

OUR BHEEL MISSION  
IN INDIA

OLUF ANTON DAHLGREN

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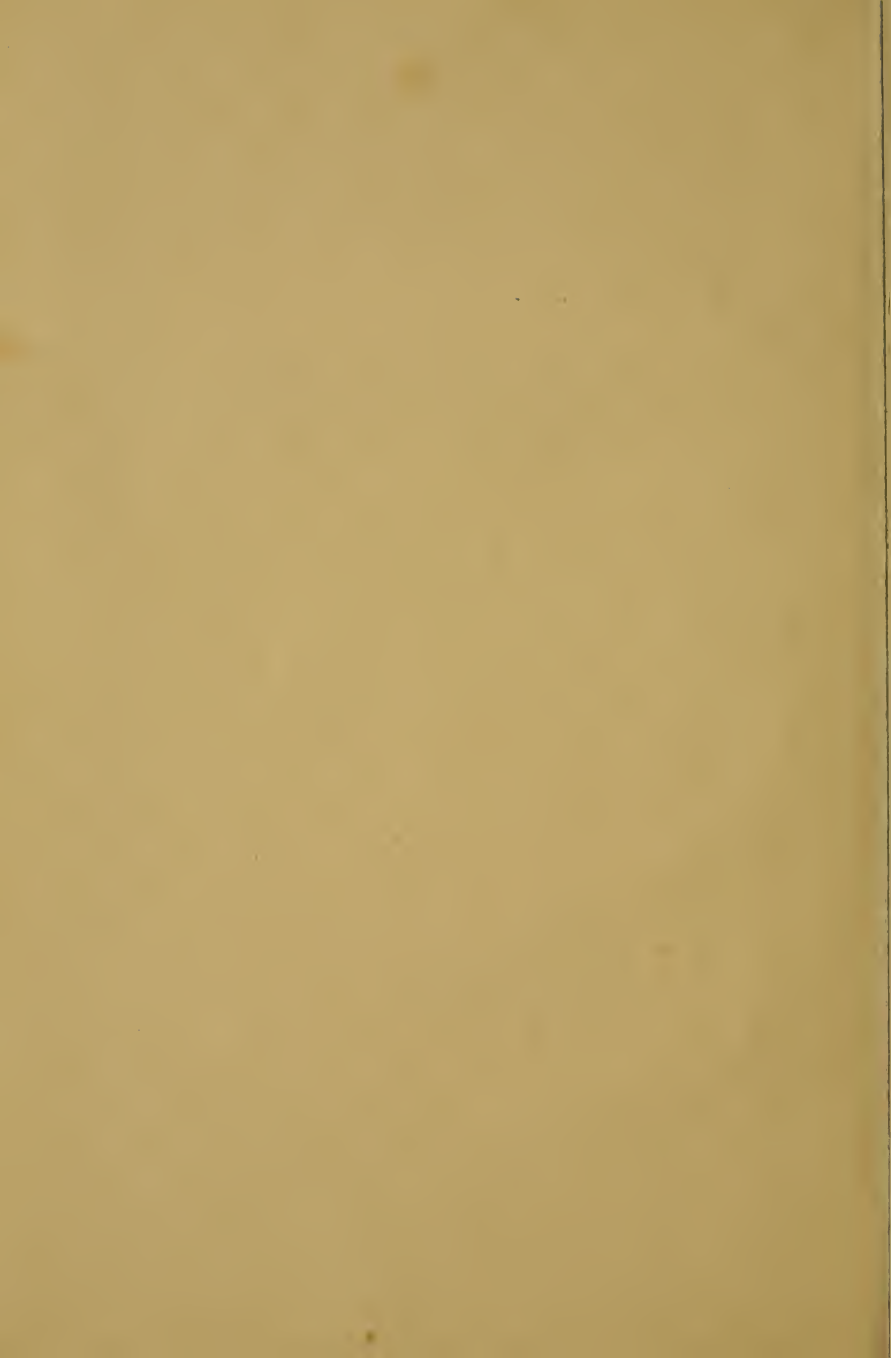
Presented by

The Rev. Robert Howard









# OUR BHEEL MISSION IN INDIA

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*An Account of the Country and the Character of the  
Bheel People and of the Work of Evangelization  
Carried on by Missionaries of the  
Scandinavian Alliance Mission.*

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BY

OLOF ANTON DAHLGREN

Missionary at Navapur, India.

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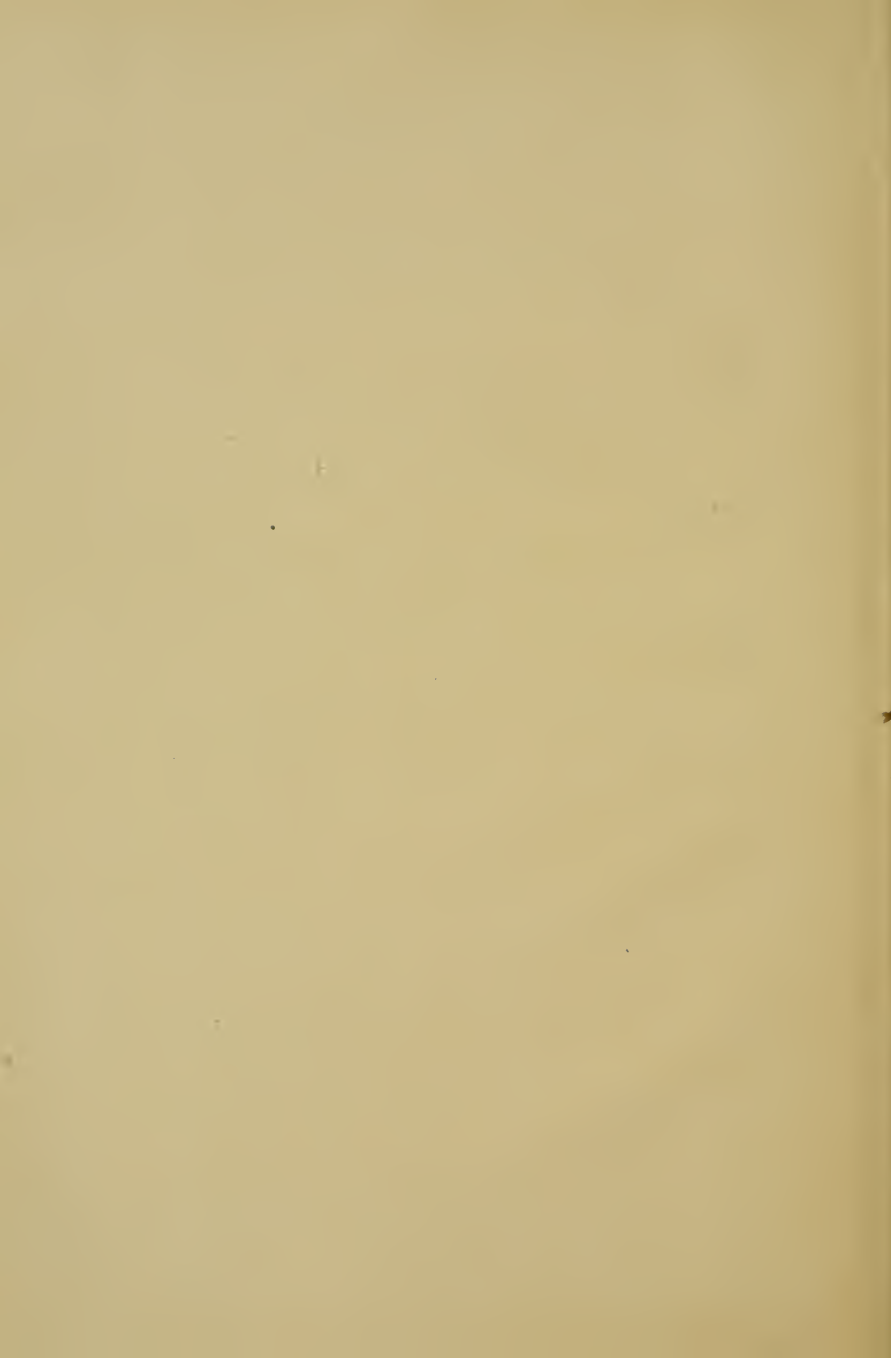
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## FOREWORD

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WHEN our Mission was started in India it was the intention to enter Thibet. This land being closed, however, the Missionaries had to settle down on the southern borders, having advanced as far as possible. Hoping soon to find the doors to the closed land open they toiled on while waiting; but the opening did not come and some began to look for other fields. One party went to Baltistan, another to Cooch Behar and still another to Naham, while some remained still preparing to enter Thibet, which, we trust, will soon unreservedly welcome the heralds of the cross.

Finally, the Bheels drew our attention, no effectual opening having been secured in the other places. Where this people live and how, the circumstances that led us to them and the part we have taken in the work of evangelization among them, these facts are related in this little book, which is sent forth with the hope that through it the Master's cause among the Bheels may be served.





## CHAPTER I.

### THE COUNTRY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE.

AREA AND POPULATION.—The Bheels did not originally occupy the country which they now occupy. The character of this country is such as to afford a convenient retreat from the oppressors—the later and stronger invaders. The portion of the Bheel country occupied by the S. A. M. is situated along the Tapti River up to a hundred miles from its mouth. It is part of the Tapti Valley, to the south extending up through Satpura Range, in the north towards the Nirbudda River. Roughly speaking the area of the portion chiefly occupied by our Bheels is 3,000 square miles; that of the other classes towards the east of the Tapti Valley portion 2,000 square miles. Since a definite number of the inhabitants of the above specified locality is not available one can safely state an average of 100 per square mile, which puts the population at half a million.

TIMBER AND GRASS.—The country is very hilly and undulated, in many parts covered with thick forest on the mountain sides. Teakwood, that splendid building material, which Alexander the Great is said to have bought from India for the building of his magnificent cities, is the main tree of the forest, of which it chiefly consists. The government of India has a special department to preserve the forests. When a field is acquired on which there are standing trees the Revenue Department deals with the field itself and the Forest Department with the timber, for which a certain fee is payable to that department. This is usually very low, enabling the purchaser to make considerable profit in selling the timber and firewood obtained in the clearing of the field.

Grass grows very luxuriously in the rainy season. On the beginning of the cold season, when the harvest is over, this is cut with sickles and tied up into sheaves or bundles, which are gathered up in stacks for supply during the hot season. Enterprising Hindus and Moham-medans take large contracts at convenient centers for exportation to Bombay and other large cities. The hay is



LOADING GRASS.

then pressed into bales, weighing about 180 pounds, and loaded on trucks at the station. The Bheels find good employment in the grass and timber business and hundreds of Bheel carts, loaded with heavy timber, are seen moving in to the weekly Nandurbar market during the cold season.

RIVERS.—Three large rivers flow through the country, viz., Tapti, Nirbudda and Mahi, each receiving a large

number of tributaries, many of which almost entirely dry up during the hot season. The villages are generally built on the banks of these brooks and rivers for water supply, since along their beds numerous springs gush forth out of the rock, the more prominent of which seldom dry up altogether. Should the rainy season be late the people may have to go for miles to water their cattle and fetch water, if, for want of a good well, they are dependent on the river supply. These tributaries quickly fill up at the heavy breaks of the Monsoon, sometimes working havoc. In some of these rivers marks are found of far better methods in agriculture than now contrived by the people, i. e., irrigation works at every prominent break in the bed-rock. The old Mahrattas and Moghuls, if to them we may ascribe these works, knew a good deal about engineering. The dams were made sufficiently high and strong to dam up a supply for the fields below, to which the water was led through small channels. Some of these, though very old, are still intact and used by the less industrious Bheel.

