

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Nos. VI. and XX. of the Articles of Religion in our Prayer-Book.

3. Good churchmanship consists in the cultivation of a large-hearted catholicity, and in the recognition of sound doctrine in other ecclesiastical bodies, even when they do not hold our form of government.

4. Good churchmanship consists in distinguishing between essentials and non-essentials, and giving to each their proper place.

5. Good churchmanship consists in loyalty to those principles which caused our ecclesiastical ancestors to throw off the yoke of Rome, and to recognise as allies all who have that object in view.

6. Good churchmanship consists in looking upon all ecclesiastical government and forms of worship as means to an end, and not the end itself, and in valuing the pure water of life, whether we come across it in a beautiful silver flask or in a simple earthen pitcher.

SETON CHURCHILL.

ART. V.—THE SANTAL MISSION.

THE Annual Report of 1863 says: "The Rev. E. L. Puxley has been suddenly compelled to visit England for the recovery of his health. Upon his departure, the Rev. W. Storrs removed from Lucknow to superintend the work."

Mr. Storrs has written the following account: "We came down from Benares in a steamer. It was Sunday morning when we reached Rajmahal. Mr. Puxley's elephants met us and a paliki carried by some bearers. The elephants were very old, and rather slow beasts; one was said to be 100, and the other 130, years old; and the elder one, when she got into deep mud, had always a great difficulty in getting out again. It was on September 27th, 1863, a fearfully hot day, and the paliki bearers had to rest over and over again. At last we reached Talihari. There was no furniture in the house, and our things did not come up; and had it not been for Shital Catechist and his good wife, I do not know what we should have done. It was a strange Sunday; no church, no service, no quiet, and the people came and stared at us as if we were wild beasts. At last we gradually settled down. My time was principally spent in learning the language, which I picked up simply by learning sentences off by heart, and was able in a few months, by stringing numbers of sentences together, to give an address, which included all the necessary Gospel truths, and found that the people could understand me when

I could scarcely understand a word that they said. I began at once to visit the little village schools in the neighbourhood, taking Bhim, Ram Choron and Sham with me. In this way my knowledge of Santali increased. It was in April, 1864, that one Sunday, after preaching in Hindi to the boys in the school, that Ram Choron (a Hindu, but one who was brought up from infancy among the Santals, and thus knew their language as if it were his own mother-tongue) followed me back to the bungalow, and begged me to baptize him. After a few days Bhim made the same request; a man named Suphal, too, from a near village came forward, but he understood so little that I was obliged for the present to put him on one side. However, on May 15th, 1864, Sunday, in the afternoon, amidst a crowd of gaping heathen, with the Christian teachers and heathen school boys ranged round, I baptized Ram Choron and Bhim in the spring which is just below the hill on which the present church stands. A few months afterwards Sido came forward; he was very young and delicate, but most terribly in earnest about it. The news spread all over the district. Many of the training school boys were removed; but, on the whole, wherever we went, we found the people not so much irritated as interested by what had occurred. Soon after this Mr. Puxley returned from England, and I moved slowly through the district preaching the good tidings everywhere. My children were all so ill, and I was in such weak health that, having been nine years in India, it was thought advisable for me to go home. Whilst I was in England, Mr. Puxley baptized several more of the training school youths, and the first village Christians among the Santals. At the end of 1866 I returned, and found that Mr. Puxley had been obliged to leave for England; fever had so weakened him by its continued attacks that it was thought advisable for him to leave as soon as possible. A few months after my return the great wave of blessing came; at a number of distant places people asked for baptism, and the people seemed most really in earnest, and everywhere God gave us His blessing."

Mr. Storrs, writing on November 2nd, 1867, says: "I have been immensely encouraged during these few days by seeing the way Christianity is spreading. I have had the happiness of baptizing about seventy persons since last Sunday. On this day week I rode to Chuchi and spent a long time in examining inquirers, and on the following evening (Sunday) I went again and baptized them—I think about forty souls. They had already undergone a little trial of scoffing and petty persecution. Tuesday and Wednesday I spent in examining candidates for baptism and confirmation, and the next evening, under the shade of a gigantic cotton-tree, baptized twenty-one

more souls in the pretty river Gumani. On Friday I examined some more in a village three miles distant, and baptized them the next day among some rocks in the river—twelve souls.

