



THE VAISHNAVA  
HOLY LAND

T. M. SCOTCH

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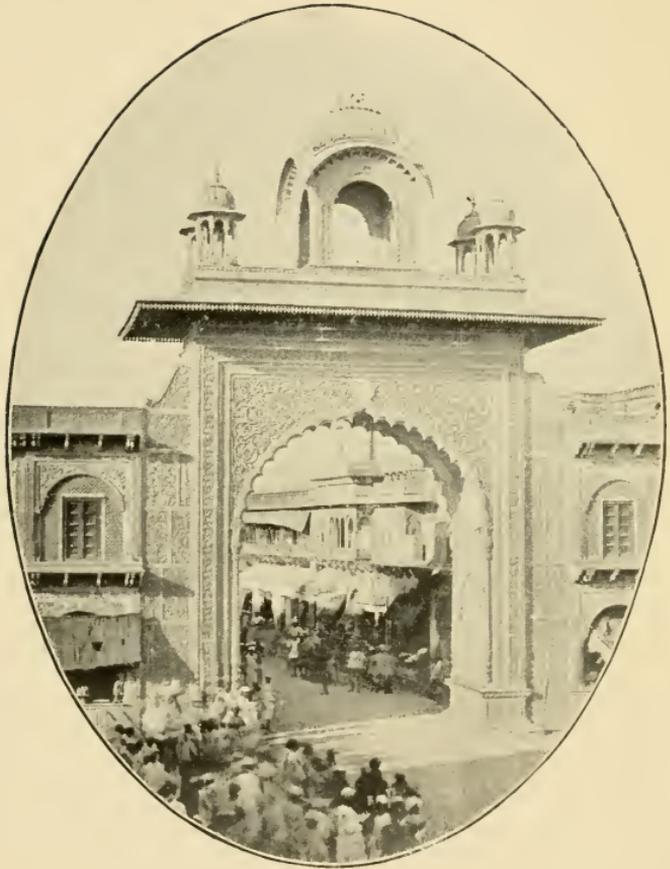












HARDINGE GATE, THE PRINCIPAL ENTRANCE TO THE CITY  
OF MATHURA

(It is now surmounted by a clock.)

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# BRAJ

## THE VAISHNAVA HOLY LAND

*A Jubilee Volume*

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By

Rev. J. E. SCOTT, Ph.D., S.T.D.

Author of "In Famine Land," "The India Mission," etc.



NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS  
CINCINNATI: JENNINGS & GRAHAM

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## PREFACE

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THE author's purpose in preparing this brief brochure is fourfold: First, to give a short account of an interesting land and its paramount religion. Second, to show that this religion has deteriorated with age, and that the most modern form of it is the most corrupt. Hinduism is worse than Brahmanism, and the more modern Krishnaism is the grossest form of Hinduism. Third, to contrast with the Hinduism of to-day—with the latter-day Krishna cultus—the purer and nobler religion of Christ, and with the puerile narratives of the Puranas the exalted teachings of the gospels. And, lastly, to show the triumphs of the nobler faith in the very stronghold of Hinduism, where for centuries it has been fortified by tradition, custom, wealth, and the prestige of a dominant and bigoted priesthood.

Modern Hinduism presents no greater attraction to the masses than this land of Braj. It is the Vaishnava Holy Land. To this land

flow annually many thousands of grossly deluded but often sincere devotees. To enter this land and establish itself at its very center and endeavor to cope with and overcome its stupendous errors has been the herculean task of that purer faith whose Founder descended from heaven and overcame the world. More really than the Kurus and Pandavas met on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, here Christ and Krishna have met.

The author endeavors to show briefly something of the physical, traditional, historical, and religious features of the land, and to record the initiation, evolution, and establishment of a mission acknowledging and following the one true Incarnation.

In preparing the first part, pertaining to the field and its cult, the author is indebted especially to Growse's Memoirs, Thornton's Gazetteer, and Cunningham's Archæological Report, and in preparing the second part, concerning the mission, he has been helped by one who was associated with him continuously in the work from its beginning in 1888, and to whose coördinate labors much of its success must be attributed. •

Ajmere, Rajputana, India,  
January, 1906. \*

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PART FIRST

THE LAND AND THE  
RELIGION

“A fine country of many pasture lands and well-nurtured people, full of ropes for tethering cattle, resonant with the voice of the sputtering churn, and flowing with buttermilk; where the soil is ever moist with milky froth, and the stick with its circling cord sputters merrily in the pail, as the girls spin it round.”—*Harivansa*.

# BRAJ

## THE VAISHNAVA HOLY LAND

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### PART FIRST

#### The Land and the Religion

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#### I

#### THE LAND

1. *Its Earliest Mention.* Perhaps the earliest mention of the kingdom of Mathura is found in the Vishnu and Bhagavat Purana and in the Harivansa, a comparatively modern sequel to the Mahabharata, in which it is related that the giant king Madhu lived and reigned in the forest of Madhuban and founded the city of Madhupuri, which, upon his death, passed to his son, Lavana, in the days of Rama, the king of Ajudhiya, the modern Oudh. The daring Lavana, with more zeal than judgment, having challenged Rama to single combat, and the latter hav-

ing disdained to meet Lavana personally, sent his youngest brother, Satrugna, who slew the giant, cut down the forest, and founded the kingdom of Mathura, the capital, of the same name, occupying the site now occupied by the village of Maholi, about five miles south of the present city and about the same distance west of the Jamuna River.

2. *Traditional Account.* In a land like India, where the historic faculty is so singularly defective, it is difficult to know where history ends and legend begins, or, indeed, whether there is any foundation in fact in any of the elaborate stories so universally believed. The story goes that at a very remote period a branch of the great Aryan Yadav family, of the Lunar race, settled along the well-wooded banks of the Jamuna River and made Mathura their capital city. This peaceful kingdom was called Surasena, and the inhabitants thereof Surasenaka. It would appear that at a certain period, but nobody knows when, after Satrugna, the brother of Rama, had departed, Bhima, the third in descent from Yadu, the son of Haryasva, the founder of Gobardhana, annexed Mathura, and the kingdom continued in that dynasty until the time of Vasadeva, the father of Krishna. In those

latter days, some would say three thousand years ago, the rightful ruler, Ugrasen, was deposed by his tyrannical son, Kansa, who himself usurped the throne and ruled with such cruelty and injustice that the people cried for help. It was then that Krishna, the usurper's cousin, arose, slew the tyrant, and reinstated Ugrasen, the legitimate king. This story may not be historically correct, but it is interesting as legend and because it is believed by the masses of the people.

3. *Its Geographical Description.* The kingdom of Mathura was early known as the land of Braj. It is thought by some that the name is derived from Vajra, who, upon the death of Krishna, became king of Mathura. This derivation, however, rests upon very doubtful premises, both historically and philologically, for the Vajra mentioned in the Vishnu Purana may not have been king of Mathura, and similarity of sound does not necessarily establish identity of meaning. It is more likely, as Growse points out, that the word is derived from the Sanskrit root Vraj, which primarily means "a herd," and then "to go," having reference to the nomadic character of the shepherds who occupied these pasture lands in "ye olden time," they being compelled to move

about, like Abraham and Jacob of old, in search of pasture for their flocks.

The present civil district of Mathura is a part of the Agra political division of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and, although there are indications that in earlier times the annual "perambulation" made by the pilgrims encompassed a larger area, it would appear to be about the same in size and shape as the ancient Vaishnava Holy Land. It is, roughly speaking, a parallelogram in shape, some forty-two miles long and thirty miles wide, intersected by the river Jamuna, which flows from north to south. Mathura, the capital, occupies the right bank of the river near the southern limit of the district. The district is divided into five townships, or political divisions for administrative purposes, which have names, location, and population as follows: On the right bank, Kosi (446,521) and Chhata (173,756), and on the left bank, Mat (97,370), Mahaban (136,566), and Saadabad (108,886). The district lies between 27' 14" and 27' 58" north latitude, and 77' 19" and 78' 33" east longitude, and is bounded on the north by Aligarh and Gurgaon civil districts, on the east by Aligarh and Mainpuri and Etah districts, on the south by Agra district, and on

the west by the feudatory state of Bharatpur. It has an area of 1,457 square miles and a population of 763,099, the vast majority of whom are Vaishnava Hindus. This comprises the Vaishnava Holy Land, the famous Braj Mandal, or circuit of 84 *kos*, or 168 miles, made by the zealous Vaishnava pilgrims, and here, legend affirms, lived and grazed their herds the deified brothers Krishna and Bala Rama, the Apollo and Hercules of India.

The physical features of this land of Braj are, generally speaking, somewhat disappointing. Farther east the country is more fruitful and covered with rich mango groves, and at one time the traditional description of Braj, as covered with forests and rich pasture lands, may have been true, but at the present time the land is flat and uninteresting. There are a few large towns, as Mathura, Brindaban, Gobardhan, Kosi, etc., but the villages in which the masses of the people live are of the ordinary type, a mere cluster of three or four hundred small hovels built of mud and thatched with grass. The mud is dug from one side of the site on which the village is built, forming a tank which fills with water during the rainy season and over which a green scum forms in the dry weather, and from which the cattle,

and some of the people even, drink, and in which they wash their clothes. There is no regularity in the street, the houses being built at all angles, but there is usually one main, crooked street running through the town on which are some small shops, open at the front, in which are displayed such wares and articles of merchandise as flour, sugar, tobacco, spices, clothing, etc. In modern times the district has been greatly improved by the opening of the Delhi road, constructed as a relief work during the famine of 1860-61. This road, in the main, follows the older imperial thoroughfare mentioned by John de List in 1631, and there are still to be seen some of the old pillars which mark the course of the road. But especially helpful have been the Agra irrigating canal, which traverses the entire length of the western side of the district, and the Cawnpur and Achynera branch of the Rajputana Malwa Railway, which passes through Mathura, with a branch from Mathura to Brindaban for pilgrims. A chord line extension of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, connecting Delhi and Agra, has just been completed and passes through the capital, and a more important line, extending from that city to Nagda in the south, is under construction.

4. *Its Flora and Fauna.* On account of the unsuitability and poverty of the soil there are not now many large trees in the land of Braj. The mango and the *shesham*, found plentifully a little farther east, in the *Doab*, are, for the most part, absent, and in their place may be found the less valuable *Nim*, *Farash*, *Kadamb*, and *Babul*, and different specimens of the fig tree, as the *Ficus Religiosa* and the *Ficus Indicus*. The rural population are agriculturists, and the soil is divided as to its productiveness and accessibility and produces two crops annually, the *Rabi*, or spring harvest, consisting of wheat, barley, etc., and the *Kharif*, or autumn crop, for the most part, of *bajra*, *juar*, maize, and other smaller grains.

The land of Braj, from time immemorial, has been noted for its cattle. Many of its noted names are in some way connected with kine. Among these might be mentioned the name Braj itself, indicating the cowboy character of the people; Mathura, the capital, "resonant with the voice of the sputtering churn, and flowing with buttermilk"; Gopal, a shepherd name of its tutelary deity; Gokul and Gobardhan, and other sacred towns. "At sunrise and sunset," says Mr. Growse, "the thoroughfares are all but impassable, as the

struggling herds of oxen and buffaloes leave and return to the homestead; from five hundred to six hundred to one thousand head of cattle, at least equaling, often outnumbering, the human population."

Anywhere, in this Vaishnava Holy Land, abound three sacred animals—the deer, the pea fowl, and the monkey; the latter especially, in keeping with his gregarious habits, taking up his abode with man in the larger towns and about the temples, being fed by the people and stealing what he can. Large sacred turtles and alligators are found in the Jamuna, especially at Brindaban and Mathura, while various species of serpents, as the *cobra de capello* and the *karait*, and such animals as the wolf, the fox, and the jackal, may be found in field and jungle. In the dry season, from January to June, everything looks bare and barren, and dust covers the face of the country and fills the air so that a dull gray aspect is given to the landscape. The sacred river falls away to a mere sluggish rivulet with wide stretches of sand on either side. But when the rains set in, in June or July, in a marvelously short time the whole face of nature is changed. The Jamuna flows full from bank to bank; the plains change from gray to

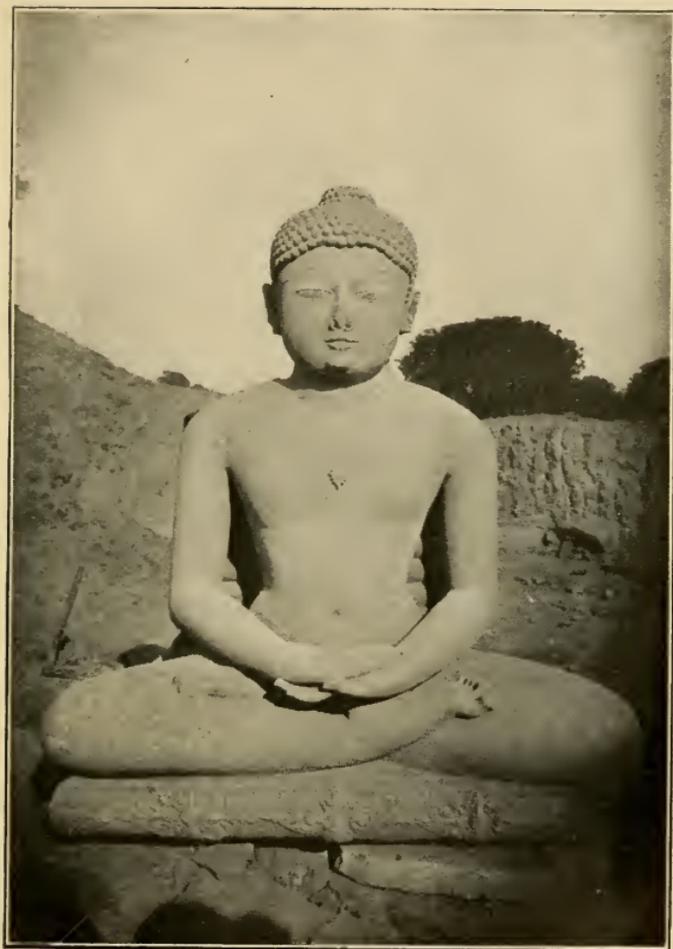
green; new life revives in everything; the shrines are crowded with pilgrims; and what before was tame and unimpressive now teems with life and interest.

5. *Its People.* As would naturally be expected, the inhabitants of Braj are mostly Hindus. Out of a population of 763,099, not more than 75,000 are Mohammedans, who are known as Malakana, or descendants of those who at the time of the conquest were forced to become Mohammedans, and are as inferior socially as they are numerically. There are only about twelve thousand Mohammedans in Mathura city, and not more than fourteen hundred in the neighboring town of Brindaban, and in western Braj only in Shahpur and Kosi do they exist in any considerable numbers. The Hindu character of the population may be readily seen from the language, which is Hindi, or, rather, a local form of it known as the *Braj Bhasha*, or dialect; also from the map, which shows nearly all the names of towns as ending with the Hindi *pur*, *nagar*, or *garh*, instead of the Mohammedan ending *abad*.

The Hindus of Braj may be classified as Brahmans, Thakurs, Baniyas, and Jats. The most influential are the Brahmans. Of these

there are several distinct classes, as the Sanadh, who are most numerous, the Chaubes, and the Ahivasis. The two latter classes appear to be peculiar to Mathura, the second as carriers and dealers in salt, and the first as mendicants and local guides. There are between six and seven thousand of them in Mathura city. These Chaubes are great wrestlers and have their gymnasia in different parts of the city. A visit to the bathing *ghats* and principal temples, and to the railway station, will show them in numbers ready to fall upon the unsophisticated pilgrims from distant parts. They are praised for their learning and sanctity, but really they are for the most part ignorant and rapacious deceivers who in the mutiny of 1857 were not, as a class, loyal to the government. They are clannish and are reluctant to marry outside of their community, and marriages are sometimes contracted between parties yet unborn, or between an old man and a child.

The great mass of the Baniyas in Braj are *Agarwalas*, and from this class, mainly, are recruited the *Sarangis*, or worshipers of the naked gods, but they are unpopular in Mathura, so that there are only two temples, one near the center of the city and another in the



STATUE OF THE JAINA TIRTHAMKAR PADMAPRABHANATHA  
(Dated Samvat 1038, or A. D. 981, a donative gift of the  
Svetambara community of Mathura, excavated from  
the Kankali Tila in January, 1889.)



suburb of Kesopur, belonging to this sect. The Jats are more important. They are very numerous. As to their origin there is a difference of opinion. They themselves claim to be descendants of Jathara by union with the Brahmans; others indicate Kandahar as their cradle; while still others identify them with the Xanthii of Strabo, the Jatii of Pliny, or the more recent Jats, or Zaths, found by the Mohammedan conquerors of Sindh.

Whatever their origin, the adjoining feudatory state of Bharatpur has been ruled by them for centuries, and in the eighteenth century their influence was extended over Braj with such permanent effect that still in the Kosi, Chhata, and Mahaban political divisions of the district nearly half the villages are held by the Jats.

In the centuries gone by these various classes fought out their differences on many a bloody field, but in these halcyon days they dwell side by side in the villages and towns of Braj, tilling the soil, herding their flocks, and living their quiet, uneventful lives under the protection of the paramount power, having long since forgotten the oppression of other days.

6. *Its Religion.* The religion of Braj is intensely Hindu. Here and there an unadorned

mosque lifts its minarets, or a church its sacred spire, in protest against the prevailing idolatry and in testimony to the unity of God, but nine tenths of the residents, and all the pilgrims, are Vaishnava Hindus. As geology reveals the various ages of the world's history by the rock strata which have been uncovered, so in this Holy Land there are evidences of the prevalence at different times of different beliefs, or of different forms of the same belief. In the religious history of India three phases of the Aryan religion are noticeable: First, the physiolatry of the Vedas; second, the philosophical speculations of the Shastras; and, third, the incarnations of the Puranas. India is now passing through this latter phase of its religious history. The triad Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, in popular estimation, has its main force, in these latter days, in its second member. Vishnu has manifested himself many times, and in the tutelary divinity of Mathura he revealed himself in a seventh incarnation, or, as some would say, manifested himself fully. At the same time Krishna was the most human of all the gods. This fact has had its influence upon the Hinduism of Braj and made its capital the most popular shrine of India. The year round festival suc-

ceeds festival, and on his birthday festival, Janm Ashtami, and at the time of the saturnalia known as the Holi, and especially during the rainy season, from July to October—when the sacred river flows full and strong, and the tanks are overflowing, and the plains are covered with verdure—then it is that many hundreds of thousands of pilgrims, of all ages and classes, flock to its temples and ghats and sacred places seeking the favor of the tutelary divinity.