**THE SOIL.**—The lower parts of the country chiefly consist of black fertile soil (rajchikan), suitable for the cultivation of wheat, grain, cotton and the castor oil seed (*palma christi*), being the chief products of the cold season crop. The black soil has a remarkable power of retaining the moisture. The main products of the wet season are the Indian millet (*Jowari*), rice and a variety of oil seeds. They also sow a small quantity of corn for the household.

**THE CLIMATE.**—The climate in the hilly and wooded parts is rather unhealthy. At the end of the rainy season the fever malady usually breaks out, causing much suffering and even death. Quinine is the preventive as well as mosquito nets over the bed at night, neither of which is very agreeable. The bitter powder affects the hearing and the net the breathing. The net is to prevent the

mosquito from biting, as the sting is said to cause the fever. Here, as elsewhere in India, there are three seasons, the dry, wet and cold season. The latter is healthy and agreeable, but rather frosty. The people sleep with their backs towards the fire to keep warm. At this season nearly all sleep out on the fields to guard them from destructive wild animals, such as the blue bull, the spotted deer, the stag (Sambar), the antelope and the wild boar bear down on their fields in the night time. We were once out to shoot wild boar on a grain field. The owner, who had been watching for nights, was very grateful to be relieved from duty, fully trusting us, who covered almost the whole field with our rifles. We decided to occupy a place at the other corner, where the pig would be likely to enter from the woods. We lay watching in the stillness of the night and heard them enter at the opposite remote corner. We expected them to move in our direction, when suddenly the owner awoke and chased them away. In the morning the poor man was grievously disgusted, a large portion of his field having been destroyed by the wild pig, which we encountered afterwards, about thirty in number, in the woods about a mile from the scene of destruction.

**OPPRESSIVE HEAT.**—The hot season is very pressing, but in reality the most healthy. The hot winds beat furiously in the middle of the season, making it almost impossible to be outdoors in the afternoon. The heat at nights and in the forenoons is less oppressive, the thermometer gradually rising to 108 and 112 in the shade.

**THE MONSOON.**—The wet season is the time of keen activity on the fields. Everybody is seen outdoors plowing and preparing the fields for sowing. Only heavy showers will prevent them from attending to the duties on the farm. The rainfall averages about 30 inches. There are many drawbacks, either from untimed rain or non-timed rain. They seem to have to look back over a

considerable number of years to recall a strictly good year. For these and other reasons the Bheels are generally very poor. Nevertheless there is a sprinkling of well-to-do farmers. Agriculture is their chief occupation, the conditions of which are more fully described in a succeeding chapter.

LANGUAGE.—There are four or five different languages and dialects spoken, of which the Hindi is the universal (or most common). Marathi is the local tongue. At the extreme west of the field Guzerathi is spoken. The Mohammedans generally speak the Urdu dialect and the Bheels their own peculiar prattle. The ancient Bheel speech, if ever it existed, is now almost extinct, their present being traceable to a corrupted form of Guzerathi or even Hindi. The men usually understand the language of culture, but not the women, who must be addressed in their own dialect fully to make them understand. Their language is not reduced to writing, hence there is no literature beyond the private works and collections of the missionaries.

Being an aboriginal tribe, the Bheels are believed to have descended from the Kolarians, who, having entered India from the northeast, were the earliest inhabitants. They now number about two and a half millions and had considerable power before being suppressed by the ruling races. Though naturally backward and timid they show a dangerous temper when ill treated by the Moghuls and Mahrattas. They are now peacefully inclined since the English Government has adopted methods of mild and beneficent treatment.

CHARACTERISTICS.—They are rather dull and lacking in ambition and somewhat bent on mischief, petty thefts and robbery, and tribal vice. They also practise polygamy and are subject to excessive use of strong drink (daru), prepared from the flower of the "Mahwa" tree. At religious festivals and marriage feasts this liquor plays an important part.



**MARRIAGE.**—The young man who wishes to marry must pay from 10 to 20 dollars for his bride to her guardians or, if unable to pay this sum, he must serve 3 or 5 years in the house of the maid's father. The marriage life is usually happy if the wife bear children, otherwise, in nine cases out of ten, she will be deserted.

Their women are free to move about in the company of men. They labor fully as hard as the men, but have their own duties. They seldom drive the bullocks, but are made to work in the fields, weeding, cutting grass, etc., and do the household duties, carry home water and fuel on their heads, bake the bread, nurse the children and gossip. They are medium sized, well built and strong. The color of their skin is brown, but their features are well proportioned, and a strain of good nature is discernable in their round faces. Their young women are not all wanting in beauty, and their young men quickly develop manhood, being early made to participate in the keep-up of the home. They dress very simply, seldom wearing shoes. The women are usually better dressed than the men, but scarcely decent in the estimate of one unaccustomed to see them, yet having no indecency to the acquainted eye. The children move about naked until 7 or 8 years old, a red cord or a chain around the loins and sometimes a leather charm about the neck to prevent the devil from entering the child, and a bracelet on the arm, these being the sole articles of covering.

They show kindness and hospitality to strangers and will jealously protect them while in their charge, but they are very suspicious and do not readily commit their secrets to them.

**WEAPONS.**—They are well armed with bow and arrow and can use them to good advantage, but are now subject to the restrictions of the Arm's Regulation Act, yet they do practice bow shooting in most parts of the country and a wild boar or a hateful enemy will now and then feel the sting of their iron-pointed arrow.

BURIAL CUSTOMS.—The most dreaded enemy is death, which claims its victims through famine, plague and the most exacting of all maladies—the malaria fever. They either burn or bury their dead, the latter being common in our locality. A few stones are rolled on the grave and the cot on which the body was carried to its resting place is placed over it upside down, the legs being split with a hatchet to indicate its design. They believe in existence beyond the grave.

## CHAPTER II.

### RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND PRACTICES OF THE PEOPLE.

MOSLEM CREED.—The Bheels are greatly influenced in their religious thought by the Hindus and Mohammedans, now and then a petty chief being converted to their faith and then his people will generally follow him. The founder of the Moslem faith was Mohammed, who lived in the fifth century of the Christian era. His followers succeeded later in conquering India and now quite a number of Mohammedans are found there. Their faith is absolute Monotheism—"God is one and Mohammed is his prophet." When, therefore, we preach Christ as the Son of God, they become greatly offended, "for how can God have a son," they say, "unless he has a wife." Although they consider themselves more righteous than Christians, the Christian religion being considered absolute, yet their mouths are usually stopped when the sinfulness of man in the light of Calvary is preached to them. What does it profit a man if he adorn himself with rites and ceremonies when his heart still remains unchanged? Nothing but a change of heart—the new birth—will do for admittance into heaven. Their consciences bear them witness that they cannot cross the bridge over the river of death, which is sharper than a sword and finer than a hair. No, not even through the offering of a goat at the yearly sacrificial feast.

FOUR DISPENSATIONS.—To establish that their religion is the only one now in force; they argue that God has given his revelations in four different dispensations, viz., the dispensation of the law of Moses (tauret), of the psalms, and prophets (Zabur), of Christ (injil) and of Mohammed (furgan). Each new revelation annulled the

preceding one; hence, when Koran was given the former, i. e., the Gospel revelation, was made void and the dispensation ended. The dispensation of Mohammed is the last and will end the world (giyamat).

Much patience and forbearance is needed to deal with the much deluded Mohammedans; but love conquers even them and they are not at all an impossible class of



MOHAMMEDAN MOSQUE, NAVAPUR.

people to reach. In India there are a number of splendid converts, some of whom are successful workers. In Nandurbar, as a result of open air meetings in the market place, a number of Mohammedans became seekers.

**MANY GODS.**—The Hindus believe in many gods. According to a passage in their religious books they num-

ber no less than 33 lacs. (One lac equals 100,000.) If they were to call them each by name they would have to keep on calling almost six months. Some of their gods are more important than others, and these they worship according to their settled beliefs. When we were adjusting the camera in the Navapur market to take a snap shot of one of their temples a man stood in front



HINDU TEMPLE, NAVAPUR.

of the idol inside making his requests. He did this apparently with much earnestness, and yet his prayer was not heard. They will worship the sun rising in beauty and call to the moon at its first appearance. They bow their knee to stones and pieces of wood; they worship silver and gold. We sometimes get red painted rupees



in our cash which had been worshipped, and many other things they do, too intricate to describe. However, the consciousness of the existence of one living God is stealing over the masses, which, of course, is due to the power of the gospel.

CASTE REGULATIONS. — The Hindus are famous for their caste regulations. The gospel is greatly hindered by the restrictions of this damnable system, and not only



BRAHMAN.

the gospel, but every healthy social reform. A Brahmin labors under the delusion that there is fully as much difference between him and a pariah as there is between his baby and his dog. Now none would degrade himself to eat with a dog, neither will a Brahmin eat with a member of an inferior caste and every other being not a Brahmin they consider inferior to them. This is the whole theory. Caste is "jat" in their tongue and it means kind.

The higher kind cannot mix with the lower kind. Christians are considered a low kind and there are few of the lower castes which are counted lower. Even the Bheels, though an inferior class of people, consider themselves higher than Christians. This they do, being influenced by the higher castes, to whom they look up.

**SPIRIT WORSHIP.**—Although the Bheels receive much of their religious thought and practice from the Hindus, yet they have some fundamental ideas which are peculiar to them. They believe in and worship evil spirits (animism), although they acknowledge the existence of a superior being or force, called bhagwat or bhagwan, which creates and maintains all things in general. The laws by which all things are governed are immutable and evil as well as good comes from the same source, and as man is a part of the creation he is understood not to be morally responsible for his deeds, since they are predetermined by this supreme being with whom they have no relation resultant from the exercise of their own free will.

**WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY.**—Those with whom they have vital relation are the demons of whom they live in constant fear. Witchcraft is the means through which they operate and the witch who causes the spirit to meddle with the life, property and happiness of a given person is responsible in the first place for any misfortune that comes. Again sorcery is employed to find out the witch. Some prominent priest in the neighborhood (bhagat) is asked to reveal the mysterious person. If the usual fee is duly paid he will point out as a result of his witchcraft



**BHEEL PRIEST.** some suspicious character in their neighborhood, whereupon the party will return to inflict due punishment on the guilty. Much mischief is done by this

superstitious belief. A poor Bheel was forced, through witchcraft and devils, to move from place to place in order to get rid of the devil. Though he moved his hut to a number of places yet in none of them was he delivered from Satan. Having heard that a missionary had come to live near by he determined to seek his advice. The missionary told him of Jesus who had come to destroy the works of the devil. The man believed and was delivered from his bondage.

RELIGIOUS OF NECESSITY.—The Bheels are very irreligious, and the above facts explain it. When they do worship it is in a spirit of fear rather than of devotion. They are sure to worship with sacrifices in any given crisis. "Why did you make that sacrificial feast?" I once asked a Bheel who had slain a goat before the idol. "To prevent the recurrence of a child being suddenly taken away from us—what do you suppose?" he answered. The god "Mata" receives many offerings. This idol, whose name means mother, is commonly a red painted stone, carved or uncarved. They believe in a plurality of gods or manifestations of the supreme being. One idol very common in our locality is the "Shivaria deo," the keeper of the fields. Its shape is the head and neck of a horse held high, the idea being that they shall obtain a clear view of the field. Its height is about eight inches. They never turn their heads, however, to see what's going on behind them. This remark I often make to the amusement of the hearers.

