

V

THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN OF THE GREAT CENTURY

Dr Latourette has given the name "the Great Century" to the time between 1800 and 1914. He says: "When consideration is given to the difficulties which faced it, in the nineteenth century, Christianity made amazing progress all around the world. It came to the end of the period on a rapidly ascending curve. Its influence on culture was out of all proportion to its numerical strength. It had an outstanding role as a pioneer in new types of education, in movements for the relief and prevention of human suffering and in disseminating ideas."

How did Christianization proceed during the Great Century? This is a most important question because most of our present thinking is coloured by the missionary effort of this century. When we think of missions today, we think of those with which we are familiar, and which prevailed in China, Africa, India and other countries during the Great Century. Since this century produced a radically new and different approach, the older kind of missions which existed for 1,800 years have tended to be forgotten. The missionary and the churches tend to think that the only kind of missions and the only kind of Christianization possible is that used with greater or lesser effect during the past 150 years. The Great Century created a new method to meet a new situation. Both situation and method are worthy of our closest study.

The New Situation Described: The Gulf of Separation

Missions were carried on from the ruling, wealthy, literate, modern countries, which were experiencing all the benefits of political and religious freedom, an expanding production, and universal education. In the year 1500 European visitors to India and China described countries which compared favourably with their own. But by the nineteenth century the West had progressed while the East had stood still, so that there was a great gap between them. Western missionaries went to poor, illiterate, medieval and agricultural countries. The gap widened with the passage of the years, for the progress of the West continued to be greater than that of the East. While it is true that missionaries tried to identify themselves with the people, they were never able to rid themselves of the inevitable separateness which the great progress of their home lands had imposed upon them.

This gulf became very clear in the living arrangements which European and American missionaries found necessary. Their standard of living at home was many times higher than that of the average citizen on the mission fields, though it could not compare with that of the few wealthy Chinese, Japanese and Indians. Modern medicine was unknown. Health demanded big bungalows on large sites. Servants were cheap and saved much domestic labour. The people of the land generally walked, but the missionary was accustomed to a conveyance and so he used one. The colour of his skin also set him apart. He could not melt into the generality of the inhabitants of the land as Paul could. He was a white man, a member of the ruling race. To this day in the rural sections of India, seven years after independence, the white missionary is frequently addressed as *Sarkar* (Government). The missionary was an easy vic-

tim not only to malaria but to intestinal diseases. He had to be careful about what he ate. The Western style of cooking agreed with him, whereas the Eastern style did not. So in matters of food also there came to be a great gulf between him and the people of the land.

There were practically no bridges across this gulf. There was nothing even remotely similar to the Jewish bridge over which Christianity marched into the Gentile world. Staggering numbers of people lived on the fertile plains of Asia, but not one of them had any Christian relatives! Even in the port cities there were none. *Mésalliances* between white soldiery, rulers or commercial people and the women of the various lands were so resented on the one hand and despised on the other that they served as barriers rather than bridges. The normal flow of the Christian religion simply could not take place. Separated by colour, standard of living, prestige, literacy, mode of travel, place of residence, and many other factors, the missionary was, indeed, isolated from those to whom he brought the message of salvation.

The missionaries did indeed learn the languages of the country and learned them well. They served the people with love, taught their children, visited in their homes, went with them through famines and epidemics, ate with them, bought from them and sold to them, and, more than any other group of white men in the tropics, were at one with them. Thus, it will be said, this emphasis on the separateness of the missionary is exaggerated. To the student of the growth and spread of religions, however, it is apparent that these casual contacts described above are just that—casual contacts. They are not the living contacts, the contacts of tribe and race and blood, which enable the non-Christian to say, as he hears a Christian speak: "This messenger of the Christian religion is one of my own family, my own

People, one of us." Casual contacts may win a few individuals to a new faith, but unless these individuals are able to start a living movement within their own society, it does not start at all.

The separateness we describe seemed likely to last a long time. It existed in an unchanging world, where the dominance of the West and the dependence of the East seemed to be permanent. Missionaries thought, "There will be centuries before us, and, in a 400-year relationship like that of Rome to her dependent peoples, we shall gradually bring these peoples also into the Christian faith."