## II

## ITS TUTELARY DIVINITY

1. *His Popularity.* One does not have to live long at Mathura, or, indeed, anywhere in the land of Braj, to find that the demigod Krishna has gained a mighty hold upon the popular affection. Here throng multitudes of zealous pilgrims from all parts of India, and especially from the south. One great event follows another in quick succession. A stream of strange-voiced and oddly clad men and women pour along the sacred way of eighty-four *kos* about the holy city. Gobardhan, Nandgawn, Barsana, Brindaban, and Mahaban are sought by the weary multitudes, coached and bled by the *Chaubes*, all anxious to see the sacred places and do honor to the deified hero of Mathura. Great temples, richly endowed, occupy the sites indicated by tradition and legend as the haunts and homes of Krishna. To spend some time along the Jamuna with Krishna is the highest ambition of the devout Hindu.

The enthusiastic Vaishnava confidently believes that one day spent at Mathura is more

meritorious than a whole lifetime spent at Benares. One reason for this is that a longing humanity finds in him that which appeals to universal nature. The heroic and the human can be understood by man. And in the inspiring account given in the Mahabharata, the story of "the Great War," and in the Puranas, especially in the Vishnu Purana and in the Bhagavat Purana, they read of the famous exploits of the hero of Mathura and of Kurukshetra, and of the amatory swain of Brindaban, and feel that in him they find one in touch with themselves.

2. *Modern Accretions.* The people of India have never been historians, but they are imaginative, and the uncritical votaries of Krishna do not stop to consider that the stories which have gathered about the life of their hero at Mathura are after accretions very much later than the earlier accounts. It may be correct to say that Krishna worship is at least twenty-four hundred years old, for Megasthenes has referred to Herakles worshiped in Methora and Klisobora, or Mathura and Krishnapur. But this was before his identification with the Supreme. He is not mentioned in the early literature. In the later Vedic literature he is mentioned as a man and in the

Sutra literature as a hero, or a demigod, and not as supreme. It is thought that the Vaishnava cultus did not develop into its present form earlier than the close of the sixteenth century of our era, when the Brindaban Bengali Gosains, or the Gokul Vallabhacharis, wrote the Brahma Vaivarta Purana, the authorized Sanskrit source for the local legends.

There may, indeed, have been an historic Krishna living a thousand years before Christ who saved his people from oppression and allied himself with the Pandav princes in their struggle for the throne of Indraprastha, near modern Delhi. But he is very different from the youthful Krishna who stole the curds at Gokula, sported with the milkmaids at Brindaban, and performed grotesque feats in the forests of Braj. The Mahabharata, the longest poem in the world, in all its ninety-one thousand couplets, makes no mention of his early life. The most of this epic may have been written before the Christian era. The Hari-vasa, a modern sequel to the Mahabharata, and the Vishnu and the Bhagavat Puranas, which give such glowing detailed accounts of the deeds of the youthful Krishna, were written hundreds of years after the epic, the latter perhaps as late as the tenth century of our era.

The Prem Sagar, the tenth book of the Bhagavat, and which, in its Hindi version, is the authority most read by the people of Braj, is quite a modern narrative. And now, while Radha, the mistress of Krishna, is worshiped equally with him, yet she is not even mentioned in the older Puranas, the one devoted to her, the Brahma Vaivarta Purana, being the very last of the Puranas; and the Braj Bilas, the popular Hindi authority for Radha's life, was not written till A. D. 1743. All of which goes to show how rapidly a story like the Krishna legends may grow among an imaginative people like the Indians.

3. *The Krishna Legends.* It may seem superfluous to give much space to the Krishna stories, but, as Growse points out, "however puerile and comparatively modern many of them may be, they have materially affected the whole course of local history, and are still household words to which allusion is constantly made in conversation either to animate a description or enforce an argument."

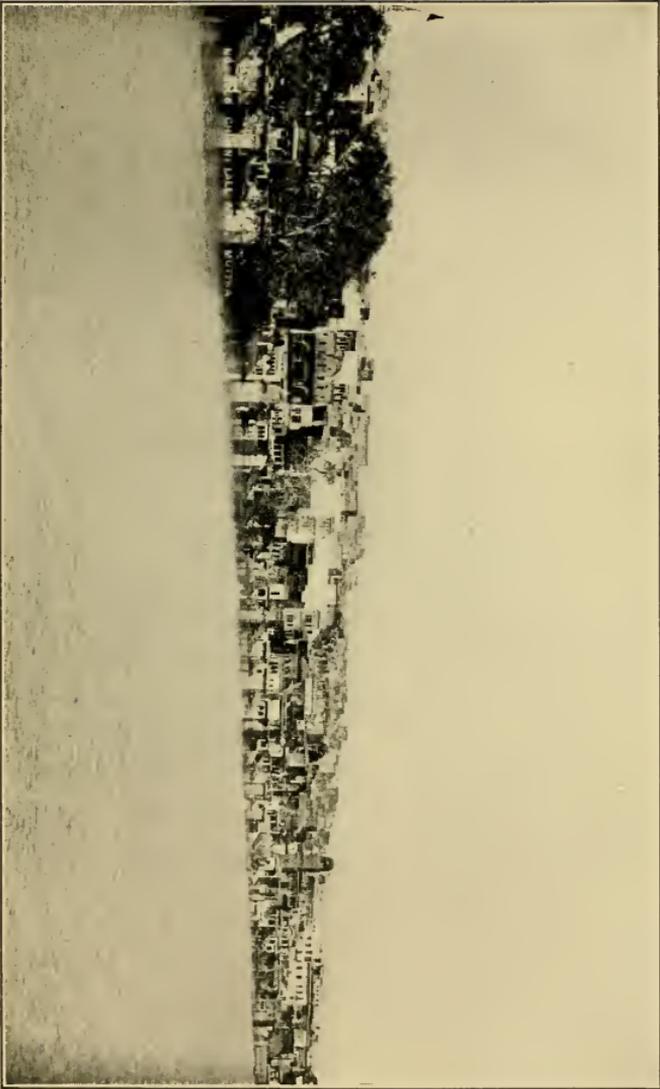
As gathered from the Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas the legends run, briefly, as follows:

Toward the close of the Dvapara, or third age of the world, earth became greatly afflicted

by asuras, or demons, and especially by the cruel tyrant Kansa, who was in reality the demon Kalanemi, who had usurped the throne of Ugrasen, his father, the rightful rajah of Mathura. In her distress she went, in the form of a cow, to Indra at Mount Meru, who, listening to her complaint, went with her to Brahma, who, in turn, took her, with all the gods, to Vishnu at the milky sea, and, praising him, at last persuaded him to become incarnate, to relieve the persecuted earth and destroy the tyrant Kansa. Vishnu plucked off two hairs, one white and the other black, and said to the gods: "These my two hairs shall descend to the earth and relieve her of her burden and distress." The white hair became Balarama and the black one Krishna, who was born as the eighth son of Basudeva and Devaki of the Lunar race. The king of the Daityas, Ahuka, had two sons, Devaka and Ugrasena, the latter the father of Kansa, and the former the father of Devaki. Basudeva, the husband of Devaki, was the son of Suru, a descendant of Yadu of the Aryan race, and had another wife, Rohini. Kansa had been informed by the prophet Narada that the eighth son of his cousin, Devaki, would destroy him. To prevent this he had imprisoned

her and destroyed each child as it was born. But the seventh, Balarama, who subsequently became the companion of Krishna, was saved by being transferred to the womb of Rohini. When the eighth, Krishna, was born he was carried by his father secretly in the night under the protection of Yoganidra, or Maya, the Sakti of Vishnu, and Sisha, the many-headed serpent, across the river Jamuna to the town of Gokula and to the house of a nomad herdsman named Nanda, whose wife, Yasoda, had just given birth to a daughter, in whose place he substituted Krishna, and, bringing the daughter with him to Mathura, unknown to anyone, placed her in the arms of Devaki. The guards were awakened by the cry of a newborn child, Kansa was immediately called, and he, seizing the child, dashed it against a stone. But it arose into the air and, expanding into a giant figure, cried out, "He is born who shall kill thee," and vanished. Kansa, finding himself thwarted, liberated Basudeva and Devaki, but, summoning the principal asuras, told them that the gods were plotting against his life and ordered that every man remarkable for his celebration of sacrifice, and every boy in whom were signs of unusual vigor, be slain. But Krishna escaped. His foster parents, Nanda

and Yasoda, carefully reared him and his elder brother, Balarama, who joined him, as their own. At Gokula and Brindaban they lived as shepherd's children; and ever evinced their divine character by many strange and marvelous feats of strength. Indeed, from his infancy Krishna displayed his superhuman powers. He destroyed the female Daitya, Putana, sent to kill him, overturned the shepherd's cart, and uprooted two large arjuna trees, and by his unruly pranks compelled the cowherds to migrate to Brindaban. There the two boys roamed about in the forest at will, even joining in sport with the other children, or performing wonderful feats of strength. Krishna destroyed the serpent Kaliya in the Jamuna River, and the demons Kesi, Arishta, and Kalanemi, who sought to take his life. He, later, persuaded the cowherds to abandon the worship of Indra and to worship the cows that gave them milk and the mountains that gave them pasturage, saying that "the object that is cultivated by anyone should be his chief divinity." To protect them from the wrath of Indra, who rained down upon them a mighty torrent, he plucked up the mountain of Gobardhana and held it aloft upon one hand.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF MATHURA FROM OPPOSITE BANK OF THE JAMUNA RIVER



But Krishna was not only the mighty hero admired for his superhuman powers, but he was, also, the jovial companion, the amorous swain, ever playing and sporting, and dancing with the shepherd women and maidens, teaching them the *Rasa* dance, stealing their clothes at *Chir Ghat*, and amusing himself with them at his will. In the course of his career he had more than sixteen thousand wives and one hundred and eighty thousand sons. Radha, the wife of Ayanaghosha, was his chief favorite, and has become deified with him. Kansa, who had not forgotten the prediction of Narada, resolved to make one more effort to rid himself of his mortal foe. He invited him and Balarama to some sports at Mathura, in the course of which he killed the tyrant and placed Ugrasena upon the throne of his fathers.

He repeatedly defended Mathura against the attacks of Kansa's son-in-law, Jarasandha, king of Magadha, and Kalayavana, king of the Yavanas, but, to save his people from further trouble, deported the entire city in a moment to Dwaraka, the exact counterpart of Mathura, which he had prepared in the midst of the distant sea. He subsequently destroyed Kalayavana, carried off Rukmini, daughter of King Bhishmaka, killed the demon Naraka,

and, going to Swaraga, Indra's heaven, at the instigation of his wife, Satyabhama, daughter of Satyajit, stole the famous parijata tree and planted it in her garden at Dwaraka.

He fought with and conquered Siva, destroyed Paundraka, a usurper, and burned Kasi with his flaming discus. It was while reigning at Dwaraka that he acted as the charioteer of his cousin Arjuna, the leader of the Pandavas on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. In the narrative of this event may be found many of his views and teachings with which he endeavored to persuade his cousin to slay his kindred.

The mission of Krishna was soon ended. There came a messenger to him from the gods, saying, "The demons have been slain, and the burden of the earth has been removed; now let the immortals once again behold their monarch in heaven."

Dwaraka was restored to the ocean, the Pandavas destroyed at Prabhasa, Balarama assumed the form of Sesha, and, finally, Krishna, in fulfillment of a prediction, was accidentally shot by the hunter Java, and, abandoning his mortal body, and the condition of the three-fold qualities, became again *nirguna*.

#### 4. *Names and Appearance of Krishna.*

Krishna is worshipped under different forms, and has numerous names and titles, all significant of his character. The most popular among his names are Gopal, "the Cowherd," so given because he grew up among the shepherds of Gokula and Brindaban; Gopinath, "the Lord of the milkmaids," referring to his amorous relations with the shepherdesses of Braj; Mathura-nath, "the Lord of Mathura," where he was born, and whose deliverer and defender he became. But he is usually represented in two forms, namely, either in the form of a crawling child with one hand extended full of butter, or curds, which he has stolen, and popularly known as the *Makhan Chor*, or "Butter Thief," in memory of his childish pranks at Gokula, or as the young swain, Kanhaya, standing in careless attitude playing the flute. When in the latter form Radha is usually associated with him in worship. His name, Krishna, signifies "black," and he is described in the Vishnu Purana as "black as the dark hues of the lotus," and elsewhere as having curly hair, with a curl of hair, called *Sirivasta*, on the breast, while his insignia consists of a club, a mace, a sword, a flaming discus (*Chakra*), a jewel, a conch, and a garland.

5. *Manner of Worship.* Krishna, while con-

sidered to be Vishnu himself, is yet the most human of all the gods, entering heartily and fully into human life, and in every way was approachable. He represents the joyous and cheerful side of Hinduism, and his worship is characterized by a lightness and freedom not found in that rendered to any other deity in the catalogue. Music and especially dancing characterize the ordinary Krishna worship. The universal and innate love of childhood finds an attraction in the merry child Krishna, and the story of his birth, infancy, and youthful life is read with the same avidity as are the gospel accounts of the nativity and infancy of our Lord in a Christian household at Christmas time. There are many festivals and joyous assemblies held during the year, such as Krishna's birthday (*Jann Ashtami*), the *Ras Lila*, and the *Holi*, in which the people give themselves up to the most boisterous revelry in commemoration of their hero. The Krishna worship conducted at the temples consists of certain ceremonies performed by the priests in the presence of the people, and is usually made up of the following daily routine: First, early in the morning, the god is bathed and dressed; then lights and incense are brought before him, after which an offering of food

is made of which he is supposed to partake. This food usually consists of cooked and uncooked rice, or other grains, and various kinds of fruits and sweetmeats. After the god has partaken the remains, called *prasad*, are eaten by the worshipers. It is usual to find the god decorated with flowers and costly ornaments. At some temples, especially at the Vallabha Swami temples, there are performed the following eight services: 1. *Mangala*, the sunrise levee; 2. *Shringara*, the enthronement, half an hour afterward; 3. *Gwala*, suppositional cattle grazing in the forest; 4. *Raj Bhog*, the midday meal; 5. *Uttapan*, the awakening from siesta, about 3 P. M.; 6. *Bhog*, the evening meal; 7. *Sandhya*, disrobing at sunset; 8. *Saya*, retiring for the night.

Among the Vallabha Charyas, or Gokulastha Gosains, Krishna is worshiped with immoral rites, and, indeed, the priest is himself looked upon as an incarnation of Krishna to whom the worshiper is bound to render the most degrading services. The founder of this sect declared that the dogma of *Brahma-Sambandh*, upon which his system was based, was given to him word for word by the Deity. In this it is declared that "every sin, whether of body or soul, is put away by union with the Crea-

tor," which, in the teachings of this sect, means complete submission to the selfish desire of the priest.

6. *Krishna and Christ.* In these days when men and women like Viva Kananda and Mrs. Besant seek to fill uncritical minds with the vague occult and mystical teachings of Yogism and theosophy, some may be misled by certain statements made concerning the Krishna cultus to believe that there is but little difference between the lives and doctrines of Krishna and Christ. It is true there are some apparent similarities. Among these may be noticed the similarity in sound of the names Krishna and Christ; the flight into Egypt from the wrath of Herod and the flight to Gokula from the wrath of Kansa; the massacre of the innocents by both Herod and Kansa; the miraculously born forerunners John and Balarama; the songs of the angelic hosts and the worship of both Christ and Krishna by the shepherds; the prominence given to the childhood of Christ and Krishna in Saint Matthew's gospel and in the Vishnu Purana; the kinship of Christ and Krishna with kings; the assumption of divinity and the exhibition of miraculous powers by both Christ and Krishna. Among the apparent likenesses

found in the tenets of the respective cults may be named the primary idea underlying both religions as that of a benevolent deity becoming incarnate in order to save the world (*Prithwi, Kosmos*) from oppression and to restore the practice of true religion; the personal assumption and equality with the Supreme; the requirements of personal devotion and attachment on the part of the disciple; the emphasis placed upon the doctrines of devotion and faith (*Bhakti* and *Pistis*) in the Gita and in the gospels; and the promise of untold blessings to the faithful in both cults. Savants have advanced various theories to account for these similarities. Some, who maintain the ante-Christian authorships of the Gita and a high antiquity for Krishna, have suggested that Christianity may have borrowed something from Krishnaology; others, with a greater show of success, have expressed the opinion that the Krishna story may have borrowed something from Christianity, either from the apocryphal writings or from Saint Matthew's gospel brought to India by Saint Thomas, or through Brahman travelers who in the early Christian centuries visited in western lands. But the argument for either view is not conclusive. It is more probable

that each system grew up without having any important influence on the other. The growth of such a religion as Krishnaism out of the antecedent pantheistic doctrines of the Brahmans and in obedience to the longing of the human heart for a greater union with the divine is as natural as the evolution of Christianity from the more primitive religion of the Hebrews.

The agreements are, after all, more apparent than real. Similarity of terms does not necessarily imply identity of meaning, and the similarity in the events are mere coincidences. The *Bhakti* of the Vaishnava is not the same as the faith of the Christian. The Gita teaches that to slay one's kindred is right, while the gospel urges us to love our enemies. Krishna lived the life of a rake, while Christ is the model of holiness.