THE TIGER GOD.—The tiger god is the one most dreaded. This god has the prominence of being living and active. I was once in a village and had to remain over night. On such trips I usually carried my rifle with me as a protection against wild animals or to obtain game, of which we have a rich variety. Now the people told me that the blue bulls usually come down into the fields during the night. "If we are out early in the morning at the edge of the forest we will surely see them," they

said. Before going to sleep I ate a meal of coarse rice served in a bowl without anything with which to eat it save my fingers, and nothing to eat with it. We rose up early in the morning, walked across the fields to the outskirts of the forest and there found a blue bull as expected. I shot the beautiful bull to the great delight of the Bheel people, who soon provided a cart and brought it to the village. This village was situated close to a big forest, where many tigers and leopards roam. As the



DANCING BHEELS AT HOLY FESTIVAL.

men busied themselves skinning the animal the cowboy of the village happened to bring the cattle of the village too near the shrine of the tiger god. The headman noticed it and warned the boy with a loud cry to move away from the place lest some calamity should befall the cattle. Through this little incident I learned a precious lesson, viz., how the poor Bheels actually fear the tiger god. To be regardless of religion, when one's gods are cruel and

vicious, is less remarkable than to be irreligious in spite of the goodness and mercy of the living God. Yet, such is man.

EVIL SPIRITS.—In conclusion it might be asked whether their belief in evil spirits is an imagination only, the sole creation of a superstitious mind or whether the existence of ghosts and demons is a fact? Whether they do have the power to interfere with men and women to oppress them? The Bible is clear on that point, I believe, and I do not hesitate to answer in the affirmative. Whence all the wickedness and all the misfortunes in the lives of men, if not from this source? Direct all the forces of the gospel against the hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places and sin and suffering will cease. To this end was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and none but the simple message of this gospel will deliver the heathen from their superstition and fear, and, praise God, it does most fully and perfectly deliver.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE BEGINNINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK.

Having thus been introduced to this interesting people we will now tell some of the things which have been done to evangelize them. This is a most fascinating story, indeed it seems almost like a romance throughout. God chose a peculiar way to make this people known to mission societies and missionaries. The church took no special notice of the Bheels up to the year 1880, when, through the devout wife of an English official, the Church of England was stirred up to raise some 15 thousand rupees for the beginnings of a Bheel mission. A missionary was sent out that year. The work was at first very discouraging. After eight years labor the first convert was enrolled, but in the year 1900 fourteen had been added to the church. Then came the great famine, after which things began to appear different. In the spring of 1903 fifty-four converts were baptized. The Dunker Brethren and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland have each their Bheel mission. The former have a considerable number of converts. The Canadian Presbyterians and later on our own mission also started work among this people.

COL. DE LESOE.—A certain Danish gentleman, Col. de Lesoe, was acting for the British Government as political agent to the Bheels. He was a fervent believer in Christ and took no little interest in the spiritual welfare of this people. He induced the Canadian Presbyterian mission to open a station in Amkhut through Dr. Buchanan. The work at Amkhut is very flourishing, not less than 105 converts having been added in 1901-2.

When he heard that two new missionaries had arrived from Sweden to take up work on the western

borders of Thibet he made their acquaintance and urged them to labor among the Bheels, to whom the door was open. At first they did not take to heart his advice, but one day, as Mr. A. P. Franklin was about to survey a site for their mission station in Nahan, a letter was handed to him in which he was strongly advised by his companion, Mr. A. J. Selin, not to transact any business regarding that land—though it was to be a free grant. He dropped the chain a bit perplexed; this, however, was to last only a short time for it so happened that Col. de Lessoe again wrote him a very urgent letter. Having poured out his heart before God he was no longer doubtful as to the meaning of these occurrences and as to what course to take. He visited the Bheels twice and secured the sanction of the home authorities to take up mission work among them. One morning in December, 1904, he ventured to start out from Amkhut, where he had studied the methods of Dr. Buchanan, setting out for the rough jungle with the object of beginning a mission in some suitable center on the southern side of Nirbudda River.

**THE WORK BEGINS.**—He crossed Nirbudda River and set foot on the soil of his promised land. He soon found a spot in Akrani suitable for a mission center and immediately began to build a mission station. He did this with the aid of the Bheels, making them brick forms and employing about a hundred people to make bricks. The work went on with some difficulty. Shortly afterwards Mr. Bjork joined him.

**JOURNEY FROM CASHMERE.**—The writer, who was then in Cashmere, had been informed of his movements. Recognizing an inward call to go to this people I packed up my things and started for the plains in the beginning of the year 1904. Being anxious to be led entirely by God to a field of His appointment—at times even Persia was in my mind—I did not beforehand make up any definite

plans. Mr. Franklin had instructed me by letter how to find him, but I found, after having started on my journey, that this letter had been left behind. Nor did I remember the name of the railway station; but as I was traveling over the snowy Himalayas I was led to make up my mind to visit Mr. Franklin and see his work. I tried to call to mind the name of the place and managed to recall —durbar. The ticket was to be bought at Rawalpindi, far up in the Northwest Provinces, but



BULLOCK CART.

goodness me, I couldn't make out where to go. You will surely say that I must have lost my head at that time and I almost agree with you, though I still maintain that it was the head of the place I had lost. But I was not to abandon the quest anyhow, so I purchased a ticket to Delhi. In Delhi, famous from the days of the Indian mutiny and as the old capital of India, I made up my mind to find the head to the name of my destination. I went in to a native bookshop, asking to be shown a

large map of India, as if I wanted to purchase one. Looking over the district of Kandesh I found in fairly large letters the name Nandurbar. I noted it down in my pocketbook and handed the map to the shopkeeper. I then went and bought my ticket to Nandurbar, where I arrived after two days' journey on the railway. At the government building of Nandurbar I ordered a bullock cart, which took me to Taloda the same evening. The next day I arrived in Mandulwar, and on this occasion I was very favorably impressed by the way the Bheels received me. Having shown to me unmistakable tokens of hospitality they appeared to me like perfect gentlemen. These were, of course, first impressions and as "familiarity breathes contempt" different impressions might come. Let this be said, however, in honor to those villagers who showed me that memorable noonday to the headman's house, where I was cordially greeted and begged to be seated on a very neat "Charpai." I was much exhausted after a very brisk walk. I asked them to bring me some water and they brought a vessel, not full of water, but, imagine, of warm pure milk. It is needless to say that it was appreciated. Being a perfect stranger, such being usually looked upon with suspicion and contempt, I never was more grateful, when, asking for the least with which to refresh myself, the best available was given. They also sent two guides with me to show me the way to the mission station—all this as if I had been their brother, and this I was, though they knew it not.

**BUILDING A HOUSE.**—Not a few had already been baptized in this newly opened place and most of them labored on the walls of the mission station. I now joined them in this work, laboring hard with my own hands in order to get the roof on before the rains. We then started off, just at the break of the Monsoon, to spend some time in seeing the work at other missions. When Mr. Franklin

and I left all the Bheels were busy preparing and sowing their fields.

VISITING.—We journeyed down to Taloda, a distance of about 24 miles. At that time there was no missionary nor mission work at Taloda. At present there are both. Right here something happened which was to have a bearing upon the future development of the work. It is delightful as well as instructive to call to mind such experiences as they show the unmistakable guidance of God. At the postoffice two postal cards were lying for Mr. Franklin. One was from Ellichpur, asking us to defer our visit a few days, and the other from Mr. Stover, the superintendent of the Dunker Brethren mission. This post card informed us that Mr. Stover was contemplating a visit to Mr. Franklin in the Satpuras to see the work, but especially to confer about Nandurbar, which was to be abandoned by the C. M. S. mission. Now, Nandurbar is the nearest railway station to Mandulwar, where we had just opened a work. The Brethren were thinking to take over the work of the church mission at Nandurbar. This set us to thinking about Nandurbar that perhaps we had better ask the Brethren kindly to leave Nandurbar to the S. A. M. We knew that the C. M. S. wished to abandon this mission at Nandurbar, but we had never seriously thought of occupying that place. But here, through a remarkable coincidence, at a decisive moment the finger of God was again seen. We decided to run down to Bulsar and arrange in the best possible way about Nandurbar. Mr. Stover received us very kindly. We suggested that the Brethren might take up another unoccupied district among the Bheels, nearer their old field, and leave Nandurbar to us. We assured him that we would buy the place and put workers there immediately. This was a bold assertion, for we had no money on hand nor did we know exactly who could take up the work there.





REV. FREDERICK FRANCON.

Thus our first attempt at extension was made and the initial step taken to open the second station. We then proceeded on our journey.

I went to Ghoom to take charge of a station there belonging to the American branch of our mission. Mr. Franklin returned to his station and found to his dismay that every bit of what the Bheels had sown was dried up for want of rain. The prospects were intensely dark, since the rainy season was over and no crop had been secured. All expected famine in Akrani that year, hence Mr. Franklin and the other workers were urged to make an immediate appeal to friends in the home lands to render all possible assistance. Very promptly a sum of about \$2,500 was contributed and sent in. Meanwhile a heavy shower came and relieved the distress. The famine was averted and the money on hand saved.

MR. FRANSON VISITS THE BHEELS.—Mr. F. Franson, our general director, visiting India and the Bheel work in the year 1905, wrote me a letter from the field, relating the bright prospects of the work—not altogether unknown to me—and said he would have no objections if I wished to leave Ghoom and come down to the Bheels. I saw in this my call to the Bheel field confirmed. When I came down the circumstances soon determined what way to use the famine money on hand. The chief concern now was the crowd of people, needy objects for famine relief, who gathered around me. They were all Bheels, needing assistance in almost every respect. We did not, of course, encourage them to hope for earthly blessings, but rather to look for the hidden treasures of the Kingdom of God. They came regularly for instruction during a period of two months. Their baptism and settlement on the Dhanora farm is all stated in another chapter. With my family I spent two years together with the people of new Dhanora.

THE OPENING OF NAVAPUR.—An opportunity then presented itself for a further extension when a mission

station at Navapur under an independent American missionary, Mr. W. A. Phillips, was offered us. God's guidance may be seen in this also. This mission station at Navapur was opened about seven years ago by Mr. Phillips. He aimed at founding an orphanage there in view of which he secured 80 acres of land near the railway station. He spent much in clearing this spot to suit his purpose and thought of building a house; but lack of means as well as time prevented him from attempting the task. The only human dwelling available



BHEEL DWELLING.

was a native bamboo house, plastered with a mixture of mud and cowdung. In this house he and his wife lived and suffered most of the time during their pioneer work at Navapur. Their health broke down at last and consequently they had to leave the work and return to America.

Mr. Phillips negotiated with another society for the sale of the property. At one of our yearly meetings at Nandurbar he was present on invitation to take part in the devotional meetings. Being drawn to us by the spiritual blessings received while with us he naturally

proposed to us to take over Navapur. The condition was to pay the amount of their passage money home and a sum of money which he had put into the work, amounting to Rs. 3,000. The property available being valuable at this sum and being in need of more stations we decided to accept this offer at once. He said he felt a little uneasy in regard to his negotiations with the others, but on returning to Navapur he received a post card from their secretary stating that since they could not give a decisive answer for a considerable time he would be free to dispose of the property to some other party.

Hearing of this we felt encouraged to go ahead, since it was an indication of God's guidance, for we never sought to possess the station, though we were aware of its importance in the Bheel work, being situated near a railway station in the center of a comparatively well populated Bheel district.