This grave separateness faced Christian missions during the Great Century. When the churches and their missionaries have no relations, no contacts and no bridges over inter-racial gulfs, what do they do? How do they carry out the command of their Lord? When there is no living approach, how do they go about the Christianization of peoples?

The New Method Evolved: The Exploratory Mission-Station Approach

If there is any aspect that is typical of modern missions, it is the mission station with its gathered colony. Missionaries facing the gulf of separation built mission stations and gathered colonies of Christians.

They acquired a piece of land, often with great difficulty. They built residences suitable for white men. Then they added churches, schools, quarters in which to house helpers, hospitals, leprosy homes, orphanages and printing establishments. The mission station was usually at some centre of communication. From it extensive tours were made into the surrounding countryside. It was home to the missionary staff and all the activities of the mission took place around the station.

Together with building the station, the missionaries

gathered converts. It was exceedingly difficult for those hearing the Good News for the first time, knowing nothing of Christians, or of Christianity save that it was the religion of the invading white men, to accept the Christian religion. Those who did so were usually forced out of their own homes by fierce ostracism. They came to live at the mission colony, where they were usually employed. Orphans were sheltered. Slaves were bought and freed. Women were rescued. Some healed patients became Christian. Many of these usually came to live at the mission station. They were taught various means of earning a livelihood and directed into various forms of service. They formed the gathered colony.

This kind of mission approach took shape out of the individualistic background typical of much Protestantism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. To be a Christian was to come out and be separate. For converts to leave father and mother invested their decisions with a particular validity. To gather a compound full of Christians out of a non-Christian population seemed a good way to proceed. Frequently it was also the only possible way. The universal suspicion and often the violent hostility with which Christianity was regarded would have forced into the gathered colony pattern even those who consciously sought integration.

This, then, was the pattern which was characteristic of most beginnings in the Great Century. We call it the exploratory mission station approach, but from the point of view of the result of mission activity, it was the exploratory gathered colony approach.

It was excellent strategy in its day. It was a probe to ascertain which peoples were ready to become Christian. Christianity must be seen to be stable before it will be accepted as a way of salvation. Peoples are not going to commit their destinies to a faith which is here to-day and gone to-morrow. Men must see over a period of

years what the Christian life means and what Christ does to persons and to groups. While the Good News is first being presented and the Christian life demonstrated the mission station and the gathered colony are essential. As we look back over the last hundred years it seems both necessary and desirable for there to have been this approach. With all its limitations, it was the best strategy for the era. This approach has been no mistake. It fitted the age which produced it. It was inevitable.

The Road Branches According to Response

This beginning, adopted by practically all missions, may be considered as a road running along a flat and somewhat desolate plain and then dividing, one branch to continue along the plain, the other to climb the green fertile hills. Whether missions continued on the flat accustomed road (of the gathered colony approach) or ascended the high road by means of the People Movement Approach depended on the response given to the Christian message by the population and on the missionaries' understanding of that response.

Where the number of conversions remained small decade after decade, there the mission remained the dominant partner and the Mission Station Approach continued and, indeed, was strengthened. It was strengthened because the gathered colony furnished Christian workers so that the mission could expand mission healing, mission teaching and mission preaching. Where the number of conversions mounted steadily with every passing decade till scores of thousands were Christian, there the Church became the dominant partner and the mission turned up the hill road. It started using the People Movement Approach.

These two roads, these two ways of carrying on mission work, are distinct and different. Clear thinking

about missions must make a sharp differentiation between them. Each must be described separately. The People Movements, the hill road, will be described in the next chapter. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to describing the widening road on the plain, the way in which the exploratory phase gradually turned into the permanent Mission Station Approach or gathered colony approach.

Small response was not expected by the early missionaries. The exploratory Mission Station Approach was not launched as an accommodation to a hard-hearted and irresponsible population. It was regarded as *a first stage after which great ingathering would occur*. Even after the Basel Mission had lost eight of its first ten missionaries in nine years, the heroic Andreas Riis wrote back from the Gold Coast in Africa, "Let us press on. All Africa must be won for Christ. Though a thousand missionaries die, send more." The exploratory gathered colony approach was adopted with the expectation that the Christian faith would sweep non-Christian lands bringing them untold blessings.