## III

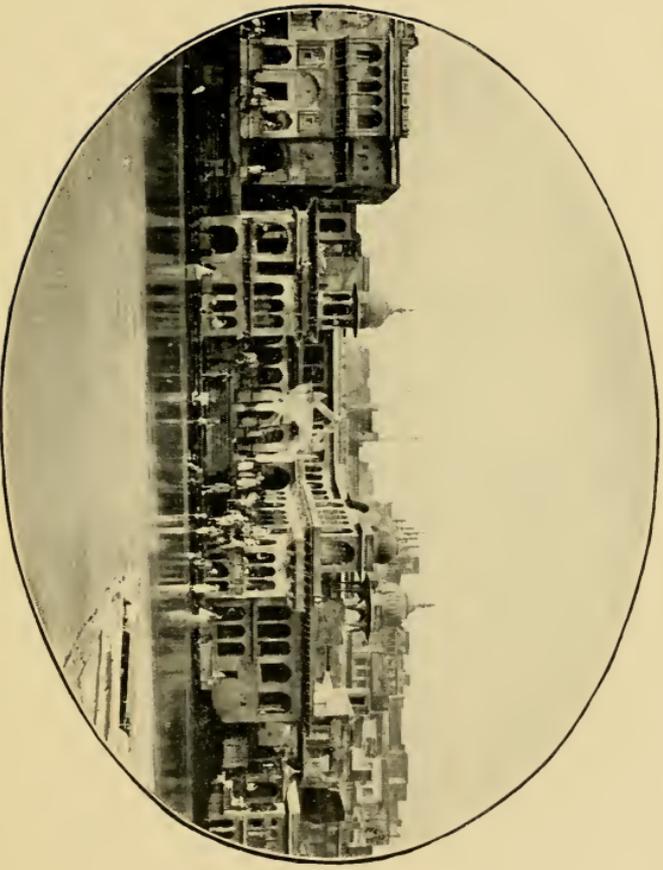
## ITS CAPITAL

1. *Its History.* (1) Traditional. If tradition and mural remains and ancient ruins are to be trusted there have been at least three Mathuras, each occupying its own site. As has been already related, the earliest known ruler was Madhu, who reigned in the forest of Madhuban. This forest was hewn down, and a city of Mathura was built by Satrugna at a very remote period. This city may not have been on the river Jamuna; at least its site is now four or five miles distant from the river. The present village of Maholi is on or near the location of this ancient Mathura, and it has been pointed out by archæologists that the farther back toward Maholi excavations are made the more ancient the antiquities discovered. Indian rivers easily change their beds, and in the intervening centuries the Jamuna may have gradually shifted away from the ancient capital. This city was distinctly a Hindu city. After the departure of Satrugna the city was annexed by a branch of the great Yadav clan.

(2) Buddhist Mathura. Buddhism arose

in India in the sixth century B. C., and the religion must at a very early period have become very strong in Mathura, for tradition affirms that it was visited by the great founder himself. The many remains exhumed in recent years indicate that it became one of the great Buddhist centers. This second city of Mathura occupied the site of the present Bhutesvar and Katra and "Kankali tila," some distance back from the river toward the west. About the years 400 and 634 A. D. respectively two Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang by name, visited Mathura and found it to be a mighty religious stronghold. The former of these declared that all the people he met were staunch Buddhists and had been so for a very long time. He found in Mathura and in its neighborhood twenty monasteries with three thousand monks and six *stupas*, or relic towers, which he mentions by name. Hwen Thsang describes the Mathura of his time to be four miles in circumference, and as containing twenty monasteries with two thousand monks and seven *stupas* containing relics of great religious teachers. He recorded that about a mile and a quarter to the east of the town a great monastery, reputed to have been built by the venerable Upagupta, in which were

VISIRANT GHAT, MATHURA





preserved his nails and beard, was to be found. In 1853 General Cunningham discovered some important Buddhist remains at Katra, the site of the famous Hindu temple of Kesava Deva. Among these was a figure of Buddha three and a half feet high. In 1860 a more important discovery was made when a number of statues, pillars, and bas-reliefs were uncovered, from the inscriptions on which it was ascertained that these occupied the site of four Buddhist monasteries. But the most important discoveries of all have been made at "Kankali tila," a mound on the road leading to Katra. Here were found colossal images of Buddha and many other relics which convinced the discoverers that here was the site of a great monastery, perhaps that of Upagupta, mentioned by Hwen Thsang. A large pillar was found in the vicinity of the Katra hill near the town. Katra seems to mark the center of Buddhist Mathura. Concerning this Growse says: "Taking the Katra, or the adjoining shrine of Bhutesvar, as the omphalos of the ancient city, and the probable site of the *stupa* of Sariputra, a short distance to the east will bring us to the 'Kankali tila,' that is, the monastery of Upagupta; while the Jalalpur mound has already been identified with the monkey

*stupa* and the mounds on the Sonkh road with the *stupas* of four earlier Buddhas and the other great teachers of the law.”

(3) Hindu Mathura. But Buddhism was an episode. It was destined to decay and die out of this land. Hinduism again gained the ascendancy, and a second Hindu Mathura arose. It would appear that even at the time of Hwen Thsang's visit in the middle of the seventh century Buddhism was on the decline, and in the beginning of the eleventh century the Mohammedan historians describe Mathura as an almost exclusively Brahmanical city. Mahmud of Ghazni sacked the city in 1017, when the historian records: “The town was constructed of hard stone, had opening on the river two gates, raised on high, and massive basements to protect them from the floods. On the two sides of the city were thousands of houses with idol temples attached, all of masonry and strengthened throughout with bars of iron, and opposite them were other buildings supported on stout wooden pillars. In the middle of the city was a temple, larger and finer than the rest, to which neither painting nor description could do justice. If anyone wished to construct a building equal to it he would not be able to do so without expend-

ing a hundred million *dinars*, and the work would occupy two hundred years, even though the most able and experienced workmen were employed." "On the decline of Buddhism," says Growse, "Mathura acquired that character for sanctity which it still retains as the reputed birthplace of the deified Krishna. Or, more probably, the triumph of Buddhism was a mere episode, on the conclusion of which the city reacquired a character which it had before enjoyed at a much earlier period; for it may be inferred from the language of the Greek geographers that Brahmanism was in their time the religion of the country, and Hindu tradition is uniform in maintaining its claims both to holiness and antiquity."

(4) Mohammedan Mathura. For more than five hundred years this sacred city lay under the dark cloud of Mohammedan supremacy, during which time Hinduism exceedingly feared and trembled and made no record of progress or even of existence. It is only when some fearful lightning stroke, more terrible than the rest, broke through the cloud that we have a glimpse of its condition. In 1017 Mahmud of Ghazni, during his ninth invasion of India, descended upon this holy city and gave it up to plunder. The magnificent and richly

endowed temples were thrown to the ground, and more than a hundred camel loads of costly images, including five large idols of pure gold, with eyes of rubies and adornments of other precious stones, were carried away. For twenty days this ruthless work of plunder went on, and it is estimated that three millions of rupees' worth of spoil, and more than five thousand captives, were carried off. During the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (1488-1516) it is said that "he entirely ruined the shrines of Mathura and turned their principal temples into *sarais* and colleges. Their stone images were given to the butchers to serve them as meat weights, and the Hindus in Mathura were strictly prohibited from shaving their heads and beards and performing their ablutions. He thus put an end to all the idolatrous rites of the infidels there, and no Hindu, if he wished to have his head or beard shaved, could get a barber to do it." When one considers how the high-caste Hindus abhor meat, and how essential ceremonial bathing and shaving are to them, one can realize to some extent the indignity heaped upon them. In 1636 the emperor Shahjehan appointed Murshid Kuli Khan governor of Mathura, with instructions, which doubtless were zealously carried out, to

stamp out all idolatry. But most destructive and ruthless of all was the incursion of that iconoclast of the East, Aurangzeb, his son, who died a prisoner in the Gwalior fort in 1665. He was born at Mathura, and in the town now called Fathabad, near Agra, he seized and had carried off to prison his elder brother, Murad, the rightful heir to the throne of his father, Shahjehan. So fierce was this zealous Mohammedan that he not only sought to utterly destroy the most sacred temples and shrines of Mathura, but also endeavored to change the very name of the place to Islamabad. Not content with the work of his deputies, Aurangzeb, in 1689, descended in person upon the devoted city. He marked out for his special vengeance the famous temple of Kesava Deva, which had been built at a cost of thirty lakhs of rupees, and concerning which Tavernier wrote in 1650: "It is one of the most sumptuous edifices in all India, and the place where there used to be formerly the greatest concourse of pilgrims. The temple is of such vast size that, though in a hollow, one can see it five or six *kos* off, the temple being very lofty and very magnificent." In the language of a writer of the time: "The proud rajahs felt their breath burning in their throats

and became as dumb as a picture on a wall. The idols, large and small alike, all adorned with costly jewels, were carried away from the heathen shrine and taken to Agra, where they were buried under the steps of Nawab Kudsia Begam's mosque, so that people might trample upon them forever." But they did not succeed in securing the most famous idol, for, in anticipation of Aurangzeb's raid, it had been removed, and now rests in the temple of Nath Ji in the town of Nathdwara, twenty-two miles from Udaypur.

(5) Modern Mathura. So complete had been the destruction of the city by the fanatical Mohammedans that save a few relics nothing earlier than the sixteenth century can be found. More than five hundred years of plunder and rapine had almost completely wiped out all traces of the magnificent old Hindu city, so that the modern city does not even occupy its ancient site. In 1803, upon the fall of Aligarh, then held by the French, Mathura came under British rule and was made a military station on the British frontier, whose western boundary was the Jamuna River. From this time onward, interrupted only by a number of famines and the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857, the city continued to grow in prosperity.

There have been five famines since 1803 worthy of note, namely, in 1813-14 many died of hunger, and men sold their wives and children to get food; in 1825-26 the suffering was great, especially in the Mahaban and Saadabad districts; in 1837-38 Mr. Hamilton, the commissioner, reported that "all the Aring and Gobardhan *Parganas* which came under my observation was an extensive arid waste," and "the cattle in Aring were scarcely able to crawl"; in 1860-61 the famine was terrible, and many people died, the collector reporting 2,500 deaths from starvation in the district during 1861 alone, and the Delhi road was opened as a relief work, 8,000 men being employed in metaling it during April alone; in 1897-98 there was great suffering, and it was necessary to open poorhouses and afford relief.

In 1832 Mathura was made the capital of a new district. On the memorable fourteenth of May, 1857, the mutiny broke out at Meerut. Mr. Mark Thornhill was magistrate and collector at Mathura, and at once took steps to protect the city and guard the more than four and a half lakhs of rupees then lying in the local treasury. He applied for aid from the adjoining native state of Bharatpur, and a small force was sent under the political agent,

Captain Nixon, to Kosi, on the northern border, to intercept any rebels who might be approaching from Delhi, which had already mutinied. Mr. Thornhill himself occupied the old fortlike imperial *sarai* at Chhata, a town about eighteen miles from Mathura, on the Delhi road. But while these preparations were being made the native troops at Mathura, which had been selected to escort the treasure to Agra, mutinied, shot Lieutenant Burton, their commanding officer, seized the treasure, set fire to the public buildings, threw open the jail and liberated the prisoners, and departed to join their comrades at Delhi. Mr. Thornhill then abandoned Chhata and returned to Mathura, where he was received and secluded by the millionaire, the late Seth Lakhmi Chand, who lived in the heart of the town. He remained there some time, but upon hearing that the rebels from Morar and Nimach were approaching the city upon their retreat from Agra Mr. Thornhill, disguised as a native and guided by a faithful native officer, Jamadar Dilawar Khan, with an escort, set out to endeavor to reach Agra Fort. They found the road swarming with rebels. The escort fled. But the faithful Dilawar Khan, by his adroit movements and clever replies, brought Mr. Thorn-

hill safely to Agra. Twice the rebels passed through Mathura during the mutiny. The Nimach rebels remained two days before passing on to Delhi, and the city was only saved from plunder by Seth Mangi Lal, who satisfied their greed by levying a contribution upon the principal residents of the town. On the twenty-sixth of September, on the fall of Delhi, the retreating rebels remained a week at Mathura, and the city was again saved from pillage by one of their own leaders, Hira Singh, who persuaded them to spare the holy city.

Still they practiced great oppression upon the people, and even set up their own government, proclaiming Maulvi Karamat Ali in the Jama Masjid to be viceroy of the emperor of Delhi. In October Mr. Thornhill returned with troops, and gradually order was restored, and in July, 1858, the treasury was again established in the police lines.

During Christmas week, 1859, the viceroy held a Durbar at Mathura, at which many honors were conferred upon those who had proved loyal and faithful during the terrible rebellion.

2. *Its Appearance and Population.* The city of Mathura occupies the right bank of the Jamuna River, about thirty miles above Agra, and, being for the most part built on a hill

sloping to the river, it has from the opposite side of the stream a picturesque appearance, especially from the middle of the railway bridge which spans the river at the lower end of the town. The houses are built of stone from the Bharatpur quarries, but, there being no very tall or pointed buildings, the roofs being usually terraced, the sloping site is much to the advantage of the city. There is a wide street paved with stone running the whole length of the city for nearly a mile and a half from Bengali Ghat to Brindaban Gate, conforming for the most part to the course of the river. On this main street are to be found the principal temples, shrines, and bathing *ghats*.

The population of the Mathura municipality, according to the census of 1901, is 50,566, of whom 38,000 are Hindus, 12,000 Mohammedans, and about 500 Christians. This is, of course, the resident population residing within the municipal limits, but the stream of pilgrims, especially during the rainy season and upon the occasion of the great religious festivals, swells this number many fold. Mathura is a typical Hindu city; the temples and bathing *ghats* swarm with priests. The Chaube Brahman is ever on the alert to make gain out of the pilgrims. Here may be found at the open



VISRANT GHAT AND OTHER GHATS, MATHURA



shops the maker and seller of idols, praying bags, rosaries, sacred pigments, and other accessories used by the votaries of the paramount religion in their worship.

3. *Sacred Places.* Like Athens of old, "the city is wholly given to idolatry." It is full of temples and *ghats* and traditional sites. A walk to the middle of the railway bridge or a climb to the top of the Flora Hall tower will give a bird's-eye view of the various places of interest. The best way to see these places in detail is to go to the site of the old fort called Kans ka Quila, the Fort of Kansa, on the river bank toward the northern end of the city. It was restored by Rajah Man Sinh of Jaipur, and was the occasional residence of the famous astronomer Rajah Sawai Jai Sinh, the founder of Jaipur, the successor of the old city of Amber. Looking down the river from this old fort, there may be seen along the river bank a succession of bathing *ghats*, extending as far down as a walled garden known as the Jamuna Bagh, or Seth's Garden. It contains two cenotaphs in memory of Seths Mani Ram and Parikh Ji, the predecessors of the founder, the late rajah, Lakhmi Chand. Near the middle of this line of *ghats* stands the most sacred of them all, by name Visrant Ghat, commem-

orating the resting of Krishna after slaying the tyrant Kansa. It is distinguished by marble arches erected by wealthy devotees. The number of other *ghats* is given as twenty-four, twelve above and twelve below, whose names refer to well-known legends, as, for instance, Ghanta Bharan refers to the bell rung to arouse Vishnu from sleep; Dharapatan marks the spot where a woman on pilgrimage fell into the sacred river and was at once born again into a high position; Sami (*Samhne*), so called because it faces the main street of the city; Dhruva commemorates the name of the son of Uttana-pada, who, through seven years' penance, was translated to heaven. On the river bank just below Visrant Ghat stands a square red sandstone tower called the *Sati Burj*, said to have been built by Rajah Bhagwan Das of Jaipur in A. D. 1570 in honor of his mother, the queen of Rajah Bhar Mal of Jaipur, who immolated herself. On rising ground in the center of the city stands the Jama Masjid, a mosque built in 1661 by Abdun Nabi Khan, the local governor, on the site of a temple. Among the most noticeable of the temples is the temple of Dwarkadhis, in Asikunda Bazar, founded by the Gwalior treasurer, Parikh Ji, commenced in 1815. It was visited by Bishop

Heber in 1825, before it was quite completed. It belongs to the sect of the Vallabha Charyas, or Gokulastha Gosains, of which the founder was a member. The temple of Bhairav Nath, in the Lohar's quarter, is remarkable for the fact that in it is a shrine dedicated to a Mohammedan saint. It is equally revered by Hindus, Sikhs, and Mohammedans, who flock to it in great numbers. Noticeable also are the temples of Radha Kishn, in Chhata Bazar, Bijay Gobind, in Satghara Ward, Bala Deva, in Khans-Khar Bazar. On the opposite side of Asikunda Bazar from the Dwarkadhis temple stands the palace of the Bharatpur princes, with a fine gateway, and just opposite the temple is the residence of the late Rajah Lakhmi Chand. On the same side of the street, past the palace of the Bharatpur princes, standing a little back from the street, but with an entrance opening to it, stands Flora Hall, a church and schoolhouse built in 1893 in commemoration of the deceased daughter of W. E. Blackstone, Esq., of Oak Park, Chicago.

Krishna's birthplace is shown at the back of the Katra, near the site of the temple of Kesva Deva, now occupied by the mosque of Aurangzeb, built in 1669. It is on the margin of a large quadrangular tank called Potara

Kund, where it is said Krishna's "baby linen" was washed. It is a small room called *Janam Bhumi*, "the birthplace," or Karagrah, "the prison house," where the parents of Krishna, Basudeva and Devaki, were imprisoned. The Arina, where Krishna killed Kansa, is to be found outside of the city opposite the civil dispensary, and is known by the name of *Kans ka Tila*, or *Rang Bhumi*. The four principal entrances to the city are called the Brindaban, Dig, Bharatpur, and Holi Gates. The latter is also called the Hardinge Gate, in honor of the late Mr. Bradford Hardinge, who was magistrate and collector at the time the beautiful and elaborately carved stone arch was erected over the main street leading from the civil station into the city. The center of the portal is surmounted with a clock. About the only indigenous art found in Mathura is that of stone carving, which is indeed very fine, and the fronts of many of the temples and private dwellings may be found covered with exquisite specimens of reticulated tracery in red sandstone. Paper and rope are also made, and little brass images, especially a curious little cup, known as *Vasudeva ka Katora*, representing the infant Krishna being carried across the Jamuna by his father.

## IV

## THE HAUNTS AND HOMES OF KRISHNA

I. *The Ban Jathra.* The land of Braj is full of sacred places, revered on account of their being the reputed haunts and homes of Krishna. The pilgrims can never rest until they have made the round of these holy shrines, and hence, especially upon the occasion of Krishna's birthday, called *Jann Ashtami*, falling in the month Bhadon, corresponding with our August-September, in the midst of the rainy season, they may be found by the thousands making the Ban Jathra, or perambulation of Braj. The distance traveled is popularly said to be eighty-four *kos*, or one hundred and sixty-eight miles, with Mathura as the central point in the circle. But at the present day Mathura is at the western side of the course marked out, and it is therefore thought that originally the circle must have been much more extensive. But in any case the circle is not intended to be exact, but rather ideal, and so any place within may be considered the center. The sacred places to be visited are enumerated, in a local manual published for the guidance

of the pilgrims, as four hills, eleven rocks, four lakes, eighty-two ponds, and twelve wells, but the main features of the pilgrimage are twelve woods and twenty-four groves, which are taken in order. During the month of pilgrimage a series of festivals called the *Ras Lila*, commemorating Krishna's amours with the shepherdesses of Braj, is arranged for by a class of Brahmans called Rasdharis, whose special work it is, and who make their living thereby. There is no better way, the writer has found by personal experience, of becoming well acquainted with the haunts and homes of Krishna than falling in with a company of pilgrims and making with them the perambulation of Braj.