At first Mr. and Mrs. Lieden took charge of the work at Navapur and moved over to the place in December, 1906, and began to dig the foundation for a new dwelling. Mr. Lieden, however, had been out on the mission field many years and needed to go home on furlough. The question then arose who should take charge of the station.

NAVAPUR BECOMES AMERICAN STATION.—The committee on the Bheel field at its quarterly meeting at Navapur, January 28-29, 1907, found it necessary to decide the question to which home committee the Navapur station should belong and who should be stationed there. It was decided that the Swedish committee should continue to work all the stations already occupied and to take over the work at Dhanora, this to constitute the eastern Bheel field. The American committee should take the western field, the center of which should be Navapur. Mr. Phillips was paid Rs. 3,000 for all the existing property at Navapur. Mr. A. Dahlgren was given charge of this field.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

Callings differ according to temperament and aptitude. Some are called to do the work of a deacon, others of an evangelist. "Do the work of an evangelist," was Paul's terse command to his son Timothy. This gracious watchword resounds through the gospel age and we do well to heed it studiously. Different modes may present themselves even as to the carrying out of this command, but the end is the same, viz., souls brought in to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Workers for this blessed soul-winning are greatly needed everywhere. To be a successful laborer of this kind special grace is needed. None will really succeed in this unless he or she spends much time in earnest waiting upon God. This presupposes entire freedom from earthly cares. When love for souls overpowers the worker, then even the cares and anxieties have to give way to the consuming fire of the Spirit of God.

One of the best methods to get the knowledge of the saving powers of the cross spread abroad is the simplest, i. e., to proclaim it—and that not in persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. It is the preaching and the teaching of the gospel.

OPEN AIR PREACHING.—The missionary devotes his whole time and energy to preaching and teaching. The preaching is done at the weekly market place, where much people usually come together, and in the villages at any time, but especially during the so-called touring season. Such open air meetings are conducted in a very simple manner. Upon entering the village or the

market place one chooses the most suitable place and begins to attract the people by singing a favorite hymn. Soon a crowd gathers and some one gives a simple testimony, for example, concerning the sinfulness of man and his lost condition, in which he is unfit to appear before God in His glory and majesty, and consequently



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needs a qualified mediator. Again a hymn is sung bearing upon these facts, after which another speaker supplements the first by making some pointed remarks on religion, setting forth the excellencies of Him who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

As an example of what can be accomplished through



such meetings I will describe one that took place at the market place of Navapur, being the last meeting before the writer left for America. The message delivered was frank, simple and clear, making it possible for the ignorant and superstitious crowd to comprehend the wonderful gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God to save men from the bondage and fear of Satan. They were made glad; it struck them then and there as a glorious message. That they were convicted in their minds is evident by the fact that although some were present who wished to contradict, none of those who could do it had any desire to do so. A prominent Mohammedan fakir decidedly declined to say anything when some tried to incite him to speak against the missionaries, on the contrary, declaring that they had spoken the truth.

A few days later this very man came to our mission station, wishing to converse on religion. He was "a man of understanding," who could read and write. He accepted with gratitude a New Testament in the Urdu language, which he promised to read, though he might have to do it at night time to avoid being tantalized by his co-religionists. When we left for America this man came to see us off on the train and there he talked with me a few minutes while the train was waiting, and acknowledged that Jesus was a wonderful guide for mankind. He repeated a poem in Urdu which he had composed to the honor of Jesus. I caught a few sentences and then stepped on the train. He went his way back to the village and we saw him no more. We can only trust that the gospel message which, as far as we know, began to work itself into the heart of that precious soul the first time he heard it will transform his life.

A NOISY MEETING.—Mention may also be made of the open air meetings we used to have in the market of Nandurbar. Hundreds gathered around us listening

breathlessly to the wonderful message. Many were convicted in their hearts. Fierce opposition also raged, the baser class making noise and throwing dust and mud, and at times even stones calculated to injure. But the Lord protected us and none was hurt. One market day, as we gave testimony to our matchless Savior, the large crowd gathered became restless and unruly. We were served with showers of gravel and dust and their fury began to look serious, but the Lord stood by us and none



MARKET.

of us turned. The over-mastering feeling which ruled our hearts was that God would graciously pardon them and bless them. As our position seemed to become helpless the Mohammedan section took our side and a number of them rushed upon the stand where we faced the crowd and sheltered us, raising up their hands in our defense against the persecutors. When they had cooled down the crowd somewhat they escorted us out of the tumult. But these were blessed days, not only to us, but

I am sure to scores of those who heard the gospel of peace from time to time in Nandurbar. . Not a few came to the mission house to have private talks with the workers on religious questions. The workers spent much time in earnest supplication for the people of Nandurbar. Their prayers were partly answered then; but perseverance is needed in continued intercession for the salvation of sinners and the outpouring of the Spirit in a mighty revival in our whole work.

The native helpers, Catechists and Bible women, are capable of doing much good service for the Lord if



WORKERS AT NAVAPUR STATION.

endued with the power of the Spirit. To get a number of Bheels trained for the ministry is a thought which commends itself forcibly to us. The danger is that they become lazy and reckless in their habits when released from their former occupations. The problem is, then, how to combine industry and thrift with the spiritual training. Now there is, indeed, a labor which is labor in every deed, labor for the salvation of souls. There are many among this people, no doubt, who are capable of becoming earnest workers for the Lord if wisely trained. A number of boys are already under instruction, and many earnest prayers are offered up for them that the Lord may use them for His glory among the Bheels.

BEGINNING.—This part of the work of evangelization may begin by a missionary touring in his district requesting any young man he may find interested in the “Yisudharm” (the religion of Jesus) to go with him to his headquarters. They agree to come with him, if possible, on the condition that they stay with the missionary at least two weeks at their own expense. The village is sometimes influenced to support its man, if he cannot support himself. Much faith and courage are needed to carry out this plan, for usually there is not much faith among the people themselves in such an undertaking. It must be inspired by the faith of the Messenger. But if the missionary succeeds in getting the men to go with him on these conditions he is sure to be successful in teaching these young men during this short term some essential things in Christianity.

METHODS.—My readers doubtless will be interested to learn how such a course may be turned to splendid profit. There are, of course, different ways, perhaps as many as there are heads and hearts; but the following is an example of a systematic course taken up in evangelistic work on the field: Each morning is devoted to Bible reading, prayer and singing. Such scripture passages are chosen as will bear upon the general subject of the day. As the men are illiterate (this we have to count on) the remaining hour in the forenoon is given to the alphabet and spelling. This to continue throughout the course.

Two hours in the afternoon of the first week are spent in memorizing scripture passages and singing, committing the text and the tune to memory. The afternoon of the second week is spent in visiting adjacent villages, giving the class a trial in actual service. They begin to sing and possibly to repeat some of the passages, some one even having courage enough to say something out of his own heart, as was the case once, when we preached in a village concerning the evils of strong drink. One

of those who was with us supplemented us most emphatically on this point and made a good impression.

TEACHING.—As to what to teach them, we begin with the ten commandments and the Lord's prayer and some passages of scripture on the sinfulness of man and the all sufficiency of Christ to cover all their needs. (John 3:16), the publican's prayer and such words, for example, as "the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."



NATIVE EVANGELIST.

There are some things which they cannot fail to learn, i. e., that the Bible is a sacred book and that the great God it reveals is approachable in audible prayer. They will learn the alphabet. They will learn to repeat the Lord's prayer, or part of it, and the decalogue. Conscience will be awakened to some extent and they will know that there is a way of forgiveness and will realize a need of applying for it; and last but not least they will know how to sing a Christian hymn.



This they are told to repeat in the village upon their return, each one to his own hamlet. When these doctrines are taught in faith and simple trust in their mighty reality, the men go back astonished, some of them at least, and they hardly fail to testify of it in some way. The woman of Samaria is a telling illustration. Now others are brought in the same way. But next time these first ones are carried through a more elaborate course. The villages where these young men live are visited as often as possible with "the word of His life" and gradually a precious work grows into existence.

CONVERSATION.—A third method besides preaching and teaching is conversation. This is very profitable. It is almost the same as teaching, but differs in this respect, that in a conversation you deal with only one person. The introduction must differ according to the temperament and standing of the person, but it must lead to the same end—the sinfulness of man and the sufficiency of Christ to cover all his need. Those who think of nothing but their bullocks and their fields will have to be met on that platform. You lead them up to the uncertainty of these things and hence their vanity. They have trusted in them—why not trust in God, through Jesus, who satisfies all the longings of a man's heart?

Persons of refined thought—and such we have—must be led down from their exalted position to the meek and lowly Jesus. Many opportunities present themselves for this kind of work among government officials and other leading men who live in the Bheel country.

These are the only methods through which the missionary may expect the special co-operation of the Spirit for if faith is the motive power it has no other guarantee for success than the power of the truth itself and the operation of the Spirit. A few years of such work, carried on through the guidance of "Him, who supplieth us the Spirit and worketh powers," bring glorious results and the name of God is greatly magnified.



## CHAPTER V.

### OUR CONVERTS.

IGNORANCE.—When you ask a heathen about things pertaining to the way of salvation through the gospel, most of them will answer very much the same as the Eunuch when Phillip asked him whether he understood what he was reading. People at home do not easily understand how hard it is for a heathen to understand even the very simple teachings of the New Testament. This blessed knowledge which has come to us in various ways from childhood is beyond his perception, his experience—his inner life. Let us then remember that when the missionary approaches a heathen to convert and confirm him he undertakes a task, the full realization of which belongs to the future counted in years.

DISCIPLES.—With our best understanding of the significance of the Lord's commission to make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things commanded by him, we baptized a number in the month of April, 1905. This act was the second stage in the commission; making disciples being the first. A disciple is not necessarily a saint, but a learner, and he may not differ from one who is not a disciple to begin with, except in the matter of the will. In baptism he passes through the second stage and enters into the third. To take baptism implies a considerable lot of self-sacrifice, especially in places where caste distinctions are prevalent. Though not especially instructed as to the significance of baptism the heathen round about us have a very correct idea of this act. To our satisfaction they have repeatedly showed the converts that they have understood baptism to be an act by which they have

severed themselves from their former relations and become changed—in a bad sense, of course, in their estimation. They have done this in refusing to have any intercourse with them.

A HINDU RITE.—To regain caste privileges, i. e., to be converted back to Hinduism or heathenism, it may be from Christianity, one must go through a very disgusting rite. He must eat and drink four products of the



CHRISTMAS GROUP.

cow—milk, clarified butter, urine and dung. This is a Hindu rite, but practised among the Bheels by the guidance of Brahman priests. It seems to take the same place in their religion as baptism in the Christian religion.

It is then obvious that a change must take place in the mind of the heathen in baptism, though in some cases, especially in the baptism of masses the heart may remain little changed. We notice, however, with gratefulness that conversion towards God has taken place,

for they begin to heed his commandments. We believe that a fuller change of heart will follow as the words of Christ find entrance into their hearts. Possibly all will not be saved and brought into the fold of Christ, even though this is our earnest prayer. All the heathen look upon such a conversion as a victory for the new religion and they are not altogether inactive in offering resistance.

A PROBLEM.—It then behooves us by the grace of God to endeavor to keep that which He has committed in our charge. The converts are to be taught to observe all the commandments of the Lord. This is the teaching stage, and here we are confronted with a problem of magnitude. Were it not for the promise of the Lord's presence with us we would be unequal the task. I have found how futile is the attempt to withstand the forces of darkness and ignorance in one's own wisdom and strength.

A conquest has been made for the Lord—a field is occupied in which, alas, wild oats have grown for ages, yielding a plentiful increase to the winds and the flames. The cry is unto the Lord of the harvest, "Teach me how faithfully to utilize all available means to root out the evil and cleanse Thy garden that it may yield rich increase unto thee."