But these expectations were often frustrated by meagre response. In the light of the event Professor Latourette can now serenely write:

The advanced cultures and faiths of Asia and North Africa did not yield so readily as did those of the primitive folk, either to Western civilization or to Christianity. This was to be expected. It has usually been characteristic of advanced cultures and their religions that they have been much slower to disintegrate before an invading civilization.

But the meagre response was not expected by the early messengers of the Church. It was disappointing.

A factor in the small response, whose importance cannot be overestimated, is that, partly because of the indi-

vidualistic bias of the missionaries and partly because of the resistance of the hearers, conversions were mainly *out* of the tribe, *out* of the caste and, indeed, *out* of the nation. Converts felt that they were joining not merely a new religion, but an entirely foreign way of living—proclaimed by foreigners, led by foreigners and ruled by foreigners. Converts came alone. Often even their wives refused to come with them. Naturally conversions were few. A vicious circle was established: the few becoming Christian one by one set such a pattern that it was difficult for a Christward movement to be started, and by the lack of a movement converts continued to come one by one and in very small numbers. In many parts of the field it was as psychologically difficult for a person to become a Christian as it would be for a white man in South Africa to join a Negro Church knowing that his children would intermarry with the black children. The person not only became a Christian, but he was generally believed to have "joined another race". When, among peoples which intermarry only amongst themselves, a man becomes a Christian, his old mother is likely to reproach him, saying, "Now whom will your sons marry? They cannot get wives from amongst us any more."

The Exploratory Approach Becomes Permanent: Terms Defined

Where meagre response continued, there gathered colony missions gradually accommodated themselves to carrying on mission work among populations which would not obey the call of God. Once this occurred we may say that the mission, which had started its road-building on the plain, with the intention of reaching high fertile land as soon as possible, settled down to road-building on the barren plain as its God-given duty. It found plenty of good work to do. It never admitted, even to itself, that it had really given up hope of

reaching the hills; but that is what had actually happened.

In order to understand what occurred we shall define three stages in mission work:

Stage I. The mission sets out on the desolate plain with the intention of taking to the hills as soon as possible.

This is the exploratory Mission Station Approach.

Stage II. The mission continues on the desolate plain, and has concluded that it is impossible to mount to the hills. This is the permanent or ordinary Mission Station Approach, which we know to-day. It is equally truly called the gathered colony approach. We shall use both terms interchangeably.

Stage III. The mission takes the road branching off to the fertile hills. This is described in the next chapter and is the People Movement Approach.

Let us now see how Stage I grew into Stage II.

Diversion to Secondary Aims

As a result of the small response, gathered colony missions were easily diverted to secondary aims. Sometimes when a famine occurred the mission cared for thousands of orphans and became for the next twenty years in effect a vast orphanage. The evangelistic work was still called the central task, but the orphanages claimed the lion's share of the budget. Around the orphanages were built great institutions. Missionaries, permanently located, were the heads of the orphanages. Since they commonly lived at the centres they had an influential voice in mission policy. It was expected that the orphanages would provide indigenous preachers for the proclamation of the Gospel. When it became apparent that the people of the land were not espousing Christianity in any but the smallest numbers, the institutional work appeared as more solid, more tangible,

more rewarding. The church that thus grew up was at least there; it was visible. If people were not becoming Christians, what matter; a great work was being done, and the foundations were being firmly laid for a mighty church which would start growing some time in the future. Indeed, the solid nature of a church based on famine orphans and one-by-one converts, as opposed to that built on a group movement out of an illiterate people, became a matter of considerable pride, and leaders consciously turned from seeking "large numbers of ignorant converts".

Sometimes the mission was pressed into educational work. The leading men of the vicinity begged the mission to start a school. The children of the small Christian community needed a school. The Bible could be taught every day to every pupil. Many of the pupils came from the best homes of the city. The missionary was splendidly equipped to teach English—who could teach it better? To know English was a burning desire in the hearts of many youths. Prestige accompanied school-work but the schools rarely led to conversions. An occasional exception merely proved the rule. But there was no question of the liberalizing effect of mission schools. Boys who had gone through mission school and college usually had a deep respect for the Christian faith and the Lord Jesus Christ. They saw that the Christian movement was a good thing for the country. The ethical message of Jesus was readily absorbed. Leading men sent their sons to Christian schools, "because we like the type of character they develop there". In short, the indirect effects of mission schools in terms of the betterment of non-Christian nations were large. Considerable numbers of missionaries and, in some cases, entire missions, meeting meagre success in the disciplining of peoples, turned to institutional work. This offered, not a rapidly growing Church, not a body of

saved persons, but something which looked like the first steps toward a later widespread adoption of the Christian faith. The non-Christian faiths were being reformed, the intense opposition to Christian work was being lessened, and numbers of secret believers were, it was hoped, being increased.