2. *Maholi*. The pilgrims naturally start from the holiest place in the holy city of Mathura, namely, Visrant Ghat. The first halting place is Mahaban, some four or five miles southwest of Mathura, in the present village of Maholi, lying back from the river about the same distance. This is the reputed place, as has been before related, where Rama's brother, Satrugna, founded the city of Madhupura, which Hindu classic literature from the earliest period identifies with Mathura, although, to meet all the require-

ments of the case, the city and the river must be united.

3. *Gobardhana*. After visiting Tal-ban, Kumudban, and Radha-kund, on the way, the pilgrims come to Gobardhana, "the nurse of cattle." This famous place of pilgrimage is about thirteen miles from Mathura by the metaled road leading to Dig. It is especially noted as the place where Krishna held up the mountain Giri-raj on the tip of his finger for seven days and seven nights to protect the people from the wrath of Indra, who had, through the teachings of Krishna, been deprived of his usual sacrifices. This limestone range of hills is four or five miles long and about one hundred feet high, and rises a hundred feet from the level plain. It is considered so holy by the devotees of Krishna that out of respect for their feelings the modern government high road had to be carried over it on a paved causeway. The town of 6,738 souls is built in a break in this range of hills and on the margin of a large tank called the Manasi Ganga, which is illuminated once a year, during the festival of the Dewali. Near this tank stands the renowned temple of Harideva, built during Akbar's time by Rajah Bhagwan Das of Amber, the old city of Jaipur. On the

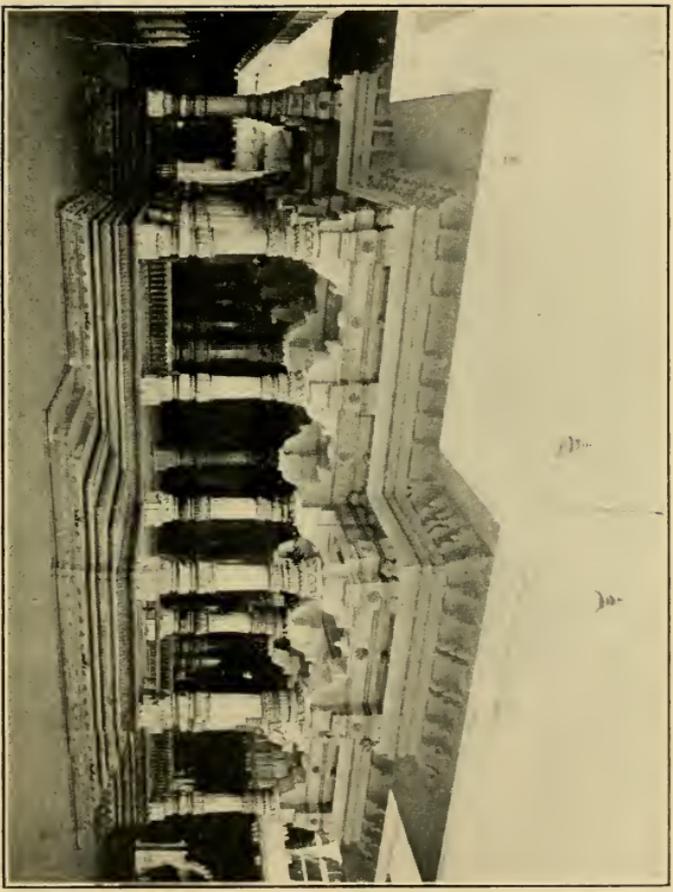
opposite side of the Manasi Ganga are two cenotaphs built in memory of two rajahs of Bharatpur, Randhir Sinh and Baldewa Sinh. These stately cenotaphs have in them some fine specimens of reticulated tracery in stone, some frescoed panels exhibiting scenes in the life of Krishna, and on the ceilings of the pavilions are painted some grotesque historical pictures of the siege of Bharatpur in which the British army is conspicuous. The cenotaph erected to the memory of the famous Suraj Mal by his son, Jawahir Sinh, may be found a mile or so from the town. Gobardhana is surrounded with places full of interest to the pilgrims, such as Basai, where Krishna and Balarama lived for a time with their foster parents; Paitha, where the affrighted people gathered under the sheltering mountains; Morban, the haunt of peacocks, and Chandra-Sarwar, "the Moon-lake," where Brahma joined with the Gopis in the mystic dance; and Ganthauli, where was tied the marriage "knot" which united Radha and Krishna in marriage. Some strange sights, showing the devotion of the pilgrims, may be witnessed at Gobardhana; men and women, under a vow, making the pilgrimage by measuring their length on the ground, and men with arms extended rigidly above their heads.

Mr. Growse tells of a fakir and devotee as follows: "For many years past one of the most striking sights of Gobardhana has been an aged Hindu ascetic, who had bound himself by a vow to absolute silence; whatever the hour of day, or time of the year, or however long the interval that might have elapsed since a previous visit, a stranger was sure to find him sitting exactly on the same spot and in the same position, as if he had never once stirred, a slight awning suspended over his head, and immediately in front of him a miniature shrine containing an emblem of the gods. The half century which was the limit of his vow has at length expired; but his tongue, bound for so many years, has now lost the power of uttering any articulate sound. In a little dog kennel at the side sits another devotee, with his legs crossed under him, ready to enter into conversation with all comers and looking one of the happiest and most contented of mortals, though the cell in which he has immured himself is so confined that he can neither stand up nor lie down." What a strange, inconsistent, and contradictory thing is Hinduism!

4. *Barsana*. The next important halting place after Gobardhana is Barsana, where Radha, Krishna's mistress, was born. It stands

on and at the foot of a ridge on the summit of which are several temples dedicated to Larli Ji, "the beloved," a local title of Radha. She was brought up here by her parents, Brikh-bhan and Kirat. Near by are Dhani Kund, where Jasoda, the foster mother of Krishna, when washing her milk pail, first saw the youthful pair together; and Prem-Sarovar, "love-lake," where Krishna first made love to Radha; and Sanket, their place of illicit meeting. The town of Barsana, now in ruins, was built on a magnificent scale by a famous pundit, Rup Ram, early in the eighteenth century, and was enriched by the rajahs of Bharatpur and Indore and further helped by Mohan Ram, a Brahman, and by Lal Ji, a Tantia Thakur, but had scarcely been completed before it was destroyed by Nazir Najaf Khan, after a severe battle with the Jats, in 1775, when the town was given over to plunder.

5. *Nandgawn*. About five miles from Barsana is Nandgawn, which, like the former, is in a ruinous state. The village occupies the slope of a hill on the top of which stands a large temple dedicated to Nand Rai Ji, the foster father of Krishna. Nandgawn is the reputed home of Nanda. In the town may be found some handsome houses built by the fa-



TEMPLE OF DWARKADHISI, MATHURA



mous Rup Ram of Barsana, and seven or eight temples, of which Jasoda-Nandan is the largest, but none of them are more than a hundred and fifty years old. Near by is one of the four sacred lakes of Braj, Pan-Sarovar, covering about six acres with steps leading down to the water on all sides. After leaving Nandgawn the pilgrims visit Karohla, Kamsi, Ajnokh, where Krishna penciled Radha's eyes with *Anjan*, and Pisayo, where she gave her thirsty lord a draft of water, and still journeying north come to Charan Pahar, where he delighted to stop and play the flute and where he was visited and worshiped by Indra. Thence they reach Dadhiganw, where Krishna sported with the milkmaids, and Kot-ban, the extreme limit of the perambulation. They then turn south to Sessai, where Krishna reclined under the canoping heads of the divine serpent Sesha, and so reach the Jamuna at Khel-ban, where his temples were crowned with the marriage wreaths, after which they follow the course of the river, coming first to Bihar-ban, and to Chir Ghat, where Krishna stole the milkmaids' clothes, and to Nand Ghat, where Nanda was carried up at the bidding of the sea god, Varuna, and to Bachh-ban, where the demon

Buchhasur was slain, and to Akrur, where Krishna received Kansa's invitation to the Mathura contest, and then, finally, to the ever-famous Brindaban, "the Tulsi Grove."

6. *Brindaban.* (1) Description. Brindaban occupies a bend in the river Jamuna about six miles north of Mathura. A little higher up the river there is a similar curve. Concerning these the traditional explanation varies, some holding that the bend in the river is due to the anger of Balarama at Jamuna for deriding him over his clumsy dancing, leading him to draw his heavy plow through the soil, drawing the helpless river from its accustomed channel. Others, following the Puranic accounts and other Sanskrit authorities, relate that the hero, becoming intoxicated, longed, in his thirst, for a bath in the sacred stream and called to her to approach, which, refusing to do, he took up his plow and made a new channel, forcing the water to follow his bidding. The more natural explanation would appear to be that the river, coursing its way through the sandy soil, took the natural turn it has assumed, the traditions having been invented to explain the phenomenon. Brindaban has a population of 22,717, 1,459 of whom are Mohammedans and about 200 Christians. The

Hindus are mostly Brahmans, Banyas, and Vaishnavas; half the people are professed celibates, a large number of devotees have come to the holy shrine to die, and it is said that some eight thousand widows devoted to Krishna reside in the place, so that it is not surprising that the deaths should exceed the births.

The word Brindaban, as has been already stated, means a Tulsi grove, the word Brinda and Tulsi being synonymous. The Tulsi plant is the sacred shrub *Ocimum Sanctum*, found at many of the temples, and which at one time grew there in greater profusion. Others, with more romantic ideas, would make the term Brinda a name of the deified Radha, who was sentenced by the demon Sankhachura to become a nymph of Brindaban. From time immemorial this town has enjoyed the distinction of being one of the holiest shrines in India, but for many centuries it remained little else than a wild, uninhabited jungle. There are no very ancient temples in the place, the oldest not earlier than the seventeenth century, while none of the modern ones are more than a hundred years old.

In the sixteenth century the popularity of the place as a pilgrim's resort seemed to spring into new life, and during the past century, since

it came under British rule, its popularity, largely due to facilities for travel and good roads, has increased. It is now connected with Mathura by a good metaled road and by a branch meter-gauge railway. The old road ran along the river bank and is now almost entirely abandoned.

While there are now a thousand temples and shrines, large and small, within the municipal limits of Brindaban, as well as many other sacred places, there are not many of peculiar interest, and yet there are some worthy of special mention. Taking these in order, first should be mentioned

(2) The Older Temples. These are four in number. They were all built by the Gosains under the patronage of that liberal Mohammedan emperor, Akbar, who visited the place in 1570. The four temples, now in a ruinous condition, although partly restored by F. S. Growse, Esq., magistrate and collector of Mathura, about thirty years ago, are Gopi Nath, Jugal Kishore, Madan Mohan, and Gobind Deva. The first three can be described in few words. The temple of Gopi Nath is, perhaps, the oldest, and is only partly standing, the nave having entirely disappeared and the three towers fallen down. It is reputed to

have been built by Thakur Raesil Ji, descended from the third son of Rajah Uday Karan, who ascended the throne of Amber in 1389. The style of the temple is very similar to that of Madan Mohan. It has an arcade of three bracket arches and a choir arch of elaborate design. Madan Mohan stands at the upper end of the town on the banks of the river, near Kali Mardan Ghat, where Krishna destroyed the serpent Kali. It has a nave fifty-seven feet long, a choir twenty feet square, on the west, and beyond it a sanctuary of the same size. The tower over the sacarium is a lofty octagon tapering to the top. The building is in a ruinous condition and is not used. The temple of Jugal Kishore stands near Kesi Ghat, at the lower end of the town. It was built by Non Karan, who may have been the elder brother of the founder of the temple of Gopi Nath, in the year A. D. 1627, while the emperor Jahangir was on the throne of Delhi. The temple of Gobind Deva, the largest and finest of the four, deserves special mention. It stands on an elevation on the western side of the town. An inscription within states that it was built in Sambat in 1647, corresponding to A. D. 1590, by Rajah Man Sinh, son of Rajah Bhagwan Das of Amber, under the di-

rection of two gurus, Rupa and Sanatana. Mr. Growse, who partly restored the building; thus describes it: "Gobind Deva is not only the finest of this particular series, but is the most impressive religious edifice that Hindu art has produced, at least in upper India. The body of the building is in the form of a Greek cross, the nave being a hundred feet in length and the breadth across the transepts the same. The central compartment is surmounted by a dome of singularly graceful proportions; and the four arms of the cross are roofed by a wagon vault of pointed form, not, as is usual in Hindu architecture, composed of overlapping brackets, but constructed of true radiating arches as in our Gothic cathedrals. The walls have an average thickness of ten feet, and are pierced in two stages, the upper stage being a regular triforium, to which access is obtained by an internal staircase. At the east entrance of the nave a small narthex projects fifteen feet; and at the west end, between two niches, and incased in a rich canopy of sculpture, a square-headed doorway leads into the choir, a chamber some twenty feet deep. Beyond this was the sacrarium, flanked on either side by a lateral chapel; each of these three cells being of the same dimensions as the choir, and, like

it, vaulted by a lofty dome. The general effect of the interior is not unlike that produced by Saint Paul's Cathedral in London. The latter building has greatly the advantage in size, but in the other the central dome is more elegant, while the richer decoration of the wall surface and the natural glow of the red sandstone supply that relief and warmth of coloring which are so lamentably deficient in its Western rival." It is thought that the temple was originally surmounted with seven towers, over the central dome, sacrarium, chapels, and at the ends of the transepts, respectively. These have all been ruthlessly thrown down, removing the noble effect they must have given to the exterior. The building having a cruciform ground plan, and being singularly free from the usual grotesque figures which ruin so many other temples, it would not require much alteration to change it into a Christian church, and this appearance has suggested that the architect may have been assisted by the Jesuit missionaries, who had considerable influence at Akbar's court. The image of the god to whom the temple was originally dedicated was carried to Jaipur, anticipating the visit of the destructive Aurangzeb, where it still is said to be. It is also said that the original plan of

the temple showing the seven towers is to be found in Jaipur, and the Gosain in the temple there is regarded as the head of the endowment.

(3) Modern Temples. There are six temples of more modern construction worthy of notice. One of these, indeed, the Madho Bilas temple, on the Mathura highway west of the town, is not yet completed. Taking these temples in chronological order, the Krishna Chandrama temple was built in 1810 by Krishan Chandra Sinh, a Bengali Kayath, better known as *Lala Baba*. It is a large quadrangular building standing in a garden, inclosed by a high wall with an arched gateway at either end. The temple cost twenty-five lakhs of rupees. The founder had an interesting history. He was the fifth in descent from Baba Murli Mohan Sinh, a wealthy merchant and landlord at Kandi, in Murshidabad. When thirty years of age he came to live in the Holy Land of Braj. At forty he renounced the world, assumed the yellow robes of a Bairagi fakir, and begged his bread from door to door. But a chance to increase his worldly gains was too great a temptation to the man of business to be resisted. As he saw the sacred places in Braj fallen into ruins by neglect, and the multitudes

visiting them every year, he bought up at a price far below their value all the villages most noted as places of pilgrimage, and, there being no written contract, the property has passed to his family. He thus purchased in the Holy Land fifteen villages, paying for them in depreciated rupees. The temple known as the Seth's temple was commenced in 1845 and completed in 1851, the founders being Seths Gobind Ram and Radha Krishn, brothers of the Mathura millionaire, the late Rajah Lakhmi Chand, whose father, Seth Muni Ram, used to accompany the Lala Baba in his wanderings as a fakir. The temple cost forty-five lakhs of rupees, and is endowed with the income of thirty-three villages, seven of which, including one fourth of Brindaban, are in the land of Braj. It is dedicated to Rang Ji, a title of Vishnu. The plans were furnished by the family guru, or religious teacher, Swami Ranga Charya, a native of South India, which accounts for the temple being built in the homely Madras style. It has an outer court seven hundred and seventy-three feet long and four hundred and forty wide, inclosing a tank and pavilion and garden besides the temple proper. The temple consists of different quadrangular courtyards, one within another, and has at

either end lofty gate towers covered with grotesque sculpture. In the central court, which may be called the Holy of Holies, in front of the image, stands a pillar sixty feet high, made of copper gilt, at a cost of ten thousand rupees. The front, or western, entrance to the outer quadrangular court is surmounted by a handsome pavilion in the Mathura style which contrasts favorably with the coarser work of the temple gate towers.

The image of Krishna is carried once a year during the Bramotsav festival in the month of Chait, corresponding to our March-April, on a huge car which is kept in an adjoining shed, to a garden six hundred and ninety yards distant, where, in the midst of the garden, stands a pavilion especially for his use. This festival continues for ten days, and each day the god is conveyed on a different vehicle, as a litter, a throne or tabernacle, or on some demigod, as the sun or moon, Garura, Hanuman, or Shesha, or on some animal, as a horse, elephant, lion, swan, etc. The huge car is only used on the closing day, when, of course, the crowd is the largest. The procession each day is accompanied by torches, music, incense, and a body-guard of troops, furnished by the rajah of Bharatpur. The image of Krishna is placed



SATI BURJ, MATHURA

(A faithful widow's tower, commemorating her immolation with the body of her husband. Built in 1570.)



in the center of the car, surrounded with Brahmans with fans and by others on foot, chanting hymns of praise in Sanskrit. The car is drawn by ropes, all classes of Brahmans and "twice-born" taking part. The distance is covered in two hours. On the night of the close of the festival there is a display of fireworks witnessed by an immense throng. The temple of Radha Raman, built by the late Sah Kunden Lal, of Lakhnau, at a cost of ten lakhs of rupees, stands in a courtyard with a large gateway. It has in front a colonnade of spiral marble pillars, each made of one piece of marble, and is surmounted by life-size representations of shepherdesses of Braj in various attitudes and flanked by grotesque creatures which add nothing to the beauty of the building. There is a small temple, Radha Indra Kishore, built by Rani Indra Jit Kuwar, of Tikari. It stands on a high plinth, is seventy feet square, has three aisles and a sanctuary, the whole surmounted by a sloping tower with a finial covered with gilt. Each pillar is made of a single piece of stone. The Radha Gopal temple was built by the maharajah of Gwalior. It has a nave fifty-eight feet long, with four aisles and a sacrarium twenty-one feet deep. The building is so constructed that, while open and

airy, the glare of the sun is avoided. The Madhu Bilas temple, on the Mathura road, already referred to, was commenced about twenty years ago by the late rajah of Jaipur, Madhu Singh, in memory of his guru, but has never been completed, and it is doubtful if it ever will be, as it has come to be believed that whoever completes the building will forfeit his life. It has already cost about eighteen lakhs of rupees. It is surrounded by a courtyard with cloisters, built of Bharatpur sandstone. The interior of the temple is beautifully carved, the reticulated tracery being especially noticeable. The roof is supported by enormous single-shaft sandstone pillars. The sacrarium is divided into three shrines, intended to receive the god Krishna in his threefold character, and is beautifully faced with marble inlaid with various precious stones. The floor of the temple is laid in marble. The whole is done in admirable taste, and has a rich and elegant appearance. As the temple has not been consecrated, visitors are permitted to enter and inspect the building.