It is then necessary to begin with God and with divine means. The spiritual plow is not only the word of God, but the word of God in the hands of a Christian life and character. If the missionary is not wholly yielded up to God and His guidance, then his spiritual plow is a poor one, or, at any rate, it will do poor work. The missionary is the ambassador of Christ, and His representative. His task is to form Christian character in his converts and this is not possible unless the missionary himself is strictly straight in his life, and filled with the grace of God to act out the Christ life in his dealings with the people. It is a well known fact that the missionary's

converts are what the missionary himself is. They will hardly rise to a higher level though they may attain to the same degree of spirituality.

**BAD WEEDS.**—It takes a long time to find out what really dwells in the heart of a man, just as you cannot say what bad weeds may spring up in your corn field, for the heart of a man is an evil thing. There is a kind of grass growing in the wheat fields of the Bheels the roots of which are a formidable foe to the wheat grower. This grass looks very nice above the ground, but one gets a different impression on closer examination of the roots covered up by the soil. Much strength and perseverance are needed to tear out these roots. The field may look fairly clean when the seed is sown, but to the irritation of the owner he finds that the greater part of them were still left, which, as they grow, kill the feebler roots of the good seed. The Lord spoke truly in the parable of the wheat and the tares concerning that wretched zizania in the heart of men which destroys the work of the Lord. It is said of these roots that they possess such inherent power of growth that if cut up into small pieces and scattered over a field the pieces will take root and grow. That is just the true picture of the evil—it has a remarkable power of growth.

The consequence then is that as the principles of Christ are being enforced the evil asserts itself. The law of Christ aims at the very roots of a man's whole being. A perfect change must take place, which is to bear its mark upon every detail of his life-walk. A change so thorough and entire cannot be effected without a serious death blow to every trait which makes up a heathen—the perfect type of a man in the flesh. When confronted with this serious crisis the majority naturally draw back. Many are called, but few are chosen. This is the condition even among people of Christian civilization.

**DISCIPLINE.**—In every case where the law of Christ furnishes definite regulations these must be observed. New regulations are, therefore, introduced displacing the old, which were contrary and destructive to the growth of Christian virtues. In most cases the customs and habits obtaining in heathenism stand in direct opposition to the law of Christ. They cannot be tolerated in the church. This brings us to the question of discipline. It is not a pleasant thing and often humiliates the worker. If ever he needs the upholding prayers of God's people, it is when he is called upon to use "the stick." As a shepherd among the sheep or a father among children his work is not only to watch and pet, but also to strike and scold. He must possess self-restraint enough to strike the wolf and not the sheep, and sense enough to scold the devil and not the child. The people at home may help to make him a true shepherd for the sheep and a loving father of his spiritual children, if they earnestly strive for him in their prayers. If left alone he may degenerate into a despot. If you knew the furious temptations that beset a missionary to the heathen you would surely, dear reader, give more serious thought to your missionary in your prayers. The distance need not hinder you from interceding as intelligently for him as for your pastor. The prayer of faith will reach the goal as surely as a wireless message its destination. We remember in this connection how the great Apostle Paul valued the intercessions of God's people.

**HOPEFUL SIGNS.**—There are at present encouraging signs of a spiritual awakening. A number is already practising the prayer life. When visiting Dhanora lately I went out late in the night and heard one of the Bheels loudly pleading with God in prayer. I listened a while and when I re-entered the house I dropped upon my knees, thanking God for His work of grace going on in the hearts of this dear people. In an assembly one of the Bheels prayed so intelligently and so earnestly that

all were moved when asked to pray for the missionaries who are striving for their salvation, and especially for those who were about to leave the field for a time.

From another visit to Dhanora I relate the following:

TESTIMONIES.—We had the Bheels to testify in the meeting, and they were interesting testimonies. A Bheel boy, Babu, gave a very definite and earnest testimony of God's saving grace. We rejoiced in the saving power of the gospel. Then came our little Rao. He seemed to bubble over with joy and his testimony was marked with a directness and simplicity that bespoke of the gracious work of the Spirit in the heart. This young man got the conviction that Jesus is able to save shortly after he first came to Dhanora. It happened that he was sick when I visited him. I knelt down and prayed for him. He realized a change at once, but it was only a long time after that he told me this. Then Damja came forward sober and serious, having covered his face for a few seconds in silent prayer. He breathed out his eternal hope. Praise the Lord! I am satisfied to know that God has begun a work of grace, which will result in the salvation of a number even from Dhanora at the coming of Jesus. Then Divalia gave his testimony, specially mentioning how he once was tempted to drink. He had not been able to withstand, but he was happy to know that God had forgiven him through Christ. How much these weak brethren need our best guidance. Ania gave a very sensible testimony that he had surely come to know that God is true because God once had answered his prayer. We then called on Surjis' brother to give account of the great sacrifice he had made some time ago in Dhanora. After some demurring he at last told the story to the hearty amusement of every one present. The substance was this: Near Dhanora on the way to the fields stands an abominable wooden idol such as is quite common among the Bheels. One of the boys living in our Christian village was troubled with a skin disease.



One day he and his companion were going out to the fields. They said, "Let us test the power of this idol. Have we not heard that he is a good idol?" As one of them, who was really in trouble, entered into the presence of the god he made a vow that he would serve him faithfully all his days if he would quickly heal him from his disease. If not he promised to make a sure end of him. No healing came, and the boy, true to his promise, sent his ax flying into the idol's head and split it from top to bottom. The boy, who is not baptized, was nearly drawn before the magistrate for sacrilege.

CHANGED LIFE.—How, further, do we notice their changed life? Voluntarily ceasing to work on Sundays and attending the meetings are infallible signs. While some do this others have to be reminded. The Bheels smoke tobacco. It may be said to take the place of the missionary's tea. We do not absolutely forbid the converts to smoke, though we urge them to stop the habit. When they decline to drink liquor, as a result of our message, they give strong evidence of a changed life. These signs are not wanting. When they have failed and confess they prove a changed opinion of good and bad. This is a hopeful sign of a general awakening of conscience which is taking place among our converts. They are no longer unconcerned as the rest when being warned of their faults. Wrath and quarreling still remain to some extent, and the deep-rooted superstition connected with sorcery and witchcraft is asserting itself. At certain seasons the young people gather at night, jumping, shouting and singing. This is being replaced by better shouting, for when they learn Christian hymns they sing them very heartily.

The S. A. M. has 300 Bheel converts, about 100 being communicants and the rest children and adherents. A number of those we baptized in the beginning have returned to their former life and relations, but we hope to win them back.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE WORK AMONG THE CHILDREN.

CONTRASTS.—The Bheel children are not as fortunate as the children of America. When we arrived in Brooklyn, after a period of seven years in India, the children quickly drew my special attention. The first thing I noticed about them was their cleanliness, this being specially emphasized by the appearance of their white skin or light complexion. They all seemed to be happier than the children of India. There was noticeable an expression of delight in their beautiful eyes, and their happy appearance made me reflect and compare their condition with that of their brothers and sisters in India. I reached the conclusion that the children of America are far happier than those of India. Now the reason for this is simply that the conditions for a happy childhood are more favorable here than in India, because they have their root in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The great majority of the children of America enjoy the privilege of a home with Christian principles—if not a strictly Christian home; but many are born in such, and this means more to them than they know how to appreciate. They have the privilege of going to Sunday school every Sunday, of hearing of Jesus and his love and of having fellowship with him; to sing sweet hymns, which make their life happier and more worth living. Moreover they can all go to school to learn to read and write and count and behave. Their parents and guardians know how to punish them when they do wrong, as well as to love them under all circumstances. The Bheel children lack almost entirely all these privileges. Take away the Christian home—I mean the lofty ideals of a Christian

home; take away Sunday and the Sunday school; take away the public school and tear off the clean and decent dress from your sweet girl of ten and dress her in a few dirty rags and you get pretty nearly the conditions of the children and young people in the far away Bheel country.

WORK.—Most of the Bheel children must work for their own living when they become big enough to do something. This is necessary owing to their poverty. Girls and boys of 8 or 10 years used to come to work on the mission station. They received as wages from 2 to 3 cents per day of 9 hours—this being the usual rate. Unless the missionary gives them some work, so they can come and earn their living, he barely gets a chance to exert any influence over them, for he will not find them at home, nor will they come to his station on promise of an education. However well he may make it sound in their ears, they see no profit in anything that does not bring tangible results immediately.

SINGING.—Owing to building work and other business around our station, we have been in a position to deal with a number of children and young people all the time, and my experiences with them belong to the happiest of all my Christian experience. I know of nothing which has moved me more deeply and left such a lasting and pleasant impression on my heart as to hear them sing in their simple way some of the songs we use in our services. Many did show a manifest interest in the gospel message, but they were usually timid and did not wish to say much in public. But they used to have their “song services,” when they happened to be sent to work in some obscure corner where they were not noticed. Thus many a time did I steal up unnoticed to listen to their sweet singing, and sometimes as I wiped away a tear I asked myself if the love of Jesus was not after all shed abroad in their hearts. I now speak of non-Christians, you

know. They usually kept singing, when they sat on the scaffolds along the walls, packing the wet plastering lest it should crack in the intense heat. Sometimes they also sang their own unique airs.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.—Thus they toil on content with their lot. But they seem to think that they must work on Sunday also, for although some acknowledge the sanctity



SCHOOL AT NAVAPUR.

of the day of rest, yet they are not inclined to observe it. They must be about some work somewhere, and as yet they have acquired no real taste for Sunday observance in a strictly Christian sense. But it will come in due course, when the time is ripe for it. The preceding work of breaking up the ground and sowing the precious seed must be done in much faith and perseverance. This

we partly do in welcoming the children to the little Sunday School class gathering every Sunday morning at the station. In order to reach those who do not come we usually visit the surrounding villages in the afternoon, taking one at a time, gathering the children and their parents. The children are usually dull and inattentive like all the rest, so that much tact and zeal is required in order to make them understand anything.

One Sunday afternoon I gathered a class of 8 or 10 in a village near the station. They sat down, listened as well as they could to my talk on the ascension of Jesus, which was the lesson that day. When I was through I held up the picture card representing Jesus being received up into heaven. I asked them whether they now could tell who the man on the picture was. They kept looking awhile and then one took courage and said, "Chokari," the groceryman. This was certainly an unexpected answer, as I had made up my mind that they had not only understood but appreciated my talk on the risen Saviour.

This little incident illustrates the fact that the nature of a man is earthly and that it readily comprehends things belonging to the earth. When there is no training of the mind and the heart to rise to higher ideals, mankind will grow up under the same principles which guided my little four-year-old boy, who, after repeating the Lord's prayer twice, kept on saying—daily bread—our daily bread.

LIE AND STEAL.—In the quest for the meat that perisheth, which is the chief thing among the heathen, and as there is no guidance by moral principles, many regrettable things are said and done, and in such an atmosphere the children of India grow up. Any means that will enable them to obtain worldly advantages is sanctioned and so children are often taught both to lie and steal. Hence they do not receive the healthy chastisement which

is freely given in Christian homes and which is the safeguard of the child's growing life. When the Bheel children deserve punishment praise is given instead, being often greeted with a "well done!" when they have succeeded in bringing home their bosom full of products from the neighbor's garden. In short, everything good in the highest sense must give way to considerations of the meanest kind—what shall we eat and what shall we drink and wherewithal shall we be clothed?