Missionaries in charge of schools often worked with cultured students who, in later life occupying posts of influence, expressed in gracious terms the debt they owed to Christian missions. They often rendered some notable service to the Christian cause. Leaders trained in such schools often led the district or the nation into great social advances. It was difficult not to compare the results of school work with the results of evangelistic work to the definite detriment of the latter. Even in the rare cases where the mission had succeeded in starting a Christian movement these illiterate rural Christians contrasted unfavourably with the products of the indirect approach through schools.

Sometimes the diversion to secondary aims came through medicine. A mission dispensary was opened partly to relieve the suffering people, partly to break down prejudice and partly to witness to the message. The demand was unlimited. People would pay highly for treatment. The volume of work grew by leaps and bounds. So did the income of the hospital. The training of nurses, doctors, technicians and compounders was added. Large institutions grew up which dwarfed those of any other mission enterprise. One, two, and three, missionaries were assigned to those medical centres, which were defended in terms of their indirect effects. How could Christian leaders, having at their disposal means for the relief of suffering, fail to be compassionate? Did not this great ministry of healing bear its own silent witness to the Great Physician? Furthermore, the hospital enterprise, using mostly Christians as staff

members, training mostly Christians, was giving to the gathered colony a tremendous opportunity for profitable and honourable employment.

We can appreciate highly all these results and support vigorously such a medical enterprise, and at the same time note that it did not give birth to any Christward movements of peoples. Indeed, the largest, most famous missionary medical centres seem to have grown up where there are no great growing churches. Where great populations have not turned to Christ, there are great hospitals; and where great populations have turned to Christ, there are few great hospitals.

Thus the Mission Station Approach, frustrated by meagre response, turned to secondary aims.

Mission Work Comes to be the Goal

Not only did missions turn to secondary aims but they came to consider them primary. Orphanages, schools, hospitals and agricultural enterprises were developed. Generations of missionaries devoted their entire lives to them. They found their consolation and satisfaction in the service of the non-Christian nations, the general alleviation of ignorance and suffering, the creation of a friendly attitude toward the mission, if not toward Christianity, and the rich service of a small Christian community. They hoped that at some time all these would work together for the Christianization of the land in which they laboured. The gathered colony became essential to the expansion of the mission. The missionaries and their national colleagues knew no other type of mission work. What they were doing *was* mission work, and was the finest kind of mission work! This was Christian missions at their best! Were such Christian leaders to be asked to evaluate their tasks in terms of the Christianization of peoples, they would quite likely reply that they were not interested in an

increase of mere numbers, or that what they were doing was Christianization of the finest sort, or that the missionary enterprise has its various branches and that the Christianizers were doubtless Christianizing and the educators were educating!

The sending boards and churches made no distinction between mission enterprises serving the primary aim and those serving these secondary aims. All were equally valuable mission work. Indeed, the need of promotion among the sending Churches turned all into "grand works". Any kind of an enterprise could usually be carried on by a missionary, from teaching non-Christians how to grow peanuts to disciplining a caste or tribe and, provided it was carried on with verve and vigour, it would be enthusiastically backed by the home base. Able missionaries came, inherited situations, "splendid pieces of mission work", poured their own enthusiasm and life into them, enlarged them, called for and sometimes obtained more missionaries and more money for them, and, in turn, passed on the torch to others. Whether anything was added to the disciplining of peoples was an entirely different matter and one to which neither the missionary nor the mission, nor the home boards, nor the churches paid much attention.