(4) Tanks. There are only two tanks of any great renown. One of these is back of the Seth's temple, and is called Brahm Kund. The other, Gobind Kund, is near the Mathura road,

and was inclosed by Chaudharani Kali Sundari, of Rajshahi, at a cost of thirty thousand rupees.

(5) Ghats. For about a mile and a half the river front is lined by a succession of ghats. The one highest up the river is called Kali Mardan Ghat, where Krishna plunged into the stream to attack the serpent Kaliya. At the southern end of the town is Kesi Ghat, where he slew the demon of that name. Chir Ghat, where he stole the bathers' clothes, is shown back of the temple of Radha Raman, although another Chir Ghat is shown at the village of Siyara, above the town, on the course of pilgrimage. There are a number of large buildings along the river bank, but perhaps the most noticeable is the Ganga Mohan Kunj, built by Ganga, the Rani of Suraj Mal, the first of the Bharatpur rajahs. "The river front, which is all that was ever completed, has a high and massive basement story, which, on the land side, as seen from the interior of the court, becomes a mere plinth for the support of a majestic double cloister with broad and lofty arch and massive clustered pier." It was in this house that a large company of missionaries met, first in 1888 and annually for several years afterward, at the time of the Brahmotsav fes-

tival, and from which they went forth to preach to the multitudes, and where the plans for the expansion of the mission in Braj were initiated. Permission was always readily obtained from the Bharatpur Durbar, which controlled the building, the only stipulation being that the occupants, out of deference to the prejudices of the Brahmans, abstain from the use of meat.

7. *Baladeva*. The pilgrims having spent some time at Brindaban, and some of them, perhaps, having decided to spend the remnant of their days in that holy place, they pass on their way down the eastern side of the river to the next important place, Baladeva. On the way they visit Bel-ban, and Bhadra-ban, and Bhandir-ban, where Balarama was first named after he had slain the demon Pralomba, and Dangoli, and Man-Sarowar, one of the four sacred lakes of Braj, and Lohaban, where the demon Lohasur was overthrown, and Gopalpur, and Raval, and Bhuriya ka Khera, where Krishna clandestinely met Manvati and had her husband beaten by his mother-in-law, and then to Bandigaown, and finally to Baladeva. Here is the famous temple of Baladeva, standing in the center of the town. This temple was built by Seth Syam Das, of Delhi, toward the end

of the seventeenth century, and the various courts by different persons from time to time from 1768 to 1828. This shrine is a very popular one among all classes, and thousands of pilgrims resort to it, especially during the two great festivals which are held annually.

8. *Mahaban*. The next place is Mahaban, a town of 5,523 souls, standing on a hill on the left bank of the Jamuna six miles below Mathura, and about six miles from Baladeva and one mile from Gokula. It is, in fact, the original Gokula of Sanskrit literature, and the events in the childhood life of Krishna occurred here, and not at the more modern adjacent town. There is no doubt that here stood some of the great Buddhist monasteries which were founded in the vicinity of Mathura during the supremacy of that religion, for wherever excavations are made for buildings many fragments of Buddhist sculpture are found, and it seems plain that the Klisobora mentioned by Arrian and Pliny is the town of Mahaban, and the gods described by them as Dionysius and Hercules are none other than our old friends Krishna and Balarama. Here are to be found the traditional places connected with the early life of the deified hero. In the ruins of an old fort occupying the hill over-

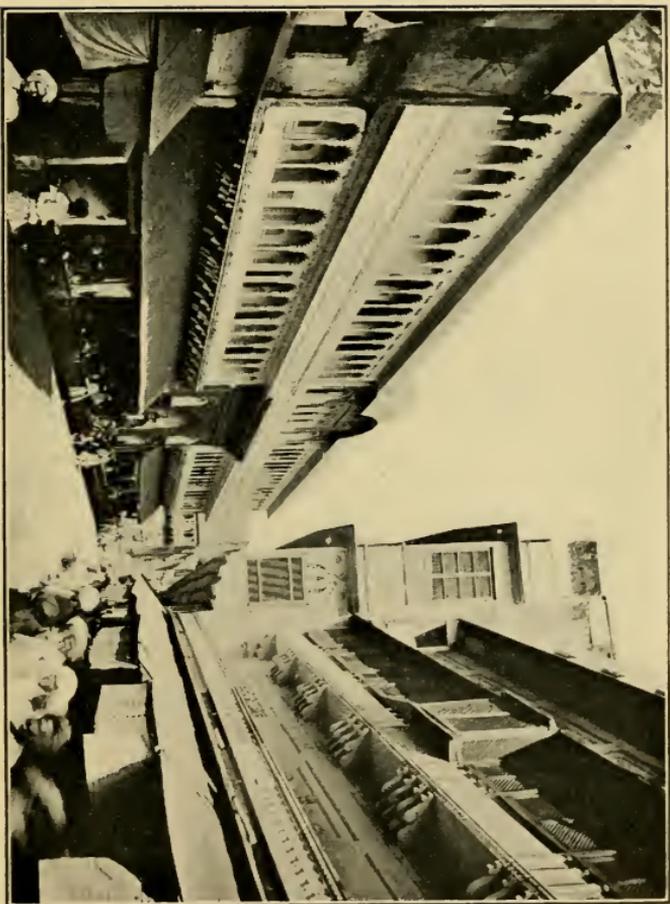
looking the Jamuna may be found the shrine of Syam Lala, marking the reputed spot where Jasoda gave birth to Maya or Joga-nidra, who was substituted by Vasadeva for the child Krishna. Nanda and Jasoda's dwelling house may be found in a covered court with eighty remarkable pillars called *Assi Khamba*. There are five rows of these pillars, sixteen in a row, dividing the building into four aisles. The pillars vary in size and pattern, the outer ones being made of massive stone shafts carved horizontally and with capitals decorated with heads and other figures, while of the inside pillars some are plain and some are highly decorated. Four of the pillars represent the four mythical ages. Several domestic articles of Krishna's babyhood are shown, as his cradle, his mother's churn, etc. It is plain that at one time Mahaban was a Buddhist center, and when the Mohammedans gained the supremacy in India this was long in their possession. It would seem that the fort was originally built by one Rana Katira, of Mewar, who had been driven out by the Mohammedans and settled here with the Rajah Dig Pal, married his daughter, and subsequently succeeded him. The fort was taken by the Mohammedans in the time of Ala-ud-din by Sufi Yahya, of

Mashad, who disguised himself and his soldiers as Hindu ladies who desired to visit the shrine of Syam Lala, and were carried inside the fort in palanquins. The town was sacked by Mahmud of Ghazni in A. D. 1017, from which catastrophe it has never recovered. It is said that the great temple was once used as a mosque.

9. *Gokula*. The river suburb of Mahaban is Gokula, which must be visited next in order, as it contains some noted shrines dear to the heart of the Vaishnava pilgrims. There are a number of temples in Gokula, the most noted of which are Gokul-Nath, Madan Mohan, and Bitthal-Nath, built in A. D. 1511, and Dwaraka-Nath and Bal Krishan, founded in A. D. 1546 and A. D. 1636 respectively.

The most notable thing connected with this small town of 3,880 inhabitants is that it is the home of the Vallabha Charyas, or Gokulastha Gosains, the epicureans of the East, who preach and practice the doctrine that life consists rather in social enjoyments than in solitude and mortification of the flesh. The founder of this sect, the exponent of ultimate Krishnaolatry, was Vallabha Swami, who was born in A. D. 1479, being the second son of a Telinga Brahman, Lakhshman Bhatt, of the

Vishnu Swami sect. He was born when his parents were fleeing from an outburst of fanaticism in Benares, to which they had gone on a pilgrimage. They, in their fear, abandoned him under a tree, but on their return found him still alive and carried him back to Benares, thence to Gokula, where he was brought up. He commenced his career at the age of eleven, and wandered over a large part of India, propagating his faith. He often visited the land of Braj, founding, in 1520, the great temple of Sri-Nath, at Gobardhana. His permanent home was at Benares, where he died in 1531. He had two sons. His second son, Bitthal-Nath, succeeded him, who spread his doctrines throughout the south and west of India. In 1565 he settled down in Gokula, and at the age of seventy he died at Gobardhana. His fourth son, Gokul-Nath, of the seven born to him and his two wives, is the most noted. The Gokul-astha Gosains are the Mormons of the East, and claim to have had their doctrines revealed directly from heaven. They are looked upon as incarnations of Krishna and worshiped as such. The cultus is the natural result of the Bhakti Marg, or "way of faith," of the Bhagavad Gita in connection with the narratives of the Vishnu Purana. "This doctrine main-



ASIKUNDA BAZAR, MATHURA  
(Flora Hall is on this street.)



tains," says Mr. Jones, "that by a devotion to a personal God salvation is achieved. This idea separates this doctrine from, and apparently antagonizes, the prevailing philosophy of the land—Vedantism. This cult of *Bhakti* is connected with Krishnaolatry, which is the worship of the most unworthy and licentious god of the Hindu pantheon." And the Gokulastha Gosain takes the place of Krishna and claims the same privileges. More will be said in connection with the account of the Hindu reformers given in the next chapter.

Grotesque silver toys and ornaments are made at Gokul and sold to the pilgrims in large numbers. Shapes of animals, as cows, deers, and peacocks, are made with some skill, although roughly finished, and the curious shapes often render them interesting souvenirs, and the silversmiths can cleverly copy any model that may be given them. After visiting all the sacred places at Gokul the weary pilgrims return to the holy city of Mathura and sit down to rest at Visrant Ghat, from which they set out. It has been a wonderful pilgrimage. They have made the *Pari-Krama*, the perambulation of Braj. They have finished the *Ban jatra*, "the forest journey," the *Braj mandal*, the grand tour. They have learned the per-

sonal history of the deified rake, and reconsecrate themselves to the god of lust, and are prepared as never before to walk the *Bhakti Marg*, "the way of faith," of devotion to a personal god.

## V

## THE LATER VAISHNAVA SECTS

I. *Hinduism Changeable.* The religion of the Aryans who found their home in India is not unchangeable. It was Vedism, then Brahmanism, and now Hinduism, yet each new evolution retains something of the older cult, so that in India to-day may be found combined with the most mystical pantheism the grossest polytheism. Even Hinduism is changing. This evolution has a history. "In a sense," says Mr. J. P. Jones in *Krishna and Christ*, "the all-pervasive pantheism of Brahmanism made a certain form of incarnation a necessity from the earliest days. The ancient Aryans could not rest satisfied with the Unknown and the Absolute of their Vedantism; so they speedily began to erect for their ever-growing pantheon an endless procession of emanations. But it was probably the phenomenal success of Gautama, and especially the posthumous influence of his life and example, that opened the eyes of the Brahmans and suggested to them the supreme need of an *avatar* (descent) for the popularizing of their faith. And thus

originated that vast system of descents, or incarnations, which have multiplied so greatly and developed so grotesquely all over the land." The Krishna cultus is a later phase of Hinduism, and the narratives of the Puranas, more modern than those of the Bhagavad Gita, and the Brahma Vaivarta Purana and the Hindi Braj Bilas are the latest authorities on the lives of Krishna and his mistress Radha, and these, according to able authority, were not written till the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, respectively. These show the popular beliefs. But there have arisen at Mathura and vicinity a number of peculiar sects which must be noticed in order to get a complete view of Krishnaism. Many of the ethical teachings of Krishnaism may be learned from the modern worship, the pilgrimages, festivals, hymns, prayers, offerings, etc., in which his votaries take part. This worship shows the hold he has upon the popular mind, and is an index to the character of the god and his religion, and to the effect they have upon the lives and morals of the people. It shows also that although Krishna is the central attraction in all the elaborate ceremonies associated therewith, yet his numerous followers are far from being of one mind as to who he is and as to

the manner in which he should be approached. A mere surface knowledge of Krishnaism would lead an outsider to believe that all the great mass of earnest worshipers believe the same thing, and are actuated by the same motives, whereas a deeper insight reveals the fact that there are many forms of belief and consequently many sects, and that there are differences between these Krishnaite Vaishnavas as wide as between the strictest Romanists and Protestants, or Calvinists and Arminians, of the Christian faith. So that one can truly say, with the late Sir Monier Williams, that the "capacity for almost endless expansion causes almost endless sectarian divisions even among the followers of any particular line of doctrine."

2. *The Modern Sects.* In the Vaishnava Holy Land there may be found a number of Vaishnava sects differing in various particulars from the orthodox faith. The leading *sampadayas*, or sects, are called the Sri Vaishnavas, the Nimbarak Vaishnavas, the Madhva Vaishnavas, and the Vishnu Swamis, or the more modern Vallabha Charyas or Gokulastha Gosains. They are all worshipers of Vishnu's eighth incarnation.

(1) The Sri Vaishnavas. The Sri Vaish-

nava sect is the most ancient and respectable of the Vaishnava sects, and its tenets are based for the teachings of Ramanuja, who flourished in the twelfth century of the Christian era in southern India and taught the union of Vishnu with the Supreme and gathered converts from all castes. The largest temple at Brindaban, that of Rang Ji, known as the Seth's temple, is dedicated to that form of worship and is attended largely by foreigners from the south, who follow rites and ceremonies quite distinct from those of the natives of the place. The Sri Vaishnavas, like the other leading sects, may be known by their sectarian mark, which in this case consists of two streaks of white down the forehead joined at the root of the nose with a slight streak of red between. Their leading dogma is that Vishnu is only visible in creation as an effect and not as a cause. They also refuse to admit Radha, the mistress of Krishna, as an object of worship, thus showing that they are followers of that older and purer Krishna cultus which either ignores the existence of Radha altogether or regards her merely as his mistress.

(2) The Nimbaraks. The Nimbarak Vaishnavas are so called from the legend that the sun god, Suraj Naraiyana, descended from

the Nim tree, under which the founder of the sect, an ascetic named Bhash-Karacharya, was dining. As observed within the environments of Braj, they may be especially found among the solitary ascetics who live in little hermitages in the sacred groves. Many of them live simple lives, spending much of their time in contemplation and worship. They have but little literature, but many of their teachings are eminently philosophical and not unlike Christian truth. They believe in salvation by faith, and in the conscious existence of the soul after death, and, if faithful in this life, in the enjoyment in the future world of the visible presence of the Deity. They further believe in the existence of one infinite and invisible God, the only real existence and the only proper object of worship. But owing to human limitations it becomes necessary for him to manifest himself to man's comprehension. For this reason they worship Krishna as God. They look upon Krishna and Radha as the symbols of divine union and love. It matters not whether they are real persons or not, for they answer the purpose of helping the mind to understand God and his nature and arouse in man religious enthusiasm.

(3) The Madhva Vaishnavas. The Madhva

Vaishnavas are not so numerous as the others, and within the bounds of the Krishna Holy Land have no temples of any note. Their founder, Madhva Charya, was born in southern India in 1199. They are dualists (*Dvaita*), in opposition to the non-dualist (*Advaita*) system of Sanka Charya, holding that there is an essential difference between *Jiv-atman*, or the principle of life, and *Param-atman*, or the Supreme Being.

(4) The Vishnu Swamis. There are but few of the Vishnu Swamis to be found, but their place is taken by the Vallabha Charyas, or Gokulastha Gosains, referred to in the last chapter. The Vishnu Swami doctrines were almost entirely remodeled in the fifteenth century by the Gokula Gosain, Vallabha Charya, who was regarded by his followers as an incarnation of Krishna and worshiped with licentious rites, his system being called *Pushti Marga*, "the way of eating and drinking and enjoying ourself."

The modern priests of this sect are known as maharajas, and stand to the worshipers in the place of Krishna himself. The maharajas have occasional sources of income as follows:

"For homage by sight, Rs. 5; for homage by touch, Rs. 20; for the honor of washing the

maharaja's foot, Rs. 35; for the credit of swinging him, Rs. 40; for the glory of rubbing sweet unguents on his body, Rs. 42; for the joy of sitting with him, Rs. 60; for the bliss of occupying the same room, Rs. 50 to 500; for the performance of the circular dance, Rs. 100 to 200; for the delight of eating the *pan supari* thrown out by the maharaja, Rs. 17; for drinking the water in which the maharaja has bathed, or in which his foul linen has been washed, Rs. 19."

"They are the epicureans of the East, and are not ashamed to avow their belief that the ideal life consists rather in social enjoyment than in solitude and mortification. Such a creed is naturally destructive of all self-restraint even in matters where indulgence is by common consent held criminal; and the profligacy to which it has given rise is so notorious that the maharaja of Jaypore was moved to expel from his capital the ancient image of Gokul Chandrama, for which the sect entertained a special veneration, and has further conceived such a prejudice against Vaishnavas in general that all his subjects are compelled, before they appear in his presence, to mark their forehead with the three horizontal lines that indicate a votary of Siva. The scan-

dalous practices of the Gosains and the unnatural subserviency of the people in ministering to their gratification received a crushing *exposé* in a *cause célèbre* for libel tried before the Supreme Court of Bombay in 1862." (Mathura Memoir.)

Before anyone can claim the full privilege of communion with the sect he is required to make a full dedication of himself and all he has (*tan, man, dhan*—body, soul, and wealth), in the following language:

"One. The god Krishna is my refuge. Distracted by the infinite pain and torment caused by the separation from Krishna, which has extended over a space of time measured by thousands of years, I now to the holy Krishna do dedicate my bodily faculties, my life, my soul, and its belongings (*tan, man, dhan*), with my wife, my house, my children, my whole substance, and my own self. O Krishna, I am thy servant."