The poor, innocent children have to suffer the consequences. But there is salvation even for the dear children of this poor degraded people through the precious blood of Jesus.



## CHAPTER VII.

### SECULAR WORKS.

VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.—One feature of our Bheel work is the Village settlement or some scheme for the furtherance of social and industrial movements among the people. There are various reasons for this. For example the Bheel is uncivilized, timid and backward and incompetent in business affairs, subject to chronic debt and poverty. He is naturally a poor economist, hence the prospects are not very hopeful for any substantial improvement even under fresh regulations. Very little definite work can be done among them, however, while they remain in a disorganized state. They need a ruling hand among them to reform their whole social and economic system according to purely Christian principles. How can this be accomplished? There seems to be a way to realize it in connection with the purely evangelistic method. I mean the organization of Christian Villages. To accomplish this both money and pluck and wisdom is needed. Doubtless there are scores of Christian philanthropists, who, if aware of the opportunities, would reckon it an honor to provide means for such a humanitarian work, fraught with abundant blessings and thanksgivings. I have had opportunity to test this method for the last four years, and if I had a fortune I would gladly spend it in the Village settlement scheme.

CONDITIONS FOR TENURE.—The Bheels are mostly agriculturists, and being naturally timid and backward they are constantly either absorbed by the stronger races, the Hindus and Mohammedans, or are ousted by them from their villages and possessions. To prevent this the British Government has made a special regulation applying

to all the backward classes. Revenue waste land is being reserved in those parts where they dwell or are likely to dwell. This land is available for tenancy, but not for ownership. These regulations are called the New Tenure, the chief conditions being first that an occupancy price be paid by the applicant. This is usually the assessment once in advance. When this has been paid the applicant is entered as a tenant. He then enjoys the privilege of raising small loans from the Government on good security. These loans are called Tagai and must be



THE KACHERI—GOVERNMENT BUILDING.

utilized for the improvement of the land, for bullocks, seed, and wells for irrigation. Secondly, the tenant is not to lease or sublet his land but the right of occupancy passes over to his descendants. Should the tenant fail to keep up the cultivation of the land he occupies or to pay the taxes and other dues to the Government then he forfeits his right further to hold the land, which in that case reverts to the Government. The land will then be rented to another, subject to the same regulations.

**MONEY LENDING.**—On closer examination of these rules we find that they are calculated to prevent the

greedy money lenders from acquiring the lands belonging to the backward classes. If they held the land on the Old Tenure they would have powers both to lease and sublet and the consequence would be that the Bheel being dependent on the monied class for the cash he needs, his land would sooner or later pass into the hands of the "sowcar."

If the Bheel, being a poor reckoner in money matters,



S.AWYERS.

happens to get into debt, say for \$15, he will ever remain a debtor—the banker will see to that. The interest is so high that he can barely manage to pay it alone. They enjoy the privilege of drawing small loans from the Kacheri, it is true, but this hardly improves the condition, since the surety generally is this same money lender. If the Bheel is ever to become an independent farmer, able to maintain an honest, debt-free position, he must be

saved from his money lender altogether. This can be accomplished in many cases—not in all—through the Village settlements.

Much waste land is still available, and many might be nicely settled. At convenient intervals a party of such, whose character has been tested to some extent, may be gathered. A suitable location having been found, the Government would be approached to obtain the best conditions. A grant of occupancy right is perhaps given free of charge, as in the case of Dhanora. The question of who should hold the right of occupancy, whether the mission or the people, is one which requires serious thought. If put in charge of the people directly by the Government the needed authority is not vested with the missionary. If it be put in charge of the mission a financial burden is placed upon the mission. The simplest way, however, is to make the people directly responsible to the Government. The grant having been made, the work of installing the tenant on his new farm begins. Bullocks are purchased, huts erected, and implements made.

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED.—Sundays are absolutely set apart for rest and worship. The settlers agree to cease all work on Sunday and to honor God and the Savior, and the Bible too. Personal work, calls to repentance and calling on the name of the Lord is constantly pursued. Drinking is forbidden. Thrift is encouraged, and a reasonable amount of advances reclaimed, the money being reserved for others who are in need of help. By the grace of God an ideal Christian community may thus be established within a comparatively short time. To invest one's surplus money in a work fraught, as it seems, with such rich possibilities compared with investments in strictly selfish pursuits is a rare opportunity which might be sought for.

AUTHORITY NEEDED.—There seems, however, to be a real need for some practical means whereby authority

may be obtained to enforce some of the primary principles of Christianity. As it is we cannot, for example, prevent the people from dishonoring the Lord's day. We may strictly tell them to hallow it by putting aside all work, and they may be minded to obey; but it often happens that some of them are working for heathen masters or employers. Sunday as a rule, at least there, is their busiest day. If they are absent that day they may have to quit work. Nor can we successfully fight the furious drink habit. I do not in the least doubt the efficacy of the gospel message itself to perform these things, for it is a power unto salvation to every one that believeth. I strongly urge that many more workers should be equipped for this direct gospel mode of transforming the lives of the heathen. I know that such workers do praise the Lord, when they come to a place organized as described, and testify that the word of God is far better appreciated in such a place than in villages where the people are left to live as they please. The work of the evangelist is indeed one thing, and the work of a social and moral reformer another, but they ought to be carried on side by side in perfect harmony and co-operation.

I trust that this will move some of the brothers and sisters in the Lord who possess lands and houses to sell and lay the price at the apostles feet, that these poor Bheels may receive according as they have need.

**BHEELS BAPTIZED.**—When I first came down to Khandesh to take up the work, we engaged a catechist who had previously worked among the Bheels for many years. This man instructed the Bheels who came for about two months. In the latter part of April, 1905, we baptized 80 souls.

**CONVERTS BECOME FARMERS.**—Wisely to care for this flock became now our next duty. They were in extreme poverty and we could hardly turn them away with-

out somehow providing for their bodily need. They had severed their former connections and gathered around us. My wife and I gathered them in the village of Dhanora, where the Government was about to grant an area of good farmland, a field of 10 acres to be given to each of those whom I might propose to settle. The Government also prepared to advance Rs. 30, the price of one bullock, to each, provided that we placed an equal sum, or one bullock, with each as security, the advance being payable in four yearly installments. The mission-



PLOUGHING.

ary in charge was to be responsible for the assessment for one year. These conditions being agreed to, we proceeded to occupy the land. About 45 persons, whom we had baptized, came together with their families for settlement. These were days of high expectations and the heart of these poor people swelled when they were given a chance to choose their plot of land. When this was done the time of the rains was approaching and four things must be done immediately, viz., to purchase 40 yokes of bullocks, to build about 50 huts, to make the



agricultural implements, and to provide food for the community.

FOOD SUPPLIES.—We set about this task to see it through before the rains, and we did it. Now food supplies were needed, but we did not feel justified in giving them the food gratis nor did we want to advance to them more than the cost of the necessary outfit of bullocks, implements, etc. Some scheme must be worked out by which they might earn their living while they plowed and sowed their fields without spending too much time. Such a scheme presented itself. It happened that five or six Bheels who applied for fields did not come to occupy them; but they were still left in the charge of our village, and as I was responsible for the assessment on them I decided to have them cultivated by the people and thus enable them to earn their living. For this purpose the whole company came over to my fields once a week. They received in wages 8 annas (about 16 cents) per day per plow—the whole outfit included. This amount certainly did not provide them with an extravagant living; but they managed to pull through somehow and thus the object was attained.

The monsoon broke one month later than usual that year. How anxiously we looked for the first break! The clouds gathered over our heads a whole month, but not a drop of its precious contents fell. At last the welcome break came, making everybody busy with plowing and sowing. Owing to the unprepared condition of the fields, the seed was sown somewhat late and the rainy season crop was almost nil. The cold season crop, on the other hand, was better. This consisted chiefly of gram, the growth of which is very luxuriant in this part of Khandesh. Yet the increase was hardly enough to cover the expenses.

CONDITIONS AND OPINIONS.—These were days not only of expectations, but of hard labor and disappointments

as well. But the hand of God was graciously with us so that no calamity overtook us; the whole settlement kept in excellent health and good spirits. Several births among them were reported but not a single case of death, so that we almost got the delusion that we had become immortal. When I call to mind how God supplied our needs during that time in answer to our prayers, I am



WEIGHING FIREWOOD.

constrained to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not his benefits!"

In this manner was this Christian farming settlement of a group of newly converted Bheels established. The outsiders looked upon the experiment with suspicion, and some predicted failure. Yet others showed a marked interest from the beginning. If others criticised we did not feel offended for we knew our imperfections and

were ready to admit every mistake, but our prayers were that God would graciously bless the undertaking, and we believe He did it.

**TIMBER BUSINESS.**—There are other opportunities whereby to develop better conditions among the people. The country, being rich in timber supply, lumber and firewood business may be mentioned. At every railway station large quantities of timber and firewood are being exported every year. While building the Mission House at Navapur we sold timber and firewood and made a profit of \$500. In this work we engaged a number of Bheels and put them under Christian management and instruction. The work entailed was to hew down the trees, which they did with their native hatchets, haul them to the railway station, the good material to be loaded as timber and the useless to be cut into firewood, weighed and loaded as such. We found no difficulty in securing buyers, the demand usually being greater than the supply. Under good management a two-fold end is gained, viz., a number of people brought under Christian influence and also financial aid secured for the Mission, the earnings being devoted to evangelistic and educational work. The difficulties, however, demand none but expert management, without which these objects can not be gained.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OUR MISSIONARIES AND THEIR EQUIPMENT.

MISSIONARY IDEALS.—We sometimes see caricatures drawn to ridicule missionaries. A common picture is of a man with a long coat, carrying a Bible under his arm. This is a common conception of mission work, that the missionaries go about carrying the Bible, doing nothing else but preaching to the multitudes—and a noble conception it is, indeed. But that is only one feature of the work; it does not give a full conception of all that is involved. There are also other considerations which cannot be omitted to have a full view of the work.

The mission societies train and equip the missionary for his work in the distant clime. It must be remembered that he is only a man, and not seldom a very ordinary one, subject to many ailments and defects. The average worker enters the field with high ideals and noble aspirations. Often unexpected and adverse circumstances, almost too powerful to overcome, prevent him from carrying out these sacred impulses—at least to satisfy himself. In India some of these are the spiritual darkness of the heathen, their customs and social standards, the language, the climate, and, last but not least, the mission station. Some of these difficulties may be overcome, but others remain. The climate always remains unconquerable to the missionary. He cannot become acclimated, for the longer he remains on the field the less he can endure the powerful heat of the sun. It often happens that a missionary is apparently healthy during the first term, but is seized with fever a short time after he returns again, only to have his name



REV. AND MRS. DAHLGREN AND CHILDREN.

added to the list of noble and self-sacrificing martyrs of the hot Indian climate. His system becomes surcharged with malaria from the first term and the malady soon overpowers him in his second.

LANGUAGE STUDY.—A needful part of the missionary equipment is the mastery of the language. The new missionary must make it his chief duty. It takes about three years to learn to speak it fluently. A rich variety of helps is available, such as primers, grammars and dictionaries—not to speak of the Bible, which is the most important. A teacher is engaged, who usually comes to the house and gives instruction two or three hours each morning. The rest of the day is occupied in private study and practice among the people. There is some advantage in engaging an English speaking Pundit, in which case the conversation is carried on in English, while the lesson is explained. Much is gained in this way as to technical knowledge, but there is a corresponding loss in practical speaking capacity, which fact makes a purely native teacher preferable, at least in the initial stages. It is not very pleasant for a new comer to be taught by one who says everything in a hopelessly strange tongue, but gradually he begins to discern words and meanings and by sheer necessity he is obliged to use what he knows and, if clever, can begin to converse in a comparatively short time. Those who attempt to speak, though brokenly and incorrectly, as soon as they know a few words and sentences, become as a rule very efficient. Other impending duties in the station sometimes hinder the missionary from completing the studies, in which there are regular courses and examinations. Older missionaries find it hard, if not impossible, to master the language.