This is scarcely the atmosphere in which Christward movements of peoples can originate. Both on the basis of a *priori* possibility and historic fact, we may affirm that once a mission station comes to be an institutional centre its chances of starting a Christward march of any of the peoples in its area are small. Pickett, in his monumental study,¹ noted that what we call

¹ *Christian Mass Movements in India*, J. W. Pickett; *Christ's Way to India's Heart*, J. W. Pickett; *The Mass Movement Survey of Mid-India*, Pickett, Singh and McGavran. These are obtainable from the Lucknow Publishing Company, Lucknow, U.P., India, and are essential books for those concerned with mission strategy.

People Movements often start many miles away from mission stations. The staff of the typical mission station do not look for a growing movement, and probably would not have time to spare for it were one to come and sit on their doorstep asking for spiritual nurture. Such typical institutionalized Mission Station Approach actually prevents the start of Christward movements.

It may be claimed that it is preparing the ground for Christianization in the future but it is certainly not fathering any People Movements now. *Good intentions*

The Churches Born of the Mission Station Approach

The first aim of missions is the establishment of churches. So, as we start to examine the results of the Mission Station Approach we turn to an inspection of the kind of churches which mission stations have fathered. These we shall call Mission Station churches or gathered colony churches.

They have some favourable characteristics. They are composed of greatly transformed individuals. The membership is literate. They come to church with hymn-books. They can read their Bibles. There are many among them who are specially trained beyond the ordinary school. In some stations there are many high school and college graduates on the church rolls. The membership contains a goodly proportion of day labourers and artisans, household helps and casual labourers, as well as teachers, preachers, medical workers, clerks, and other white-collar workers. In some places factory and railway employees form a considerable part of the membership. On the whole the Mission Station Churches are made up of people who are soundly Christian. There is not much superstition among them and not much temptation to revert to the old non-Christian faiths. The membership is proud of being Christian, and feels that it has gained tremend-

ously by belonging to the Christian fellowship. There are, of course, many nominal Christians and some whose conduct brings shame on the church. But even these are likely to send their children to Sunday School and church!

They are organized into strong congregations. They have good permanent church buildings on land indubitably theirs. The pastors and ministers are usually qualified people. The services of worship are held regularly. The elders, deacons and other elected members form church councils and govern the church. The giving would probably compare favourably in regard to percentage of income with that in the Western churches, though often most of it is provided by those in mission employ. In some churches the giving is exemplary and there are many tithers. All told, the impression is that of small, tight, well-knit communities, buttressed by intermarriage and considering themselves to be a part of world Christianity.

On the debit side, these mission station churches are lacking in the qualities needed for growth and multiplication. They are, in truth, gathered churches, made up of individual converts, or "brands snatched from the burning", or famine orphans, or a mixture of all three. The individual converts and rescued persons have usually been disowned by their non-Christian relatives. The famine orphans have no close connection with loving brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts. Furthermore, the lives of these Christians have been so changed, and they find such satisfaction in the fellowship of their own sort (i.e. other mission station Christians) that they feel immeasurably superior to their own unconverted relatives. This is particularly true when they come from the oppressed classes. The second generation of Christians is even farther removed from their non-Christian relatives than the first, while in the third

generation, in the very land where they live, the gathered church members know as a rule no non-Christian relatives at all. The precious linkages which each original member had as he came from non-Christian society and which are so needed for reproduction are all gone. A *new people* has been established which intermarries only within itself and thinks of itself as a separate community.

The Christians of the gathered colony approach have a vivid realization of the power of education. It has been education, they feel, that has lifted them out of the depths. They are keen for their children to receive as much education as possible. They skimp and scrape that their boys and girls may go on to school and proceed as far as possible on the road to a B.A. or an M.A. But they do not always have a vivid experience of the power of God. Many would grant that it was Christian education which had lifted them—an education given to them in the name of Jesus Christ. But on such experiences as the power of the Spirit, the forgiveness of sins and the blessedness of faith, many mission station Christians are likely to have a weak witness. "Become Christians and educate your children", they are likely to say. "It won't do you much good, but it will be wonderful for your sons and daughters."

The gathered colony churches usually have a vivid consciousness of the mission as their parent. The churches tend to feel that it is the business of the missionary to head up a wealthy social service agency, designed to serve the Christian community. It sometimes happens that the members of a mission station church, sensing the obvious fact that there is only limited employment in a mission station, look on new converts as a labour union would on immigrants. They draw the easy conclusion that if more people become Christians, the resources of the mission will be spread

thinner and there will be less for each of the existing Christians. Cases have occurred where they have actually discouraged possible converts from becoming Christian.