By this act of dedication a man submits to the pleasure of the Gosain not only his wealth, but the virginity of his daughter, or his newly married wife; and such adulterous connection is looked upon as the same as ecstatic union with the Divine Being and as the most meritorious act of devotion which

can be rendered. In giving judgment in the celebrated libel suit referred to above Sir Matthew Sausse, the chief justice, said:

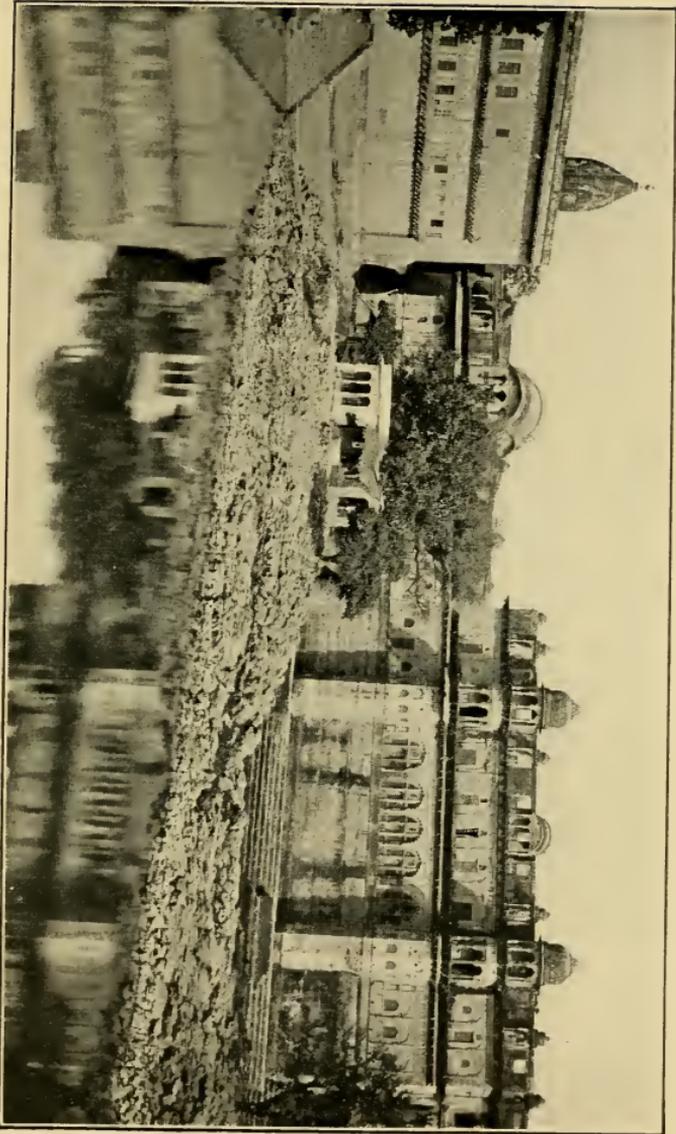
“The maharajas have been sedulous in identifying themselves with the god Krishna by means of their own writings and teachings, and by the similarity of ceremonies and addresses which they require to be offered to themselves by their followers. All songs connected with the god Krishna which were brought before us were of an amorous character, and it appeared that songs of a corrupting and licentious tendency, both in ideas and expression, are sung by young females to the maharaja upon festive occasions, in which they are identified with the god in his most licentious aspect. In these songs, as well as stories, both written and traditional, which latter are treated as of a religious character in the sect, the subject of sexual intercourse is most prominent. Adultery is made familiar to the minds of all; it is nowhere discouraged or denounced, but, on the contrary, in some of the stories, those persons who have committed that great moral and social offense are commended.” In the light of these facts it is scarcely necessary for Swami Viva Kananda to extol the Krishna cultus before a Western audience, or for Mrs.

Besant to say, "The ablest missionary can offer to the Brahman nothing more exquisitely satisfactory to the religious emotions than the Avatars of Rama and Krishna."

"What can the ablest missionary offer to the Brahman that he does not already possess in his own religion, and how can he hope to win him to modern presentments of spiritual truths already familiar to him in subtler and profounder ancient dicta? Nothing deeper and loftier can be offered to him in religious philosophy than the Vedanta, nothing more sublimely spiritual than his Upanishads, nothing more nobly moral than his *Bhagavad Gita* and other teachings in the *Mahabharata*, nothing more exquisitely satisfying to the religious emotions than the Avatars of Rama and Krishna, and the austerer glories of Maheshvara. Why, then, seek to convert him?" (Review of Reviews, June, 1894, p. 600.)

Truly the late Bishop Caldwell is correct when he says: "The stories related of Krishna's life do more than anything else to destroy the morals and corrupt the imaginations of the Hindu youth."

(5) Other Sects. Besides the above-named sects there may be found living within the limits of Braj several other more modern,



MANASI GANGA, GOBARDHANA

(Here Krishna held the mountain aloft on his finger.)



though less important, Vaishnava communities, such as the Gaurya Vaishnavas, the Radha Vallabhas, and the followers of Swami Hari Das. The peculiar doctrine of the Gaurya Vaishnavas is that in worship the repetition of the name Krishna is the chief thing, that even the formal reciting of the name will insure salvation, and that aside from this all other acts of devotion are nonessential. This sect may be known by their caste mark and their rosary, the former consisting of two white streaks down the forehead joined at the root of the nose and extended to near the tip, and the latter of one hundred and eight beads made of the wood of the Tulsi plant.

The Radha Vallabhas, founded by the voluptuous Hari Vans, who is now known by his title of Hit Ji, unlike the Sri Vaishnavas, give Radha the preference over Krishna and deify her as the goddess of lust. The followers of Swami Hari Das, known as Gosains, own one of the most conspicuous temples at Brindaban, the only one, indeed, owned by them exclusively in India. None of them can boast of much learning, nor do they differ materially from the great mass of Vaishnavas, who are especially devoted to Krishna.

All these sects are Vaishnavas ; that is, they

believe in the various incarnations of Vishnu and worship him as the great god of the pantheon. Among the various *Avatars*, or "descents," they discriminate in favor of the hero of Mathura, Krishna, the son of Basudeva and Devaki. Many of them worship him as supreme, deeming him not so much as an incarnation of Vishnu as Vishnu himself. They accept his human life as a part of the divine plan and believe in the Puranic legends as historical events. The so-called reformers sadly need reforming themselves. The modern Krishna cultus is degrading and corrupt. The life of the founder was puerile, fickle, and immoral, and it is not possible that the disciple be greater than his lord. In the interest of an oppressed humanity there is need of a greater Deliverer and a purer faith.

PART SECOND  
THE MISSION

“ Dejected India, lift thy downcast eyes,  
And mark the hour whose faithful steps for thee  
Through Time’s press’d ranks bring on the Jubilee.”

## PART SECOND

## The Mission

## I

## THE FOUNDING OF A MISSION

1. *How It Came to Be.* The opening of the Mathura Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church was the result of a combination of peculiar providential circumstances. In 1886, when the late Rev. Dennis Osborne was presiding elder of the Allahabad District, then a part of the South India Conference, he felt strongly impressed that Mathura should be opened as a mission station of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was aware that the Baptist Missionary Society had been working there since before the mutiny of 1857, and that the Church Missionary Society had an agent there, but still he felt strangely urged to insist that his church, also, whose work had expanded and overflowed from the trans-Ganges field, should have a part in the difficult task of overthrowing this great Vaishnava stronghold. Concerning this impression Mr.

Osborne some time before his death wrote the author as follows :

“It was some time in the year 1886, I being at the time a member of the South India Conference and presiding elder of the Allahabad District, that I was praying and pondering over the extension of missionary work in the district. Our resources in men and money were at the time very slender ; still God was with us, and we were laying foundations in his name. We had already occupied Agra, and one night I was distinctly awakened by a voice saying, ‘Occupy Mathura for Christ!’ It was not a dream, for I beheld nothing, nor yet an audible voice. It was a voice to my spirit, clear and unmistakable. Regarding it probably as a mere natural impression arising from my previous thought, I paid little heed to it, and fell asleep again. The voice, however, was distinctly repeated twice, and I could mistake it no longer, and immediately mentioned it to my wife. I had no acquaintance with Mathura, but so firmly was I persuaded that God called us there that I shortly visited that city and was confirmed in my belief that Providence was beckoning to us to enter this field. Hence at the next Annual Conference, which took place on February 3, 1887, Bishop

Ninde presiding, I strongly advocated the occupation of Mathura as a mission field, and in the appointments of that Conference (under the Allahabad District, then changed to Mussoorie District), the following appointment appears for the first time: 'Mathura Mission, to be supplied.' The Central Conference which followed in Bombay immediately afterward changed the boundaries of our Annual Conference; and Agra and Mathura, with the native work in Allahabad, went over to the North India Conference, with my hearty approval. This gave to our Mathura Mission its best opportunity; and since then its record has been one of peculiar success under the blessing of God."

At the session of the North India Conference which met in Cawnpur in January, 1888, the late Bishop (then Dr.) Parker, while feeling that it would be difficult to provide a man or money for the enterprise, yet felt the urgency of it, and he and Dr. T. S. Johnson, then presiding elder of the Oudh District of the same Conference, favored the matter in the cabinet, and it was decided to send a missionary to Mathura. The desire to go to this new field had strangely taken hold of the writer, who had returned from leave the year before and

had just been sent to Roy Bareilly, in Oudh. He had never been there. It had the reputation of being a hard field. It was urged that there was little hope of success in such a stronghold of Hinduism, and that all previous efforts to evangelize such places had proved a failure. Still the writer persisted in urging his case before his presiding elder, who reminded him of these discouraging features, and further told him that there was no house in which to live and but little money with which to prosecute the work. But none of these things could lessen the strong desire to enter this field.

Recently Dr. Johnson, who was his presiding elder at the time Mathura was opened, wrote the author as follows:

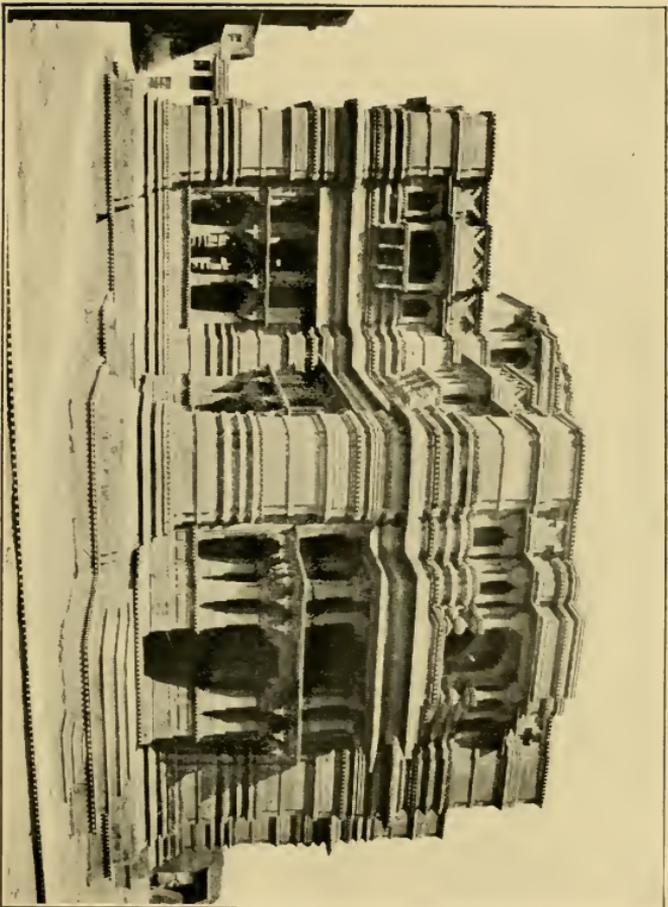
“I have been interested in that work from its beginning. I remember your continued anxiety to go and open up work in Mathura. At first I discouraged the undertaking, because we had so few men and were so pressed for money, and I thought I could not spare you from my district; but, as you persisted, I concluded it might be of the Lord. I consulted with Dr. Parker, and he, too, said we were not able to take up Mathura at that time. But, as you continued to plead to be sent to

Mathura, we decided in favor of your going and did all we could to assist you with money and workers. Bishop Parker and myself have often conversed about the peculiar manner in which you were led, and were always glad, and I still am, and I have no doubt but dear Bishop Parker in the heavenly home continues to think with pleasure of his part in making it possible for you to work in Mathura at that time. It soon became plain that the Lord was in the movement. May his special blessing continue to rest upon this work!"

The writer became preacher in charge at Mathura in January, 1888. At that time the whole of the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the upper *Doab*, as the territory lying between the Ganges and the Jamuna Rivers is called, was included in the famous Rohilkhand District, with the late Bishop (then Dr.) Parker as presiding elder. Under date of January 19 Dr. Parker wrote in his diary: "This morning started for Mathura, arriving at noon. After lunch at the Dak Bungalow went out to see the city and select a location for future work, and, if possible, hire a house for Brother Scott's residence. We selected what we think is the best location, hired half a house for Brother Scott, and went

all through the city. Our whole party was pleased with what we saw and thankful that we had come. It does seem as though a divine hand were leading us in this work here at Mathura. I never felt more sure that God leads than I now feel in this matter of entering Mathura."

2. *As It Was in the Beginning.* The first year in Mathura the writer moved four times. First he lived in a room in the Dak Bungalow (hard by the cemetery); then, with his family, in half a hired house in the civil lines, until the heat of May drove them out; and then in a small bungalow in the cantonments until the fifth of January, 1889, when they removed into tents pitched on land rented by the mission, and on which the mission house was being built; and finally, on the twenty-sixth of January, into a couple of rooms in the parsonage, which was completed early in 1889. In January, 1889, Dr. Parker wrote in his diary concerning his visit to Mathura: "Took Bishop and Mrs. Fowler to Mathura and spent the day there. Went with them to Brindaban. New mission house at Mathura nearly finished. Preached, with pictures, in the evening." This preaching was in the heart of the city, in the courtyard of a house which we had rented



TEMPLE OF GOBIND DEVA, BRINDABAN

(It is the most impressive religious edifice that Hindu art has ever produced.)



for a schoolhouse, just back of the present site of Flora Hall. The writer showed some magic lantern pictures, Bishop Fowler and his son sat on a stool in the veranda, and Dr. Parker preached to an audience of Brahmans. In those days for a helper the writer had associated with him a feeble old man, William Plomer, who had been with Parker at the famous Wesleypur, in Oudh, in 1860. He and his wife had succeeded in opening a few houses for Christian work in the suburbs, but there were no Christians of our church in all that bigoted Vaishnava Holy Land; in fact, there were very few Christians of any church. Mr. Growse, who was collector and magistrate here in 1874, states officially that in 1871-72 there were in the civil district 816,870 Hindus, 75,649 Mohammedans, and "the small remainder of 23 Christians" (!).

In the hired house in the city, just mentioned, a school was started, attended by high-caste non-Christians, and in connection with that a Sunday school was held every Sunday morning, with a preaching service in the evening. On January 19, as has been before stated, Dr. Parker, accompanied by Dr. T. J. Scott, Mr. J. T. McMahan, and the writer, met in Mathura to select a site for a mission house.

They were strangers to the place and "went out not knowing whither they went." They walked about the city, and finally reached an elevated site between the Sudder Bazar and the city on one of the main roads, and at once said of one accord, "This is the place." It was the place. None knew to whom it belonged, or if it was available. When the committee departed the missionary found that the desirable site belonged to a bigoted Chaube Brahman living in the holy city of Mathura! It was not likely he would sell his ancestral property to a Christian missionary. Nor would he, when seen. But still that was the place. And, evidently, Providence intended it to be so, for at the next interview the Chaube agreed to rent the land on a perpetual lease, and so the best site in the city limits was secured forever. It was near the city, adjoining the cantonments, on a main road, well elevated and healthful. On this was commenced the first mission house in March. There were no mission funds for building, but Dr. Parker and the writer advanced the money, application was made for permission to build, and soon the work was going forward. The ground plan was drawn on the fourteenth of February, the work was commenced on the twenty-ninth

of March, and completed by the first of January, 1899, the missionaries taking their first meal in it on the twenty-fourth, and sleeping in it for the first time on the twenty-sixth of January.

3. *Providential Help.* From the first to the eighth of March, 1888, occurred the great Brahmotsav *mela*, or Krishna car festival, at Brindaban. About thirty missionaries of various missions, and more than a hundred native preachers and Bible readers, met for the purpose of working in this *mela*. The old house, Ganga Mohan Kunj, referred to in the account of Brindaban, and put at their disposal by the Bharatpur council, was occupied as headquarters, and bands of workers preached daily for six or eight hours in the *mela*, showing the magic lantern at night to great throngs of people.

The Brindaban *mela* of 1888 is memorable for several reasons. A decision was reached at that time which greatly affected the future of the Mathura Mission. Seated around a large table in the midst of this great *mela*, in the heart of this Vaishnava stronghold, it was decided that a Deaconess Home and Training School be established at Mathura; and from there a letter was sent by Dr. Parker to Mr.

W. E. Blackstone, of Oak Park, Chicago, inclosing letters from other missionaries, urging that such an institution, which he had under contemplation, be established at this new station of Mathura. Concerning the founding of this school Mr. Blackstone subsequently wrote to the writer as follows:

“The attention of myself and friends was first directed to Mathura in the following manner: We were seeking for some good investment in India. My parents had died, and I wished to erect a living memorial for them. On conferring with the ladies of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society I learned that they were placing much stress upon a Home for Medical Students at Agra, and I first thought of building a Deaconess Home there. But, in some way, provision for this seemed to have been made, and Mathura was suggested instead. So I decided to locate the Deaconess Home and Training School there. I was in New York at the time, May, 1888, on my way to the General Missionary Conference in London, England, when I had a conference with several of the officers of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society at Mrs. Skidmore’s house in New York; and then, after carefully considering the matter, I gave them a check for

three thousand dollars to build a Home. Miss Fannie Sparks, under whose supervision the Home was established, afterward petitioned me for the addition of native quarters, etc., and we furnished two thousand dollars more."

Word came to the writer through Dr. Parker on the seventeenth of June, 1889, that the Home was to be built, and on the eleventh of July a committee, consisting of Dr. and Mrs. Parker, Misses English, Blackmar, Dr. Christiency, and the resident missionaries, met to select a suitable site for the new buildings. It was decided that the very best site was the land adjoining that of the General Missionary Society, and owned by the same Chaube Brahman. But when approached he emphatically refused to sell or rent, saying that it belonged to his grandson, who was a minor, and the land could not be diverted. Moreover, he avowed his purpose to build a shrine thereon, and in proof thereof commenced to lay out a garden. But in a few days, on the first of November, he changed his mind and consented suddenly to rent the land on the same terms as before. He was hurried to the registrar's office before he could change his mind again, the deed was written and registered, and the site was secured forever. The ground plan

of the building was drawn on the second of November, 1888, and on the twenty-fifth of March, 1889, the memorial corner stone was laid by Dr. Parker in the presence of a number of missionaries.

