change in the mentality, the character, the social and religious ideas of the people themselves. There is no other power that can effect this change except the Gospel of Christ.

(x) *Recent developments in Village
Education*

These are not revolutionary proposals, but merely a plea for further and greater support being given to a movement which is already in being. In some of the provinces laudable

efforts are being made to strengthen the system of vernacular education (in which boys are given a suitable education through the medium of a vernacular) in the villages, to increase the number of middle vernacular schools, and to render the teaching more in harmony with the conditions and requirements of the pupils. Care is being taken to ensure that instruction is related to matters which the village child sees and knows and understands. In particular, an attempt is being made in some of the provinces to enrich the course (with the assistance of school farms which are worked by the boys) by the inclusion of agricultural training, the object being to use agriculture as a means of mental discipline and training and as an important accessory to the general subjects taught in the schools. But changes in the curriculum in themselves will be of little avail unless there are at hand a large body of teachers who are in close contact and sympathy with the village folk and who understand the spirit of the New Learning. In this respect also progress has been made. Village boys who have completed the full vernacular courses are given special encouragement to

seek admission to the training institutions (which should be located in suitable rural areas), and are there trained to take an interest and a part in such activities as will lead to the right progress of the villages in which they will serve.

There is thus a beginning, in which the Christian missions have already played a leading part. It was the Fraser Commission who, in their valuable report some twelve years ago, planted the seed of rural reconstruction on the basis of a wisely devised rural educational policy. What is even more inspiring is that, through missionary agencies, the seed has sprouted in many places; at Moga in the Punjab, at the Agricultural Institute at Allahabad, at Medak in the Hyderabad State, at Madura in South India, at Dornakal and elsewhere. It is unfortunate that little is known in England and America about these promising achievements, but those who have seen them have paid a glowing tribute to the successful start which has been made.

We can best make clear our ideas on this subject by describing somewhat at length as an illustration the work and aims of the Middle

and Training School at Moga in the Punjab. It is only one out of many fruitful experiments that have recently been made by the Christian Church in the sphere of village education and rural reconstruction, but it is the most developed and the best known. The school is maintained by the American Presbyterian Mission, and owes much to the late Dr. Ray Carter, the founder, and to his successors, Mr. W. J. McKee¹ and the Rev. A. E. Harper.

The school estate consists of about 55 acres of land, 45 of which are under cultivation, with three wells, two silos and stabling for cattle. The buildings consist of a main school building with nine good classrooms, an industrial and agricultural room, a main hall, library and office; three hostels; quarters for married students; teachers' houses and the headmaster's house; the Principal's house; and a model village school building. The value of the present buildings is about Rs. 1,75,000 or £13,500, a very small expenditure for what

¹ Further information on this subject can be found in *New Schools for Young India*, by W. J. McKee (University of North Carolina Press).

has been done. An interesting and valuable addition to the buildings is the Temple of Health, which has recently been constructed in memory of the little child of the present Principal. It is a model village dispensary, which is widely appreciated by the villagers as well as by the boys.

The staff consists of three missionaries, the Principal, his wife and the Vice-Principal; the Headmaster, who has received theological training; three teachers with Government training certificates; four teachers who have been trained in Moga itself; a trained agricultural master; a carpenter and a tailor, who teach village home industries; and a woman teacher, who teaches in the women's school. The annual expenditure of the school is comparatively small, as practically all its material needs are met by student labour and by the products of the school farm. There are only three servants employed: a gardener who supervises the work in the gardens and fields, an old man who is assistant gardener, and a sweeper.

The enrolment of the school is about 150 boys, of whom about 25 are in the training

class; and the remainder are divided between the primary and middle departments in nearly equal proportions. These figures themselves are an eloquent testimony to the effectiveness of the school. They indicate, in the first place, that the boys respond to the teaching and are glad to remain at school until a much later age than is usual in the ordinary schools; and, in the second place, that the stagnation, which is so unfortunate a feature of most schools in India, does not exist in Moga, and that the boys make good progress from class to class. The pupils are mainly Christians, though non-Christians are sometimes admitted. A women's school is maintained for the wives of the married students and other women of the compound.