Gathered colony churches are often over-staffed. They are too richly served by foreign missions. Their members acquire a vested interest in the *status quo*. In one typical mission station church of 700 souls we find a missionary in charge of two primary schools and one middle school for day pupils, another in charge of a middle boarding school for girls, a missionary doctor and his nurse wife who run a hospital, and an evangelistic missionary who gives half his time to the Christian community. Then there is a national minister who is a high school graduate with theological training, five high school graduates who teach the older boys and seven high school graduates who teach the older girls, four evangelists, five Bible women and a primary school staff of six. Missionaries, who, with less than half these resources, are shepherding large numbers of Christians who have come to Christ in some People Movement, may gasp with unbelief that such heavy occupation could occur. Yet both the national and the missionary leaders of such mission station churches consider that they really are managing with a minimum degree of foreign aid!

The Missions Fashioned by the Mission Station Approach

We now turn toward the second result of this approach, namely the mission stations themselves. Any visitor to the mission field is likely to come away with the idea that mission work consists in schools, hospitals, leper asylums, agricultural institutes, printing presses and the mission compounds from which these multifarious activities are carried on. The churches would seem to be a small part of the whole and subservient to

the mission station. This impression would be largely correct.

A characteristic of static mission stations is that they have an institutional life many times greater than is needed for the little congregation and quite impossible of support by it. The congregation is made up quite largely of the employees of the big mission institutions. The mission resources far exceed those of the church; and the mission personnel dwarfs the leadership of the church. Hence the work remains mission-centred even when devolution turns the management of churches, schools and hospitals over to nationals. It is quite possible to find a mission station where nine-tenths of the management is in the hands of the nationals, and where the church remains just as dwarfed as it was when foreigners were in charge. The institutionalized mission station is like an inverted pyramid, with huge accumulation of service organizations dominating the little congregation. This inevitably creates the idea that to be a Christian is to receive aid from institutions rather than to live a Spirit-filled life.

The mission station, from the point of view of the Christianization of a civilization and its Peoples, should be considered the *temporary* encampment of an army. If its houses and institutions must be sacrificed that the church may be planted, they should be considered expendable. But the psychology of the Mission Station Approach is never this. It is almost impossible for one who is immersed in the Mission Station Approach to avoid the conviction that his primary duty is to preserve the station where he works and to carry it forward to new heights of service and usefulness. Campaigns are waged "to save this historic station". The mission station becomes an end in itself, instead of a means to the disciplining of peoples.

Growth comes hardly to the Mission Station wedded to a Gathered Colony

Any new work must be undertaken from money which "belongs" to the older work. Were the supporting Board, let us say, to send \$10,000 additional budget to the field, that \$10,000 would be regarded by every missionary and every national in the mission as belonging to the existing work. Were the proposal to be made that this sum be spent in some work which definitely planned for the creation of a People Movement, the proposal would seem to each person in charge, national or foreign, as an attack on his own budget.

The Mission Station Approach is also handicapped against growth because it has been so small in past decades, and it has been so necessary that work be carried on without using the growth of the church as a criterion of evaluation, that now most persons in charge honestly believe in patiently carrying on the work whether baptisms occur or not. "Mission work" comes to be the end rather than the "Discipling of Peoples". Most persons in charge, foreign or national, are in non-growing areas. The loyalty of the person in charge is naturally given to his work or station rather than to any seemingly impossible "Discipling of Peoples". Committees, made up of those who have poured out their lives for the work in their stations, tend to revolve around the pulls of various established works, all of them, including the evangelistic efforts, unsuccessful in discipling peoples. The missionary family, which nowadays includes many nationals, knows intimately the few thousand Christians who make up the church which the mission has fathered and mothered. These few Christians and their children become the supreme concern of the missionary family. It is easy for the leaders of the mission stations to think that their reason for

existing is to help this small static church to become more literate, more healthy, more wealthy and more godly, whether Christward marches in surrounding peoples are induced or not.