Besides these mission houses some spiritual temples were built the first year. The first service was held in the city of Mathura on the twelfth of February, and the first English service with the troops in the cantonments took place in the regimental schoolroom on the eighth of April, and on the seventeenth of April a Rajput widow was baptized in Brindaban. Since the work commenced to spread into the district, old William Plomer was sent on an evangelistic tour to Hathras, twenty-four miles distant, on the Cawnpur and Achynera Railway, and was told not to return until he had some converts. He returned in about a week with the welcome news that eight persons had been baptized and that there were other inquirers under instruction. In the meantime the school for boys prospered in the city, zenana work was opened among the high-caste women, and several girls' schools were started. On the twenty fifth of March, 1890, two young Bengali widows from Brindaban were baptized in the mission house drawing-room at Mathura.

4. *Hopeful Outlook.* Thus the first year closed, and the second opened with much encouragement. Sites had been secured for both societies, the parsonage was completed and occupied, the Deaconess Home and Training School commenced, schools had been opened in the city, a service commenced for British troops in the cantonments, and, best of all, there had been about a dozen converts and there were a number of inquirers in the surrounding towns and villages.

## II

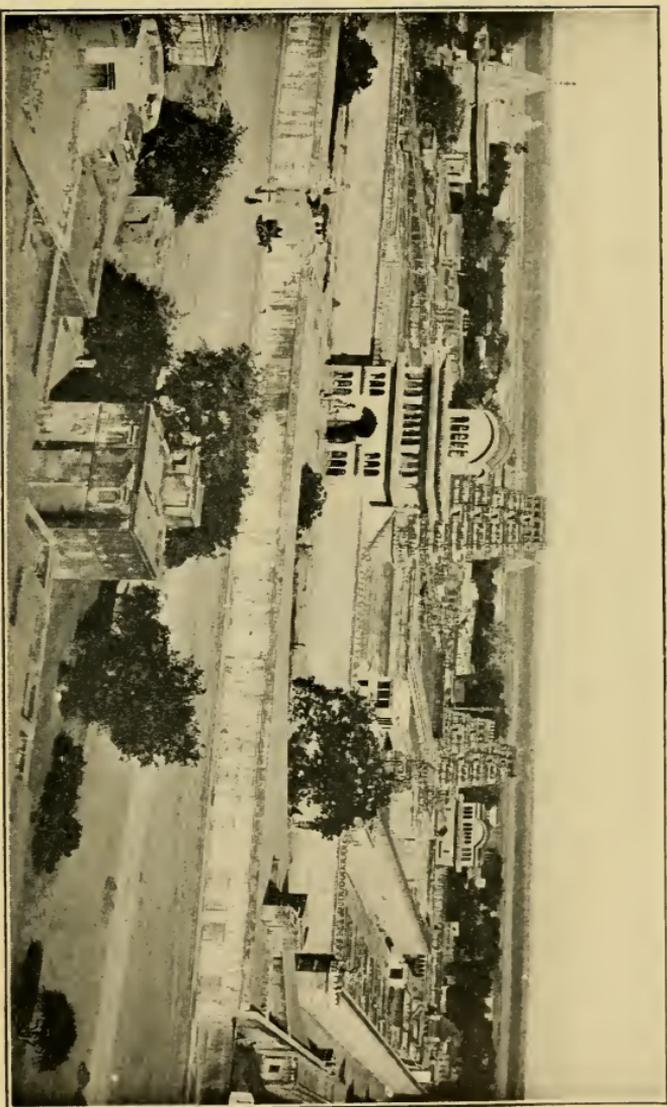
## THE EVOLUTION OF A MISSION

1. *Expansion.* At the end of 1890 there were eight preachers, four Christian teachers, and several Bible readers at work on the Mathura Circuit. There had been more than one hundred converts, and the inquirers under instruction had greatly multiplied. The Deaconess Home was completed, and a church for the soldiers also, the first service in which was held the sixth of April, and a reading and prayer room was completed. On the tenth of March the missionaries were able to go to the Brindaban *mela* by train, and for a week more than a hundred workers preached to great multitudes of people. But the first forward movement was made at Hathras at the beginning of the cold season of 1889 (October 7-9), when a camp meeting, the first of a series held there annually, took place. A large tent was pitched near the city, and several meetings were held daily, with the magic lantern at night. The attendance of non-Christians was large, and about fifty Christians, the majority of whom were from the schools at

Mathura, were present. A Hindu priest had been baptized at Mathura a few weeks before, and his presence and addresses attracted considerable attention and stirred up some resentment. During this *mela* the writer was called one night to baptize some converts in the city. He found thirteen very poor and almost entirely unclad children gathered in the midst of a company of adults in a sweeper ward. They had been under the tuition of Ummad Singh, the preacher stationed there, and were the first fruits of a large multitude who have followed. When the missionary returned to the tent, in which he had left a large congregation looking at magic lantern pictures shown by Dr. Parker, he found that some of "the baser sort" had untied the ropes and threatened to throw the tent down upon the people. Of course this broke up the meeting, and the Christians hurried away to the town hall.

Gradually there grew up around Mathura eight large circuits. The first among these were Hathras, Mahaban, Bharatpur, and Brindaban, and as the years went by almost every important village within a radius of twenty-five miles had the gospel preached in it, and many of them contained converts and inquirers under instruction. It is true the majority of

these converts were from the sweeper caste, but this did not prevent or hinder work being done among all castes, and perhaps there were as many converts from the higher castes during those years as there would have been had the work been entirely confined to them. In 1890 the editor of the *Kankab i Hind* wrote: "The work at Mathura is worthy of careful attention. This is the third year there, and in this time the missionary has built an excellent mission house and a Deaconess Home with Training School, and has put up a substantial chapel costing four thousand rupees. This chapel was designed with special reference to the needs of the soldiers, but the Hindustani congregation also meets there Tuesday afternoon. Mrs. Scott attends to the pastoral work of the English congregation, and some twenty men have begun the Christian life this year. The missionary preaches in Hindustani every Sunday evening in his city schoolroom, and he is planning for a large increase in the proclamation of the gospel. He has several outstations which are quite fruitful, notably Hathras and Sikandra Rao; in these two towns there are nearly two hundred Christians, most of whom have been baptized within twelve months." During eleven months in 1890 there



SETH'S TEMPLE, BRINDAVAN

(Built in 1850 at a cost of \$1,500,000.)



were 14 baptisms at Mathura, 22 at Sikandra Rao, and 73 at Hathras.

In 1893 the editor of the *Kankab i Hind* again called attention to the work as follows: "The Mathura work is worthy of study. The city and outlying civil district are well occupied. Circuits have been organized in each of the five *tahsils* (townships), and hundreds of converts have been gained in the past five years. In the center of the city an eligible building site was purchased for five thousand rupees, and now a large building, costing eighteen thousand rupees, is being erected. This will contain an Anglo-Vernacular School, an audience room capable of seating five hundred persons, and book room, reading room, and office. Two services are held each Sunday in the city, one in the morning for children and one in the evening for non-Christians. It is not an easy thing to gather and hold continuously a non-Christian congregation. It requires great tact and excellent preaching ability."

By January, 1891, the eleven Christians of Hathras had grown to a community of one hundred and thirty. The parents of the children had become Christians. One man, Lal Masih, and his wife, Pulmani, became teachers

and were the means of influencing hundreds to forsake their idols and turn to God. About thirty Christian and Chumar (leather-worker) boys were in the school which met in the chapel which had been built, and were under the tuition of two Christian teachers. Those were the days of active aggressive work; of long tours from village to village; of rides across country in uncomfortable *ekkas* without springs; of sleeping under trees and in native huts; of eating unwholesome native food and drinking unfiltered water. But they were the days of opening new work, of finding and training inquirers, of baptizing and organizing converts. Workers and teachers had to be sought out and trained. But the gospel is self-propagative. As such converts are made they themselves spontaneously turn into earnest, successful workers, uneducated and often very inexperienced, it is true, but simple-hearted, teachable, and familiar with the people among whom they live. In those days the missionary wrote in his diary: "Several months ago I went to Gobardhana, thirteen miles from Mathura, and baptized a *bairagi* (mendicant priest) and some of his disciples. The man was unkempt, and was loaded down with rosaries, charms, and amulets. With baptism he

discarded them. He organized his followers into a Christian school, and took the room in which they were baptized as a schoolroom. Soon he became restless for more aggressive work and hurried away to his old disciples at Digg, in Bharatpur territory. It was not long until he had numerous inquirers under training and wrote for some one to come and baptize them. Then he was off to Bharatpur itself, and the same thing was repeated. In all about one hundred converts were made by this one man in a few months."

Lal Masih, previously mentioned, is another example of the same class of worker raised up and set to work. He is of the sweeper caste, and early came under the influence of the gospel at Hathras. He was a good singer, could read and write, and soon became familiar with the New Testament. His wife, Pulmani, was in every way his equal. He sent her to the Training School at Mathura, and then both of them were sent out into the work. Old Braj Lal is another case. The man could neither read nor write. But he could sing and could compose simple hymns in praise of Christ. He had great influence in the community in which he lived, and he would often spend hours singing to the people, accompanying the singing

with his primitive violin. He brought several hundreds of his class to believe in Christ. In his annual report for 1892 the missionary wrote as follows:

“The presiding officer of the Agra District, living on his district and in the midst of the work all the year round and year after year, and being constantly on the move among the people, is pretty familiar with the details of the work, with all the excellences and most of the defects to be found in it. He is not disposed to boast of those or suppress these. As is well known, many of the people are very, very poor. They live from hand to mouth, with but little in the hand. They are exceedingly illiterate. With the exception of about one hundred and fifty mission employees and several hundred students, the great mass are unable to read or write. It cannot be expected that a people oppressed and depressed for centuries will burst out into brilliancy all at once. And yet, certainly, a marvelous change is taking place among these people, who have put themselves under our tutelage. It is with profound gratitude that this change wrought by grace in the hearts of these humble villagers is noted. Success after toil always brings joy, and in this work it is only toil that can bring

success. The heart that never feels the burden of work and worry is scarcely susceptible of the highest joy. Has not the weeping in the night something to do with the sweetness of joy in the morning? There is profound philosophy in the declaration that 'he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him' (Psa. 126. 6).

"Come with me to Dauji and hear the people pray; to Hathras and hear them sing; to Bharatpur and hear them testify! Notice the simple faith of the blind man at Aligarh who prayed all night for some one to lead him to the Hathras camp meeting, and got his answer in the morning, when a stranger, a non-Christian lad, came to him and offered to conduct him. 'Baptize me! Baptize me!' cried the villager in the early morning, before it was yet day, pleading before Mr. Lawson's tent—'Baptize me, or the devil will get me!' It is needless to say that his request was granted. See that old man from Dauji astride of his knock-kneed pony, with rope bridle and stirrups, leaving the camp ground for home with the blessing of God in his heart and the solar light making his wrinkled face look beautiful. Having got out of the grove on to the highway, he re-

turns to say, 'God has blessed me in this meeting, and now I am going home to tell the people, and I am sure many of them will get what I have got.' Yonder goes old Edward, the *sais*, the tent-pitcher, the faithful Christian worker, trudging from village to village, taking his wife with him, mounted on a pony, preaching the gospel and leading scores to the Lord. Such men as these make mission work a delight and are our assurance of certain and complete victory."

2. *Mathura Institutions.* Mention has been made of how Mr. Blackstone came to help Mathura. He and his family and friends have from the beginning helped and fostered the work in this great center.

(1) The Deaconess Home. Among the institutions which were thus founded the first was the already mentioned Deaconess Home. It was opened in 1889, and Miss Fannie Sparks was the first superintendent, with Mrs. Matthews as an associate. While the new Home was being completed they occupied a large house in the European quarters of the station, called the civil lines. From the first this Home has been like a "city set upon a hill." Since 1889 there have been five superintendents, namely, Miss Sparks, 1889-90; Miss Sheldon,

M.D., 1891-92; Mrs. Matthews, 1893-96; Miss Sullivan, 1897-99; and Miss Gregg, who is the present incumbent. These deaconesses and their associates have not only prosecuted the particular work pertaining to their office, but have managed schools, and have done the work of evangelists, and have itinerated in the villages, and have entered heartily into almost every form of missionary work, educational, evangelistic, medical, industrial, and whatsoever their hands have found to do they have done it with their might. As has been said, this Home had placed in the wall on the twenty-eight of March, 1899, a memorial stone. On that stone is the following inscription: "Training School and Deaconess Home. A Memorial to Andrew Blackstone, and Sarah his Wife, of Adams, New York. Erected by their Son, W. E. Blackstone, Chicago, Ills., U. S. A., March 28th, 1899."

(2) The Training School. As the inscription quoted above indicates, the institution is not only a Deaconess Home but a Training School as well. Mr. Blackstone's idea in founding the Mathura Training School was to have in India a school as nearly as possible like the Training School in Chicago in which he had taken an interest and which had

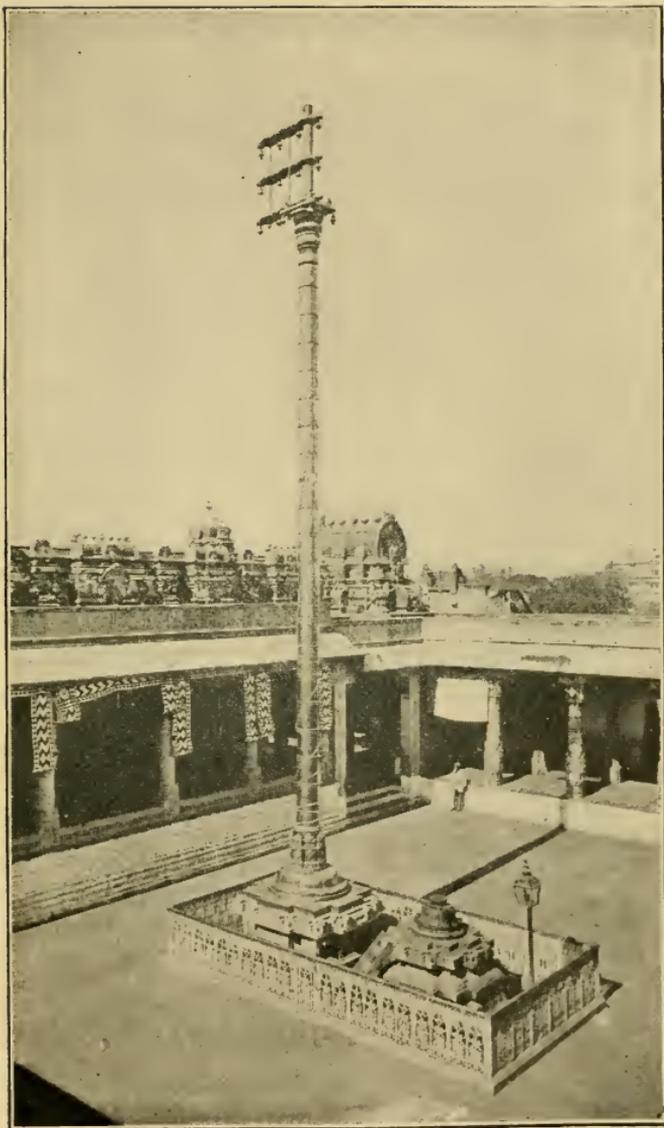
proved to be so successful. It was to give practical training to European and native young women, fitting them for mission work. "This institution was established," writes the lady principal, "to stimulate and give facilities for the study of the Bible, to increase the number and efficiency of Christian workers, and to utilize the undirected or misdirected energies of Christian women in active service." From the beginning it had two departments, one for English students, who must be over sixteen years of age, of approved Christian character, and in good health, and the other a Vernacular Department, in which the full course is given in the language of the candidate. Five students graduated from the school in 1891, four in 1892, two in 1893, one in 1894, five in 1895, nine in 1898, and four in 1900. The following is an extract from the first principal's second report, in 1890. Miss Sparks writes: "The number of students, considering that it is a new work, has been large, and promises well for the future, we think. During the two years twenty-two different students have been in the school, six English and sixteen natives, these representing fourteen different stations. Some were married and came with their families, others unmarried, and others,

again, widows. The number this year has been twelve. The yearly examinations took place in November, the students acquitting themselves well. Those who had remained the entire year completed the course of study, which, in addition to a curriculum about equal to that of the Training School in Chicago, embraces also the first year's Missionary and Bible Readers' Course of Study in Urdu, Hindi, and Bengali. Some have taken the three languages. The students have been thoroughly drilled in methods of work and in practical teaching and zenana visiting. One thousand three hundred and eighty-five zenana visits have been made by the students during the past year. They have also had special opportunities for participating in *mela*, temple, and *ghat* work, Mathura and Brindaban being noted Hindu shrines affording opportunities for a variety of practical training which could hardly be had elsewhere."

The editor of the India Witness recently wrote this of the school: "Time and space fail us to note at length the Training School in Mathura, in which European and Indian young women are being trained for mission service. Under the efficient superintendence of Miss Gregg the school is enlarging its bor-

ders and taking on strength. A function of the visit to which we refer was the laying of the foundation stone by Bishop Warne of a building for the accommodation of one of the departments of the Training School, this new building also being a gift of Mr. Blackstone. We have no doubt that this institution has a future of great usefulness before it, although the largest success is not likely to be attained in a year or two."