“December 8th, 1867.—Bishop of Calcutta’s confirmation. A good number came—ninety-six—all of them from a distance of at least twenty miles, many of them from at least forty, bringing their food with them, being two days on the road here. Bishop Milman, having inspected the site for the church, said that he had never seen a place which seemed so exactly made to build a church upon.

“December 30th.—This afternoon I baptized more than twenty people. How happy ought I to be! Oh, how many missionaries would give anything to have the encouragement which God has given me! I stand, I look, I wonder. There are now nearly four hundred Christians, where three years ago there were but three.”

Writing at the end of 1869, Mr. Storrs says: “As to evangelistic work, it seems to me as if we scarcely had any in this mission. Almost all our time is taken up with work among the Christians. I regret two circumstances. One is the decrease in the number of baptisms. This has been very marked during the last few months, and the number of inquirers is at present small.” The other was that circumstances compelled him to be absent from the mission just at this time.

As regards the character of the Christian community, we quote the following independent testimony of a well-educated Free Church native minister, the Rev. J. Bhattacharjya:

“The words of the prophet—‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose: it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing’—may be said to have been literally fulfilled in regard to Taljhari, which, but a few years ago, was a barren desert, but which is now turned into what may be termed ‘The garden of the Lord.’ A beautiful church is now in the course of erection, which will give an additional charm to the place. But the most beautiful sight, which refreshes the heart of the Christian, is the body of Santal converts, who, a short time ago, were no better than the wild beasts of the forest, but who have, under the benign influence of Christianity, become distinguished for gentleness, meekness, humility, sobriety, and other Christian virtues. There is such a marvellous change in them that even a most superficial observer cannot help noticing and admiring it.”

Sir William Muir, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces of India, paid a short visit to Santalia. He was so cheered by what he saw that he wrote to the Church

Missionary Society offering them 1,000 rupees for every new European station they would set on foot in the Santal country. Another of the Santal missionaries, who had been obliged to leave the work on account of the loss of his wife, and his own failing eyesight—the Rev. W. Shackell, a Fellow of Oxford—also offered a like sum for the same purpose. In consequence of these offers two new stations were built, viz., Dhorompur and Bhagaya, and the number of workers increased.

On February 4th, 1876, Ram Choron was ordained deacon by Bishop Milman, as pastor for the Santal Christians. He was, as we have said, the first to be baptized, became one of the earliest helpers, and having acted as an evangelist and catechist, he was chosen to become the first ordained pastor of the people he had influenced by his example when he boldly put on Christ at baptism.

On September 9th, 1877, the Rev. H. Davis died at Hiranpur. One, writing of this sad event, says: "Our brother, worn out with a disease which must have been growing upon him stealthily, one day, after a hard day's work at translations into Santali, laid down his pen and said to his Bengali munshi: 'I cannot do more; I am very weary.' It was Thursday. On the following Sunday, September 9th, he entered into rest. We in Taljhari, only twenty-five miles distant, received no intimation of it till Monday morning. A party of three of us at once set off, and notwithstanding the rains and the floods, were able to reach Hiranpur the same evening, in time to see the lifeless form of our departed brother and to assist in the interment. A very large number of people assembled together. Christians came from all parts of the Hiranpur district. In consideration for the Christians who had assembled, the Santal language was chosen for the burial-service. We sang, though sadly, his own translation into Santali of the well-known hymn, 'Work for the night is coming.' Many were the expressions of grief and looks of sadness even from the heathen, who seemed then to be, in human sympathy, brothers and sisters, though not so *in Christ*."

The Church Missionary Society's Report of 1881, speaking of this mission, says: "The Santal mission has suffered by the illness and enforced absence of some of its missionaries. The Rev. J. Tunbridge was sent away for some months invalided to a hill station, and just as he was returning to his work his wife died. The shock brought a renewal of his own illness, and he was ordered home. The Rev. R. Elliott has also come to England in very weak health. The Rev. A. Stark and family were obliged to go to the hills for several months; and the Rev. E. Droese, for a similar cause, had to be absent from Bhagulpur for some time."