In regard to the curriculum and the methods of teaching, the Principal has reported that—

“ Moga ¹ owes much to the encouragement and support of the Department of Education of the Punjab. The school is recognised as an experimental school and

¹ Government of India Occasional Reports: No. 15, pp. 64-8.

is allowed freedom to work out a curriculum suited to rural conditions, and to use methods often radically different from those of the traditional school. The requirements of the Educational Code are, however, fully met. Candidates are sent up for the Vernacular Final examination, and the percentage of successful students has also been excellent. A special examination based on our own courses, is arranged for the student teachers under training; and a special certificate which is recognised as practically equivalent to the Junior Vernacular Training certificate is granted. A grant-in-aid is given for the main school, for the training class, and for the agricultural department; and a capital grant was given towards the construction of the main school building. . . . Besides the ordinary subjects, the curriculum includes nature study, health education, handwork, practical mathematics, more reading and composition, etc. The teachers strive for a minimum of memorising textbook material, and a maximum of observing, discovering, constructing and judging. Moga boys are taught to live a real life in the world in which they find themselves. . . . Boys are given definite agricultural instruction and are taught to use both the

agricultural implements ordinarily in use in the villages as well as improved implements suitable to the country. They are also taught the care of cattle, and the securing and storing of fertilising products.”

In Moga there is essentially that unity of purpose which is so lacking in the arts colleges. The whole institution, whether it be the Principal and his family, or the teachers, or the boys, or even the few menials who are employed, are all knit together by the bond of Christian fellowship and service. The Principal has described that purpose as being

“ to provide an education arising out of the child’s experience and environment, to use his natural impulses and interests with the object of inspiring and preparing him for real community service. Our object is to encourage him to see not only the present needy condition of the village, but also what the village and his own people might become through Christian service, and to realise that he has a peculiar responsibility and privilege in the light of his training to go back and help in their uplift. We cannot claim to have accomplished this objective, but several

things have been achieved. We have succeeded in getting our graduates to go back to the villages; and there is in them an enthusiastic desire to give their time and strength for the uplift of their people.”

This little account of Moga and its ideals will not be complete without further reference to the training class for teachers. The curriculum includes observation and practice of teaching, principles of teaching, child psychology, hygiene, rural social problems, religious education, agriculture, village home industries, village school management. The object of the class is that the teachers shall gain during their training that experience of village problems and activities and that sense of leadership which will enable them to become the prop and stay of those village communities which they will serve.

It is significant that the work at Moga received the highest praise from the Agricultural Commission, who recorded the following opinions :—

“ We ¹ cannot leave the subject of the

¹ A. R., p. 528.

teacher and his training without referring to a movement which offers bright hopes of escape from the difficulties which clog the progress of education. The new scheme for training teachers, which has been worked out by the American Presbyterian Mission at Moga, has been adopted and extended by the Punjab Education Department, and now prevails in every training institution for vernacular teachers in the province. The teachers are trained in community work and service; they are taught to participate in the healthful activities of village life and to put their hands to practical use whenever they can. . . . If, in the past, the deficiencies of the teacher have been an important cause of the failure of the expensive efforts to spread primary education, it may well be that the training of his successor on new lines may prove to be an important factor in achieving success. This system of training at Moga is but one example of the valuable pioneering and experimental work accomplished by missions, to which education in India owes so great a debt."

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We are confident that it is in these direc-

tions that the missionary societies will find their full scope, free from the entanglements of the vicious system to which they are now in bondage, and full of infinite possibilities of building up that spirit of leadership in the Church which is so essential to its development. It is probable that, with regard to this subject of village education, the Commission on Mass Movements will make important recommendations which will be based on a thorough investigation into the needs of the Church in the mass-movement areas. We refrain, therefore, from making any more detailed suggestions for the present, but we look forward in the future to village universities, rooted in village life, with a curriculum of sciences and branches of knowledge that bear on village life and industry, with tutors and students who have their outlook on the villages and are inspired by the same purpose.

This pioneer work would be a most valuable instrument for the building up and extension of the Christian Church. It would also prove the greatest service which the peoples of Great Britain and America can render to India during the coming years. A Christian Church

educated to live and work in the spirit of its Master would not live its life in selfish isolation, but would be the servant of the whole village community, helping the toiling, suffering masses of the poor, the outcaste and the oppressed to rise superior to the manifold ills that now oppress and degrade their lives, and bringing to them the higher and the more abundant life that Jesus Christ promised to the world.