BUILDING THE MISSION STATION.—When the missionary has acquired the language he goes to find a field for himself in case he is not appointed to take the place of



someone else. He goes in for pioneer work in a new place where there are no suitable dwellings whatever. If it happens in the hot season, which is often the case, the hot winds beat furiously, and no adequate shelter being available he has to suffer the consequences. Not only must the man strive with the spiritual darkness about him to get a ray of light to shine into the dark lives of the wretched heathen, but with almost empty hands he must try to get up some sort of shelter for himself and his family, not to speak of the native helpers who happen to be with him. Scanty supply of means makes this a tedious undertaking—months and years see him still at it. Now the simple fact is that if new stations are to be opened at all such pioneering work must be done. According to the present mode of mission enterprise I see no possible way of escaping the necessity of the mission compound, and the sooner he gets it the better. It belongs to his equipment. If the missionary candidate at home should take his mission study course by piece meal in order to save the outlay of the needed money at once, everyone would say he did not pursue a very wise course. A prompt and hearty response should be given to the missionary's appeals for equipment by those on whom he depends. The mission station, a needed protection for the vicious climate, is what he needs as soon as he arrives on the new, unbroken field. A mission station of the style required by the missionaries of the S. A. M. in India can easily be erected in about three months at an outlay of about \$2,000, the missionary generally taking charge himself of buying the materials and engaging the needed artisans and laborers in order to save as much mission money as possible. While directing these workmen his spiritual labor and influence does not extend much beyond the small circle around the station under construction; but it is indeed a precious course for the missionary him-

self, if he be under the guidance of God, for training in Christian graces.

THE MENU.—The mission house must also be provided with the needed equipment. Some furniture is needed, often old packing boxes are used for tables and chairs. Provision is indispensable. What do you eat in India? people often ask us. We have to explain. We eat curry and rice. Curry is a preparation of fowl, fish, game or vegetables with a sauce, containing garlic, pepper, ginger



BOMBAY.

and other strong spices and eaten with plain boiled rice. We also use canned provision, which is obtained in Bombay and other important cities, whose large European or native firms supply every needful article of food and raiment through the valuable parcel post system (V. P. P.). We generally bake our own leavened bread from whole wheat flour ground for the occasion on the hand mill. Meats are less wholesome than vegetables,

which, together with milk foods, make up the main part of the fare.

Fruit is scarce. There is a variety of an inferior quality. Bananas, maujo, guava, lemon, etc., appear now and then in our markets. The maujo fruit is most delicious. Other fruits, such as apples, oranges and grapes, may be obtained in larger markets, but are very expen-



GRINDING FLOUR.

sive. Drinking water has to be boiled to kill the infectious germs which breed in it. We obtain it from blasted wells or natural springs in the river bed. The natives believe that the malaria is caused by the water which is said to be more or less unhealthy.

AN EXPEDITION.—To show how the missionaries sometimes fare, and nearly always when out touring, I relate the following incident:

“None met us at Dhanora since most of the people had gone out to the woods to fetch timber for the market

of Nandurbar. The day was very hot and we arrived in the mid-day sun. One of the bullocks of my cart became exhausted and almost one-third of the way I had to walk and poke him along with my umbrella. It is customary that the bullocks lie down before the cart when they get tired and it is by no means a pleasant experience to travel in the mid-day sun under such circumstances. Mr. Franklin rode his horse and arrived ahead of me. It is very refreshing to get some tea after such a journey and we soon had our boys to prepare some. These boys were by no means experts and the consequence was that our food could hardly induce to comfort. When we then add scanty supplies, as for instance want of a few drops of milk in the tea or salt for the eggs or other little annoyances and inconveniences of which almost scores present themselves, then we have a perfect picture of an expedition on the mission field. I noticed how thankful others were to suffer these things for Christ. This was inspiring. Their reward shall be great. So then, if viewed aright, these inconveniences are little sweet angels in disguise ministering grace to us."

THE HEALTH RESORT.—In spite of every precaution taken it may still be necessary sometimes for the missionary to take his family to some health resort. It is well for him to trust in God. If God gives the body and puts life into it one ought to have confidence in Him that he will also keep it from sickness; but in spite of this confidence in God, which his conscience tells him is right, the missionary still finds it advisable to go to a health resort. It is a well known fact that living is very expensive in such places. A suitable place may be far, far away and the journey very expensive. He finds that he cannot go for want of means; nothing remains to do then but to be quiet and still trust in God. But the weak constitution, nervous and broken down—wife and children alike—needs that recreation, while the heart

may still be fixed on God. For this reason also replenish the purse of your missionary, with a big portion of your increase, and God will abundantly refill the money bags which have thus been emptied.

OUR MISSIONARIES.—Our American branch has seven missionaries to the Bheels—five ladies and two men. Five are engaged on the field and two are home on furlough. Mr. and Mrs. T. Johansen and Miss H. Abrahamson occupy the station at Navapur. Mr. Johansen is a graduate from the Norwegian Department of the Chi-



REV. AND MRS. T. JOHANSEN.

cago Theological Seminary. He studied medicine for some time in Brooklyn before he went out to India, where he and his newly married wife arrived in December, 1908. They began at once to study the language under instruction of the postmaster of Navapur. Mr. Johansen is a man of devotion and calm disposition and an excellent companion. They both take much interest in the Bheels. Miss Abrahamson labored many years in Baltistan, India, and settled down among the Bheels when returning from furlough in Sweden and America



in the latter part of 1908. She studied medicine in Chicago and uses her knowledge to relieve the sufferers.

Mrs. J. Peterson and Miss T. Johnson are companions in the work at Taloda, where a mission station is under construction. Mrs. Peterson left the Methodist Mission, of which she was an honorary member, and joined our own mission about two years ago. She takes special interest in the evangelistic work and has many open doors to the people. She is a trained nurse and a much welcomed guest in missionary families. Miss Johnson



HOSPITAL AT NAVAPUR.

was sent out from Brooklyn by the mission about six years ago. She has had her share in the suffering and her work is appreciated. Mr. and Mrs. A. Dahlgren, now in America, have been in India seven years and intend to return in 1910.

These workers labor for the salvation of the Bheels. Circumstances sometimes determine their usefulness. May they be supplied with every good and needful thing for the work.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE WORK AT NAVAPUR.

CITIES.—Navapur is a small city in West Khandesh with about one thousand inhabitants. There are no cities of importance in the Bheel country, their population chiefly consisting of merchants and government officials who come from other places. But the district (peta) with the same name and of which Navapur is the center is important in the Bheel work, being almost entirely populated with Bheels. There is another district where Bheels dwell to the southeast of Navapur. It is Pimpalner, where we contemplate opening work some time; but with the present force Navapur is all we can work effectively. Extension beyond Navapur to the north in the Sagbara native state will be effected in the near future. It is almost impossible to state definitely the number of people, but more than 10,000 depend on the missionaries at Navapur for religious light and instruction.

MISSION STARTED.—We started mission work at Navapur in January, 1907. It has been so far a work of preparation. Mission buildings have been erected and the nearest villages visited with the gospel message in word and song. Much time and energy were spent in building the mission house, since the cost, about \$2,000, had to be secured on the field, the greater part through the sale of the mission house at Ghoom, North India. This was supplemented by earnings from the sale of timber and fire-wood from the mission land (140 acres), the sale of products raised on this land and of young cattle.

THE MISSION HOUSE.—The mission house is now almost finished. It consists of three main rooms, 15 feet

by 16 feet, and a number of smaller ones in two of the verandas, which are walled in. There are two large open verandas, one in front, which is the long side, and the other at the east gable overlooking the town and the railway station, the former a mile and the latter a quarter of a mile distant. From the front veranda we obtain a fine view of the surrounding country and villages. The house is built of stone and is 40 by 71 feet with the verandas. There is a basement at the east end



MISSION STATION AT NAVAPUR.

and the room above it has a wooden floor. The rest of the flooring is stone, except the veranda overlooking the town, which is of planed teakwood. The ceilings are of the same material. The roof is covered with country tiles, which are made to fit into each other. There is an additional house with accommodation for the catechist and occasional visitors. The kitchen and workshop and rooms for native helpers are found in this building. The houses are fairly comfortable, being situated on a small hillock, where fresh breezes seldom

fail. They are plainly seen from the railway, which runs past our front within a quarter of a mile.

A large well for irrigation and water supply is being blasted below the hill, but the hard rock is almost impenetrable. We left it dry but hope to obtain water with more boring, which, however, is expensive work.

PREPARING FOR WORK.—As the workers now engaged in mission work at Navapur are chiefly taken up with the study of the language the preparatory work is still going on. Miss H. Abrahamson, who knows some



RAILROAD STATION AT NAVAPUR.

Hindi, writes, however, that she made visits to the railway station speaking, the word of life to the laborers, who heard her and her native helpers gladly. There is no power or blessing in Christ which is not earnestly coveted by the workers to equip them for the work of visiting the weekly market places with Christian song and testimony. The importance of this work cannot be overestimated for I have noticed, when visiting villages, how people have spoken of this or that meeting,

mentioning some fact which had been impressed on their mind. How they appreciate a simple testimony of love I came to realize once when we went out to the market to preach to them. A fairly large crowd congregated to hear us sing. Most of them were Bheels, men, women and children, who seemed anxious to hear. We told them how they could safely trust in Jesus for salvation from the devils, by whom they are tormented, that he was able to save them. They were astonished, gladly receiving the message. We hope to evangelize these ten thousand and we can do it in a short time by open air preaching in their market places and villages.

LAST SUNDAY.—Our last Sunday in Navapur we spent in visiting a village, having a baptismal service in the morning and calling at the house of a Bheel friend in the evening.

BAPTISM.—We were prepared to baptize a boy who had been with us some time. He loved Jesus and His word and asked me one day to baptize him. I was very glad of this opportunity to show the Bheels around there what baptism is, since we had no converts in the place. The morning was fresh and as I walked along inhaling the pleasing scent of the flowers and the refreshing morning air, my mind was occupied with the goodness of God and the possibilities of the work. We could now organize our first little church at Navapur, and I counted that in all we could enroll at least seven members and three or four enquirers. This was to me a delightful realization, and heaven seemed to smile over the village of Berki as I began to see the little huts, wherein dwelt a number of dear souls who had been under instruction for the last two years. These gathered promptly with us by the river side; but my heart grew sad when I thought of the many sins and temptations they were subjected to, for in reality they are slaves of evil habits and sinful practices. As the gift of eternal

life was held out to them they seemed happy to know that it was for them. How they listened to the testimonies of those who had found the Savior—five of us testified—and how they loved to hear the hymns.

We then went down into the water and for the first time did those villagers witness the washing of regeneration. May many more follow in this blessed act.