The absence of medical aid and the isolation of the missions indeed are great hindrances to the conservation of health. When Dr. Davis was taken ill at Hiranpur there was no other European near; his poor wife nursed him alone, and as she was imperfectly acquainted with the language, it was all the more difficult to obtain help. A doctor was sent for, but he arrived at the nearest railway-station many hours after Mr. Davis's death. The wife was alone with her dead all Sunday night, and the next morning had to give orders for making a coffin and digging the grave. It was in the height of the rains—this added to the desolation; and God alone knows the awfulness of those hours. Strangers in a strange land. But it is for Christ's sake, and He is always near.

It may be interesting to know that in the year 1811, Mrs. Sherwood, the wife of an English officer serving in India, wrote the missionary story of "Little Henry and his Bearer." She wrote in her diary: "I have thus a time of leisure given to me to indulge in writing and reading. I am also solaced with the company of the Rev. Henry Martyn, who is in and out of our house every day."

"May 29th, 1811.—Finished my MS. of 'Henry and his Bearer.'"¹

Let us now transcribe a small portion of this book:

"Now it happened about this time that Henry's mamma had occasion to go from Dinapur to Calcutta, and as she went by water, she took Henry and his bearer in the budgerow with her. When the boat came to anchor in the evening, Henry used to take a walk with his bearer; and sometimes they would ramble among the fields and villages for more than a mile from the river. Once, in particular—it was in one of those lovely places near the Rajmahal Hills—Henry and his bearer went to walk. The sun was just setting, and a cool breeze blew over the water, which so refreshed the little boy that he climbed without difficulty to the top of a hill, where was a tomb. Here they sat down, and Henry could not but admire the beautiful prospect which was before them. On their left hand was the broad stream of the Ganges winding round the curved shore till it was lost behind the Rajmahal Hills. Before them and on their right hand was a beautiful country abounding with corn-fields, clumps of trees, thatched cottages, with their little bamboo porches, plantain and palm trees, beyond which the Rajmahal Hills were seen—some bare to their summits, and others covered with jungle, which even now afford a shelter to tigers, rhinoceroses, and wild hogs.

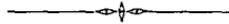
"Henry sat silent a long time. At last he said: 'Boosy,

¹ Published by the Book Society, 28, Paternoster Row, price twopence.

this is a good country—that is, it would be a very good country if the people were Christians. Then they would not be so idle as they now are; and they would agree together, and clear the jungles, and build churches to worship God in. It will be pleasant to see the people when they are Christians all going on a Sunday morning to some fair church built among those hills, and to see them of an evening sitting at the door of their houses reading the *Shaster*. I do not mean your *Shaster*, but our *Shaster*—God's Book.' ”

Those words, written eighty years ago, describe, in almost prophetic language, the present result. The scene of the pious wish was about ten miles from Taljhari. There is now a magnificent church standing on the summit of one of the Rajmahal Hills, whilst here and there, scattered all over the very country described as the one on which Henry was looking, are more than fifty village churches. Of these we hope to speak more particularly in our next paper.

F. T. COLE.



ART. VI.—THE SHARE OF PARLIAMENT AND CONVOCATION IN THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

IT is not proposed in this sketch to estimate all the different forces which produced the Reformation. To perform such a task in any detail would be a long and very tedious business. In the days of personal government, when the House of Tudor reigned, the individual character and initiative of the Sovereign counted for much, and would have to be taken into reckoning. The Reformation was in different ways profoundly influenced by Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth. And besides the general tendencies which moved the age, we should have to reckon the work of different privy councils and committees, the personal impress of great leaders and thinkers, and here and there the action of a Pope or a Legate. But it is enough for one essay to call up to remembrance the tone, temper, and work of the two great Constitutional bodies, Parliament and Convocation, in their effect on that momentous and unparalleled national struggle which continued between the year 1529, when the Reformation Parliament first met, and 1571, when subscription to the Articles was enforced by the Parliament of Elizabeth. No half-century in our history is fraught with more inestimable consequences; for it was during that short period that the national Church of England, which for some hundreds of years had submitted to Romish doctrine and discipline, deliberately, and through the trial of fire and sword, discarded both, and