A mission administrator was once faced with the fact that in one section of his field a Christward movement among a certain people seemed about to begin. He wrote at once to the person in charge of that station saying: "A question which comes to my mind is whether we have the funds to make this movement possible. Certainly your small budget will not be adequate. Each one of the stations is pressing me for more funds to run the existing work. We might quietly squeeze a little out here and there, but you cannot count on much. The other stations simply will not stand for it. You cannot expect your work to prosper at their expense. You had better be careful that you do not start something larger than you can shepherd." Granted that such an attitude is unusual, that it can be found at all is eloquent testimony to the static nature of the Mission Station Approach. The entire missionary movement exists so that Christward movements among peoples may be begun and extended, so that "Peoples may be Disciplined". Yet such is the nature of the common missionary approach of the last century that, when in the providence of God they occur, they must be carefully restricted to keep them from getting so big that they upset the nicely proportioned machine designed to bring them about!

For all these reasons such missions are not likely to start growing churches, no matter how much longer aid from the West is continued. From the point of view of fathering Christian revolutions in surrounding populations, the Mission Station Approach has serious and constitutional weaknesses.

The National Awakenings Caused by Missions

The third major result of the Mission Station Approach has been a national rebirth in those nations where missions have been at work. Part of the advance of Western culture in these lands has doubtless been due to the impact of Western rulers, to the fertilization of thought through books, but much can fairly be credited to the vast penetration by the missionary movement. Its stations were centres of education and healing. They were seed-beds of revolutionary Christian ideas about justice, brotherhood, service and the place of womanhood. We cannot estimate too highly the social dynamic of modern missions. We have seen how they turned to those forms of enterprise through which Christian ideas could be absorbed by the population without formal transference of allegiance to the Christian faith. In this they were highly successful. Had these nations turned to the Christian faith by conversion, the national awakening would have taken place on a far deeper and sounder basis. Still, even when they appropriated only the ideas produced by Christian civilization, they entered upon an era of progress and enlightenment the like of which the East has never seen.

In India the Christian doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man cut directly across the Hindu conception of caste. The beneficiaries of the Hindu religion, the High Castes, had from time immemorial held the inferior peoples, the Low Castes, in subjection. The brotherhood of the Christian religion, more than any other one factor, made it difficult for the High Castes to receive it. Yet as brotherhood was preached, practised and demonstrated, a change was forced upon Hindu thinking. The High Castes saw that when the lowest of the low, the Untouchables, became Christian and received an equal chance of education and culture, they became as good

as the best that the High Castes could produce. High Caste belief in the reality of caste distinctions was shaken. When in this century large numbers from amongst the 60,000,000 Untouchables began to become Christian, then the High Castes began to fear that, unless Untouchability, and indeed all distinctions based on caste were removed, the Untouchables would move *en masse* into Christianity. In the constitution of the country the Low Castes have written guarantees of equality which bode well for the future of India. No more revolutionary measure could be imagined. Yet it has come to pass without bloodshed or tumult. It is an achievement of the past 150 years of Christian Missions in which the mission stations have played a notable part.

Fifty miles off the railway in one of the most backward provinces of India, where the ferment of Christian ideas could scarcely be expected to permeate, there stands a little temple at a place where water gushes to the surface of a vast plain and flows throughout the driest part of the year. The temple is ornamented with images portraying a male god in various poses copulating with his devotees. It is hundreds of years old and the images had never offended the religious sensibilities of the residents. But within ten years after a small Christian outpost had been established half a mile away the images were plastered over. To-day, twenty years after, they are being gradually replaced by images of the male god alone. The mission stations have exerted a reformatory influence on the religions with which they have been in contact. In the renaissance of the religions of the East, which is so prominent to-day, the stimulation and purification caused by the proximity of Christianity has had a determinative influence. There are some Christian leaders who doubt whether an artificial addition of ethics to a religion which throughout the centuries has not evolved its own, is desirable.

Desirable or not, the Mission Station Approach has achieved it in great measure.

The social revolution caused by modern Christian missions, unlike most revolutions, has been bloodless. Missions have not led war bands and have not forced social changes. Through the quiet and peaceful processes of love and service, the criticisms voiced to the rising generation in schools, the example set in unselfish labour, public opinion in favour of social advance has been created on a large scale. Christian missions have also caused change through the challenge of their successes. "Unless we reform our society," the leaders of the land have said, "all these people will become Christian."