FAREWELL MEAL.—When we were ready to return I indicated to them that if they wished to honor us by asking us to come over and eat with them we would have no objection. They had not thought that we would care to sup with them, so it did not occur to them to ask us. I knew they would heartily bid us come but I thought I might help them out of their bashfulness by this suggestion. One of them took the suggestion very kindly to heart and bid us come later in the day. I took my family along and went over in the bullock cart the same evening. The boys were just delighted to go out for a ride. We came to the village just before sunset. They quickly prepared a meal in their best style—rice and chicken curry with clarified butter and strong spices. A carpet was spread on the earthen floor in the little hut and we were seated in cross-legged fashion. The dishes were then set before us and sugar and chutney (sour mango slices salted and peppered) on green leaves. This, together with the brass pot of water for drinking and washing the hands before and after eating, made up the supper, which was heartily partaken of—at least by myself. My wife and children did not like it so much because they were less accustomed to eating with the fingers the rather over-spiced preparations of the natives. I do not object to it, but think it rather nice, especially if the host himself partakes in a good-humored fashion. It is not customary for the Bheel to eat before or at the time of a superior, nor for caste prejudices is he allowed to eat with an inferior. According to the Hindu caste

regulations, which are observed by the Bheels to a large extent, the Christians and the whites are considered inferior. But I suggested to my kind host that we would be pleased if he would also sit down and eat with us. And he did it to my surprise. The neighbors may tease him for doing this, but we are sure the man is all the better for having done it.

I have specially recorded this little incident for it shows the feelings among the people toward the missionaries. This is typical of a number of villages that I have visited. We pray and trust that many will be brought into the kingdom of God, as prejudice and superstition are gradually removed.



## CHAPTER X.

### OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS.

Wherever there is an opportunity there is a corresponding need. Now our great opportunity among the Bheels and other classes is to make the name of Jesus known and adored. This is the aim of every effort, the value and extent of which, however, may differ, and here is where the needs come in.

THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE.—In order that Christ may be preached in all his beauty and power there is need that a spirit of revival *prevails* among all the workers—the missionaries first, then the native helpers. They need to stand in the presence of the Lord in their private life, that theirs may be a spirit-filled life. They have need of boldness, of love, of wisdom to seize every opportunity of going forth to the people and “speak all the words of His life.”

INSPIRING CONFERENCES.—Our yearly conferences in the Bheel country have been a means of much blessing. The first was held at Nandurbar in the latter part of 1906. This conference was marked by the presence of the Spirit of God, and by the sweet fellowship of the workers who were present.

We came weary, longing to have a fresh vision of Jesus, and we gathered, not so much to discuss a few trifling secondary matters regarding the work, but, like those Greeks of old, the longing of our heart was “We would see Jesus.”

We anticipate a time of more definite spiritual results in our Bheel work. The Christians, like ourselves, need a vision of Jesus. Tokens of the Spirit’s work in their hearts are noticeable. Some are offering up publicly

very intelligent prayers—a quickening which we have not noticed before. God is working through His Spirit in the souls of this dear people. It will be a surprise to them to find out the real power and peace in Christianity. It is not till they see Christ in Christianity that they realize somewhat its infinite power. We earnestly covet the highest spiritual gifts and blessings for our Bheel converts.

PRAY FOR US.—Now that this spirit may prevail the prayers of God's people in the home lands are wanted. Those who practice the prayer life will kindly make special requests for definite persons and objects on the foreign field. To do this intelligently some knowledge of the facts is needed. In a certain gathering, where large spiritual interest was represented, not a single request was made for foreign missions. Now either facts were wanting or else interest, neither of which should be.

EXTENSION.—There is also need of extending the work among the higher classes. This means, effectually, to occupy the field which belongs to the S. A. M. There are many large villages and towns to the east of the Bheel country still unoccupied. Mr. and Mrs. Edw. Lieden, who have a large experience in mission work, are starting work in one of these towns, Dondaiche. Brother Lieden writes, "The Bible school starts at Mandulwar the 1st prox. O, that our native helpers were set on fire for His cause, they who know the language and the people so well. We are still here waiting for permission to take possession of the Dondaiche Dak Bungalow and start work in that Taluka." They have now moved to the place.

A START IN TALODA.—Taloda is an old city with about half the population of Nandurbar, with 18,000 or 20,000. A mission station is being erected there under the supervision of Mr. A. J. Selin. All classes of the people of our field are represented here, the upper classes being the

most important. Mrs. Peterson, who has charge of the evangelistic work and who has the responsibility of raising the funds for the station, is much interested in the higher classes, whose homes she visits to reach the women. They receive her gladly, but are often warned by their husbands, who claim that "Memsahib" (married lady) steals the hearts of their women. Miss T. Johnson, who suffered much from fever but recovered, has been well lately and enabled to take an active interest in the work at Taloda. She is Mrs. Peterson's companion.

**MONEY NEEDED.**—There is at present a fine opportunity in Taloda and I do not hesitate to urge that the friends of our mission in India liberally support our lady missionaries there, whose whole-hearted devotion to the cause of Christ among all classes in their station is beyond doubt. They value much the prayers of the readers of this book and will need a thousand dollars immediately.

**NEED OF EDUCATION.**—I may also mention the need of men and means to start and maintain schools. Nothing need to hinder this work; no, not even the reluctance of the parents owing to poverty for means might be devised through which the children might support themselves while they learn. This is a hard problem, yet if suitable men had charge of it, with means at their disposal, a need would be supplied and much good accomplished among the children, who now grow up in ignorance and superstition.

**NEED OF CHRISTIAN VILLAGES.**—Again there is need of extending the village settlement scheme mentioned in a foregoing chapter. The nature of this work is strictly philanthropic, yet a splendid preparation for the gospel work, with which, however, it should not be confounded, for its aim is to improve their social and economic condition rather than their spiritual. But this work

cannot be carried on unless liberally supported by such as have the means and mind to do it. I confidently leave this question at its own value in the mission work among the Bheels. With it or without it *the gospel must be preached, which is and ever will be the most urgent need.*

## CHAPTER XI.

### ORIGIN AND AIMS OF THE SCANDINAVIAN ALLIANCE MISSION OF NORTH AMERICA.

This foreign missionary organization was founded February 17, 1891, by Rev. Frederick Franson, whose apostolical simplicity of life, burning enthusiasm for the extension of the gospel to non-Christian nations, and untiring faithfulness in the work until the day of his death has been an inspiration to all who have known him.

The organization has been the foreign missionary agency of free evangelical churches and people of the Scandinavian races in America.

Mr. Franson also established branches of the S. A. M. in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, each with a committee or board of directors to conduct the work.

The aim of the organization is to encourage churches, societies and individuals to send out missionaries into different foreign fields, and to keep such missionaries in direct touch with those who support them, so they are considered their representatives; the general oversight of the work, however, being in the hands of the board of directors.

God has used Mr. Franson in a remarkable manner to arouse Christian young men and women to consecrate themselves to foreign missionary work. He conducted missionary study courses to prepare them for the service and had them sent out under the support of churches or individuals whom he had aroused to provide the "sinews of war."

God has richly blessed the work from the beginning, converts being made and gathered into churches, schools and homes being established and considerable property

acquired. The crown of martyrdom has also been given to four missionary heroes of this mission.

The American branch of the S. A. M. has missions with various stations and native helpers in China, Mongolia, Japan, India, Africa and South America. In 1909 the American branch of the S. A. M. had ninety-nine missionaries sent out from the United States, of whom fifty-eight belong to the mission in China, eight in Japan, eight in Mongolia, twelve in Africa, nine in India and four in South America.

The board of directors consists of the following persons: Rev. August Pohl, chairman; Rev. G. A. Young, vice-chairman; Rev. C. T. Dyrness, secretary; Prof. F. Risberg, treasurer; Mr. J. Martenson, Prof. M. E. Peterson, Prof. O. C. Grauer.

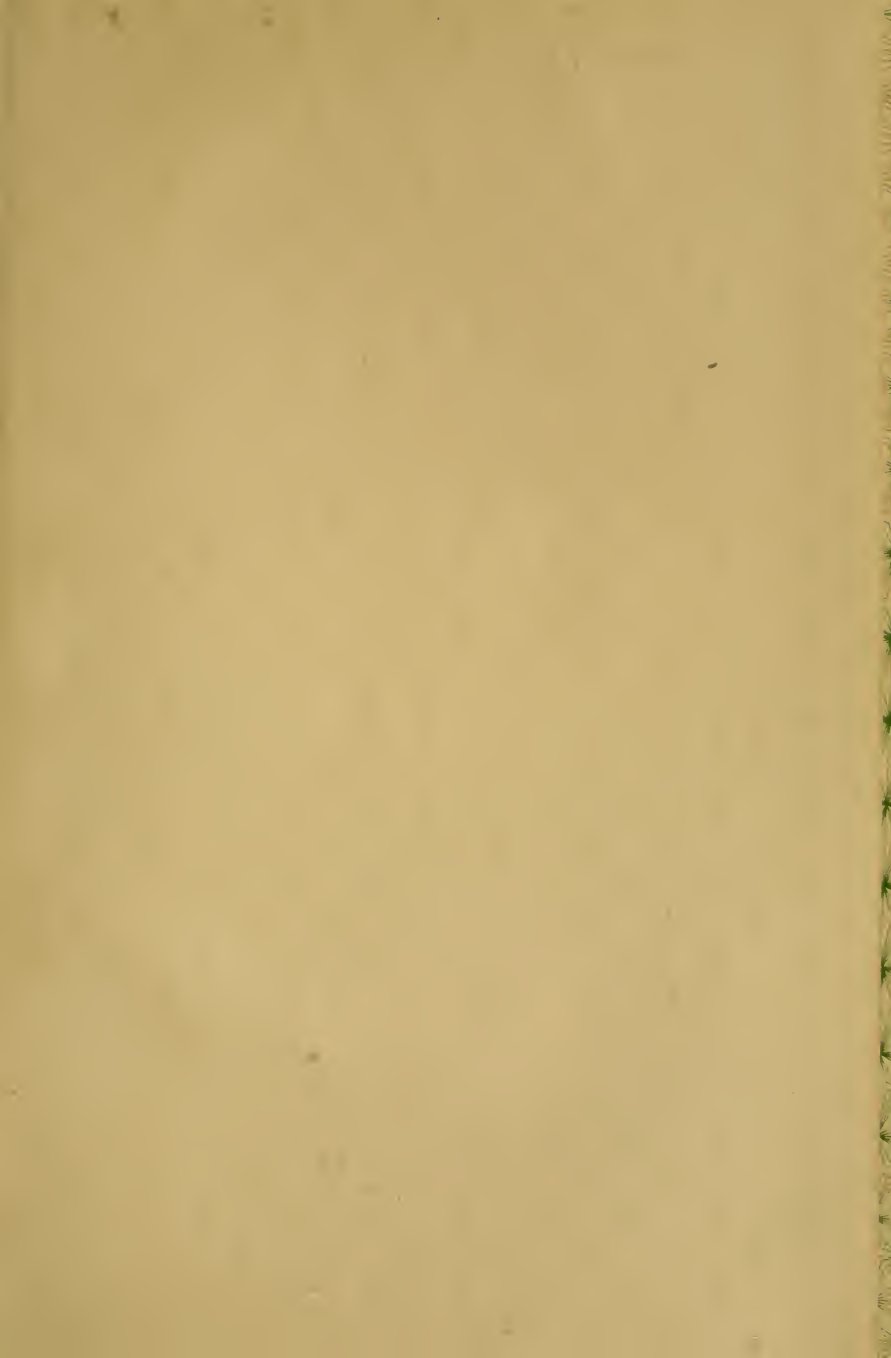
The headquarters of the mission is 20 N. Ashland Blvd., Chicago, Ill.













BANGOR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Our Bheel mission in India : an  
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Dahlgren, Olof Anton  
AUTHOR

Our Bheel Mission in India  
TITLE

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