This result of the Mission Station Approach has been well summed up by Latourette. He says of Christian missions:

Few even of those most closely associated with them, realize fully their magnitude, their skilful adaptation to the conditions of the era which is now passing, their remarkable vitality and their enormous contributions to the race. They have been and still are one of the most amazing features of an amazing age. Whatever the mistakes made and the crudities displayed, and they have been many, none who have had an active share in the missionary movement need ever feel apologetic for the sum total of the results. They should only be humbly and profoundly grateful for the privilege of association with an enterprise which has made such notable contributions to the welfare of millions of men and women.

But—the Era is Drawing to a Close

However, as Latourette points out, the era is passing. The days in which the mission stations could exert a major influence on the affairs of Eastern nations are drawing to a close. The sleeping nations are now awake. At the headquarters of the provincial and

national governments are whole departments, amply provided with millions of money raised by taxes, whose chief duty it is to plan for the future of the nations. The tens of thousands of students who journey to the West for education, the flood of publications in all the major languages of the land, the advent of the movie, the loudspeaker and programmes of social education, the sensitiveness to foreign criticism, the intense desire to prove their own nation the equal of any on earth, and the resentment felt at foreign leadership—all these pre-empt the end of an era in which mission stations in the urban centres exerted an influence out of all proportion to their numbers.

Mission schools in Asia and North Africa no longer have the influence which they once had. In the beginning they were the only schools. But now they form a small percentage of the total, and are being crowded into the background. It is still true that there are a few outstanding Christian schools in most countries, mission schools, convent schools, which are known as the best in the land. Even so, they do not get 1 per cent of the students. There was a day when they had 50 per cent of the sons of the leading families. Mission educationists cannot dodge the plain fact that mission schools cannot expect to wield the influence which they did in the days when Western cultures were first arriving in Asia and Africa.

What is true of schools is also true of mission station hospitals. Up till 1945 the Central Provinces of India had not produced a single qualified doctor. Its university had no standard medical school. The only fully qualified doctors were a few immigrants from other provinces and missionary doctors from abroad. But to-day there are four hundred students in the medical college of its university. As this flood of physicians flows out over the cities and towns and eventually the

villages of this province, the present near monopoly of the Christian hospitals is likely to be destroyed. The same sort of thing is taking place in one awakened nation after another.

Non-Christian nations are impatient with foreign tutelage. They believe it is demeaning to their national pride to admit to the need for guidance from any Western nation. The East, particularly India, honestly believes that, except for mechanization and industrialization, the West has little to give to the "spiritual East". The excoriations heaped upon Western nations by their own prophets, crying out against race prejudice, economic injustice and recurrent wars, are taken at their face value by the nations of the East. The West comes to be looked upon as soul-less, materialistic, unjust, money-mad, and moved by none but ulterior motives. The temper of these days in the East is not that of humbly sitting at the feet of missionary tutors.

It would be giving a distorted impression if the last few paragraphs were to imply that Christian missions have no more usefulness as cultural "hands across the sea". In the days ahead when nations are forced into closer and closer co-operation, all friendly efforts to interpret nations to each other will be of value. The continued residence of Westerners in the East will doubtless do good. But the days of great secular influence of foreign mission stations apart from great national Churches are probably about over.

They should be over for a further reason: there is now a use for mission resources which will do more for nation building, more for international peace, and more for the Church than the further penetration of non-Christian faiths and cultures from the vantage point of a foreign mission station.

Salute and Farewell

So has run the characteristic pattern of the Great Century. An age of tremendous mission expansion in terms of geography and influence; an age of heroism and devotion and self-sacrifice; an age of the meeting of two cultures separated by a wide gulf which, through the mission stations, outposts of goodwill and faith, has slowly drawn closer to the point where one world is in sight; an age when there is hardly a race or nation in which there is not found the Church.

So has run its pattern. But that age is now over. A new age is upon us. A new pattern is demanded. A new pattern is at hand, which, while new, is as old as the Church itself. It is a God-designed pattern by which not ones but thousands will acknowledge Christ as Lord, and grow into full discipleship as people after people, clan after clan, tribe after tribe and community after community are claimed for and nurtured in the Christian faith.