(3) Flora Hall. Another Mathura institution is Flora Hall, standing in the very heart of the city. The principle upon which the site for Flora Hall—in fact, for all the Mathura buildings—was selected was to get the very best available. In this case the writer went into the city, selected the most eligible site, and then sought out the owner with a view to purchasing it. In 1888 a small house was rented back of Naya Bazar, adjoining a mosque and near the Dwaraka-Dhis temple, in which a school was opened. This was the mission headquarters in the city. Just in front of that were some old buildings fallen into ruin used as residences. When Bishop Fowler visited Mathura, on the twenty-eighth of January, 1889, in company with Dr. Parker, and attended a magic lantern exhibition in the schoolhouse



**DHVAJA STAMBHA, BRINDABAN**

(A golden pillar in the Seth's Temple, sixty feet high, marking the location of the idol Krishna.)



he was struck with the need of a house in the city and urged upon the writer the expediency of getting the very best place. This was the best place. The owner was a young Moham-medan, Hamed Ali, of an old and respectable but greatly reduced family, a student in Agra College, who very much needed money. It was mortgaged to a Brahman who was glad to get his money. The site consisted of two parts divided by a narrow street connecting two parallel streets in front and rear. When Dr. Parker ceased to be presiding elder, at the end of 1899, he was succeeded by Rev. C. L. Bare. Upon the tenth of October, 1890, he wrote to the writer as follows: "Dr. Parker and I have talked over your new site in Ma-thura. We must have it somehow. We would better take both buildings and land on both sides of the alley leading up to your present rented school building. It would be better to buy instead of rent, and then we could hold our own in case anyone wished to oust us. I feel confident we can get our estimates through Finance Committee next year. But how can we buy now without money? Could you buy making a payment down of, say, one thousand rupees, the rest payable in installments, or, what is better, the whole payable on the first

of February, 1892? You could borrow one thousand rupees at six per cent. I believe this is best."

This was good advice, and in accordance with it the whole site was purchased on the second of January, 1891, for five thousand rupees, one thousand paid down, and the balance after a year. On the twenty-sixth of January, 1891, the Rev. Thomas Evans, who had been the Baptist missionary in Mathura in 1857, and whose house had been burned down by the mutineers, he escaping with his family to the Agra Fort, wrote as follows: "It seems to me something like a miracle that you should be able to secure a building site for a Christian church in the very center of the Hindu conservative and sacred city of Mathura. You have indeed stolen a march on the bigoted Brahman Chaubes of Krishna's birthplace, and they will open their eyes wide and exclaim in horror, 'Ram! Ram!' when they find a new building for Christian worship going up so close to their own temples and idols. Considering the difficulty of buying any site in the sacred city, the extent of the ground you have got, its frontage and perfectly central position, I consider that you have got the site exceedingly cheap, and I feel

pretty sure that as soon as it is found out that a place of Christian worship is to be put on the site you will be offered double the amount for it. All I can say is that I am exceedingly glad that in the center of the heathen city in which thirty-five years ago I began my mission work, where I could hardly find a footing on which to stand to preach Christ, you have now found a site on which to put up a good large building to the honor of the God of heaven. May this prove but the beginning of still greater success in the storming and subjugation of this stronghold of idol worship, to the praise of the living God!"

As Mr. Evans surmised, the purchase of such a site for such a purpose was looked upon as a daring enterprise. A missionary begged of the writer to abandon it. An officer in high position under government considered it fraught with danger. The Brahmans of the city framed a petition and forwarded it to the government, setting forth that the land had been purchased without their knowledge, that the erection of such a building would desecrate their holy city. But a just magistrate referred them to the presence of mosques in their city, one of which was adjacent to the site, and showed them that the site had been purchased

in the open market and that it was not done in haste or without their knowledge. Other difficulties arose about the subway over which the building was erected, and about certain front buildings whose cellars extended under one corner of the site, but with patience and fairness all these matters were amicably settled and the work went forward. The Mission Board promptly gave five thousand dollars to pay for the site. The old buildings were cleared away, and throughout the year 1891 a service was held in the open every Sunday evening attended by Christians and a large number of outsiders. While earnestly praying for funds to build the much-needed house on the eligible site now secured, the heart of Mrs. Adaline M. Smith, of Oak Park, Chicago, was moved to build the house in memory of her granddaughter, Flora L. Blackstone, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Blackstone, a young lady who died in her senior year at Oberlin College, while preparing to be a missionary. Under date of the twenty-eighth of April, 1892, she wrote as follows: "After prayerful deliberation I have concluded to furnish the funds to build the church or hall, schoolroom, etc., you desire to put up in Mauthura, as soon as I can obtain the same. My

granddaughter, Flora L. Blackstone, died last month, and the sorrow has been very heavy on all of us. She would have been twenty-four in June, and was to graduate from Oberlin College that month. She seemed eminently fitted for the Master's service, and the sad dispensation is all the more inexplicable. I desire to make this building a memorial to her and name it Flora Hall, or some such name as you may think wise, and place a tablet saying that it is erected to the memory of Flora L. Blackstone by her grandmother, Adaline M. Smith." On the fifth of June she sent three thousand dollars, followed on the twenty-first of the same month by a letter inclosing two thousand dollars more, in which she wrote: "With God's favor I have been able to sell my interest in a farm near Onarga, Illinois, and thus raise the funds for this building. It is among the last of my earthly possessions, and I am thankful that I live to see it well invested for time and eternity. I am just getting about the house after many weeks of sickness. I am eighty years old on the twentieth of April. God has been very good to give me so many years. I hope he may give you a great work of grace and the salvation of many souls in Mathura and Brindaban."

The work was commenced early in 1893 and completed the same year. On the sixteenth of May Dr. Parker wrote to Mr. W. E. Blackstone from Lucknow as follows:

“At your request in your last letter I last week went to Mathura. The building is all that you stipulated. 1. A good audience room with good foundations and good solid walls and no rooms above it to make it top-heavy. It is the first floor above the elevation walls required to level up the place so it will be airy and not too high. The foundations go down deep, twenty-five feet in places, and must stand. 2. There are good class rooms. These begin a little lower down, and hence are two stories, and will compare well with the audience room. All is well built of good solid burned brick with thick walls. The plan is very much like what we talked of at Oak Park. While in Mathura I was at the Deaconess Home for our Epworth League meeting, and saw all the folks. The work is good. They very much need a girls' schoolhouse. They are very much crowded. Their dormitories are leaking badly, and I had two hundred rupees given me by a friend, so am helping them this amount toward repairs. If you find anyone who has two thousand dollars to invest

get it for that Training Home schoolhouse, please. Mathura is a grand place. I love Mathura."

The work on Flora Hall drew near to completion, but it was found that it would cost more than the original estimates. Mr. Blackstone wrote under date of July 13: "It is very hard times here now, but I will send the remaining thousand dollars for deficiencies, furnishing, etc., of Flora Hall as soon as I can raise it." And three weeks later, on the fourth of August, he wrote again as follows: "Phil. 1. 2, 3. God is good! In the midst of most fearful financial times he has enabled me to secure the one thousand dollars to send to you. First I had only three hundred and thirty dollars, but the next day I was again most providentially helped to get the balance. This explains why there are two drafts. This is to be applied as follows: Five hundred and thirty-six dollars from Adaline M. Smith for balance of the expense of building Flora Hall, and four hundred and thirty-four dollars from Mrs. Blackstone and myself to apply on the furniture." And on August 9: "My wife and I have questioned much what we should do with two hundred dollars which belonged to our darling Flora. She went so suddenly that

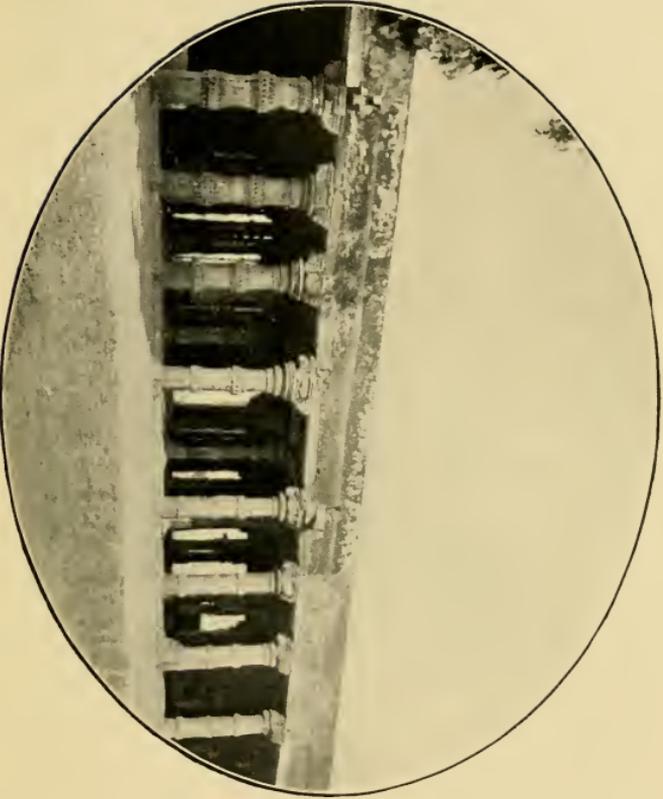
she gave no directions concerning it. O, if we could only know what would please her most, how thankful we should be! It has seemed to us that she is greatly interested in the work at Mathura, and her lovely spirit would rejoice in the thought of her being able to call the people to the place of worship which bears her name. So we have about concluded to purchase a bell with the two hundred dollars for Flora Hall." This was done. It was cast by the Meneely Bell Company, Troy, New York, and was shipped on the twentieth of November, 1893, and arrived early in 1894. The bell has cast upon it the following verse of Scripture: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." It can be heard for several miles, and is rung thrice daily when the school is in session, and four times on Sundays for services. At the end of the audience room facing the platform is a black Italian marble slab mounted in a stone frame sunk in the wall, which bears the following inscription in conch-shell letters: "This Building is erected to the Memory of Flora L. Blackstone, through the munificence of Her Grandmother, Adaline M. Smith, of Oak Park, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A."

Flora Hall was dedicated by Bishop Tho-

burn on the tenth of December, 1893. There were several preparatory assemblies and services. On Friday, the eighth, at 7:30 P. M., there was a platform meeting at which a number of addresses were made. On Saturday, the ninth, at 8 A. M., there was an Epworth League meeting, and at 4:30 P. M. a memorial service was held at which Bishop Thoburn presided and the memorial inscription was unveiled and addresses were made. On Sunday, at 8:30 A. M., there was a young people's meeting, and at 4:30 P. M. the Hall was dedicated by Bishop Thoburn. All the meetings were crowded, but at the dedicatory service the hall and class rooms opening into it were packed, the doors and windows were crowded, and even the flathouse tops of the adjoining houses were covered. Mr. and Mrs. Blackstone sent their daughter's picture, which hangs in the Hall, and an organ, which stands on the platform, and have added an additional room to the building. On June 21 Mr. Blackstone wrote: "Your letter of May 16 has just been received, and I can assure you it was read with great interest. I truly believe the Lord himself led us to undertake this work in Mathura, and it rejoices my heart to hear how he is owning and blessing it." Since the dedi-

cation of this building it has been in constant use. It has been received kindly by the Brahmans of the city, who now see that it is not a menace, in any bad sense, to the holy city. An Anglo-Vernacular School, attended by more than one hundred high-caste Hindus and Mohammedans, is held during the week, Sunday school in the morning and preaching in the evening on the Sabbath, the Christian girls and boys from the school marching quietly down through the city to the Hall both morning and evening, which in itself is an object lesson to the people. God has signally blessed this enterprise, and the people have come to look upon it as one of their own institutions. In 1901 the editor of the Indian Witness visited Mathura and wrote about Flora Hall as follows:

“Mr. Blackstone has identified himself with Mathura in a remarkably helpful and liberal way. Through his generosity and that of his family seven or eight fine buildings, including Boys’ Boarding School and new dormitories, have been brought into existence within a few years. Among these is the commodious ‘Flora Hall’ in the very heart of the city, surrounded by temples and occupying a position of the highest strategic importance. This building



CHHATTHI PATNA, MAHABHAN, MARKING THE SPOT WHERE KRISHNA  
WAS CRADLED



was erected as a memorial to Miss Flora Blackstone, a deceased granddaughter of the donor. Nothing like it, we think, is to be seen in India, wedged in, as it is, among temples and the pretentious houses of wealthy merchants. Prayer and faith and true American grit secured the splendid site after a long, weary struggle with the bigotry and intolerance encountered. Architecturally the site was made the most of in erecting the Hall. Additions have recently been made to the main building, these, too, at Mr. Blackstone's expense, so that now, as a central place of worship, also affording accommodation for school, bookshop, etc., it would be difficult to find a building more completely suitable for the purpose for which it was erected. It stirs the heart with hope to listen to the silver-toned bell that rings out the glad summons to the worship of the true and living God in the heart of the city given over so utterly to idolatry; and Dr. Scott believes that it should be rung often and vigorously, for it has many rivals within a radius of a mile. Day by day, almost hour by hour, it sounds forth a suggestive reminder to the thousands who are mad upon their idols that a Christian fort has been erected at the very heart of Hinduism, which is to be a center of

light and holy influence to the generations following. Here, Sunday after Sunday, and on certain week days, gather large congregations of Christian people, including scores of young people of both sexes, pupils in the boarding schools; while here and there in the body of the large hall, or filling the doorways, are Hindus who come to see and hear for themselves what the Christians are doing and saying.

“On one of the days of our visit a big procession composed of the boys and girls of the schools, preachers, teachers, and Bible women, the members of the Summer School then in session, and visiting missionaries of both sexes, with banners flying, and Bishop Warne and Presiding Elder Scott leading on, started from the mission premises and marched to Flora Hall through the well-flagged streets of the city, sweeping past numerous temples with joyous Christian song, and filling the hall with a cloud of witnesses to the transforming power of the gospel of Christ. As we listened to the strains of the well-known Christian battle hymn, ‘*Jai Prabhu Yisu, Jai Adhiraja,*’ ‘Victory to the Lord Jesus,’ we could see by faith the glorious day when Mathura shall be as clean swept of all its idolatry as was the idol-

atrous Athens of Paul's day through the power of the gospel."

(4) Gracie Hall. The next enterprise was Gracie Hall. When Dr. Parker wrote to Mr. Blackstone on the sixteenth of May, 1893, "They very much need a girls' schoolhouse. They are very much crowded. If you find anyone who has two thousand dollars to invest get it for that Training Home schoolhouse, please," he addressed a sympathetic listener in a worthy cause. The house was, indeed, very much needed. The school had outgrown its quarters and was crowded into leaky dormitories, and had to study and recite on verandas and under trees and in the overcrowded rooms of the Deaconess Home. In mission work, as in everything else where there is a real need, there is, somewhere, a supply to meet it. Mathura was on the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Blackstone and their venerable mother, Mrs. Smith. On the third of February, 1894, he wrote: "Your letter, and also one from Mrs. Matthews and one from Miss Rowe, and the plan and map of Mathura, are all received. Times are very hard for selling property here, and I suppose you know that the investments our dear Mother Smith has been making are from the disposition of her

property. She has no money, and my wife and I must raise the money for the Mathura building, if it is built, taking of mother two vacant lots, all she has left, except one lot in the city and her homestead. We have not the money at command. Must sell something, but we have concluded to undertake it. I think we can send five hundred dollars in sixty days and the rest within six months from now. If you can manage it go ahead on this basis. I think (D. V.) you can depend on receiving the two thousand five hundred dollars within six months. I shall leave the plan of the building to you, taking Brother Parker's advice, if you wish. We wish the building to be called 'Gracie Hall,' in memory of Mrs. Smith's grandchild, Gracie Budlong, who died in infancy. Let there be a plain tablet as per inclosed slip. May the Lord bless this investment; and if he shall tarry, may many girls be educated and converted and their souls made white and beautiful in this building to greet her whose memory it keeps green, when we all meet in the glory land!" In the front veranda, under the tower, in black letters on white marble, is placed the inscription reading as follows: "Gracie Hall. To the memory of Minnie Grace Budlong. This Building is

erected by her Grandmother, Adaline M. Smith, of Oak Park, Ill., U. S. A., 1894."

(5) Dormitories. Under date of August 8 he wrote: "Your letter of July 3 is received. If you wrote in the evening it was just about the time our dear Mother Smith was joining the hosts above. Doubtless, ere this reaches you, you will have received the paper giving account of her going. It was triumphant. 'One by one the saints are going.' God help us to do our duty ere our sun goes down or he calls us to meet Jesus in the air!" He adds: "By God's help we will make Mathura a city set upon a hill. The bishop is with us in sympathy and effort. Just read a most approving letter from him. A letter from Mrs. Skidmore gives us assurance of hearty coöperation and sympathy. So it appears that all is accomplished, or will be. Therefore you may go right on with the dormitories and extra room on Flora Hall. I will have the money ready as you need it (D. V.). Can send a part, or perhaps all, by the time I hear from you again." And on October 25: "I hope you are getting on safely and well with 'Gracie Hall.' It will surely add much to the facilities in Mathura for gospel work. But most of all I hope you are progressing grandly in securing

'living stones' for the spiritual Taj they are building in the heavens for the habitation of God in spirit. O, how beautiful those Indian souls will be, sanctified and cleansed by the 'washing of the water of the Word.' I desire to be a coworker in winning thousands of them, and how I shall rejoice when Jesus presents them to himself (Eph. 5. 27), without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish! We are expecting that many will be won in and about Mathura." The work in Mathura prospered beyond the highest expectations. Mr. Blackstone provided funds for dormitories for the Christian boys attending the city school, which were built in 1896 on land purchased from the Bharatpur state in 1893.

(6) Smith Hall. The Deaconess Home soon became too small, and in 1897, through the liberality of Mr. Blackstone, it was enlarged. But again it became too small, and it became necessary that Gracie Hall be enlarged, and that a new hall, to include class rooms and dormitories for the English Department of the Training School, be built. When Mr. Blackstone was communicated with and was told that this enlargement was due to the success of the mission he at once made sympathetic

response. He hoped that he could get the money, and authorized the additions contemplated. But he failed to get the money from the person from whom he had hoped to receive it, and rather than disappoint the missionaries he drew upon his own reserve fund, signing the check upon Thanksgiving Day, 1900. This needy work was, therefore, taken in hand in 1900, and Gracie Hall was enlarged. New dormitories were added, and a new hall, to be called Smith Hall, was commenced.

On the eighth of August, 1901, the corner stone of Smith Hall was laid by Bishop Warne. A large company gathered in the early morning under the shade of a tree in front of the building, a hymn was sung, prayer offered, an address giving an account of the providential development of the work in Mathura delivered, and the stone was with appropriate ceremony "well and truly laid." On February 15, 1902, the completed building was dedicated to the use of the English Department of the Mathura Training School.

3. *English Work.* A word must be said about the English work of the Mathura Mission. When the writer went to Mathura in 1888 he found a British cavalry regiment quartered there in which were a large number of

nonconformists for whom no religious services were provided. Besides these there were the missionaries and English students to be ministered to. It was therefore desirable to open an English service. There was no church in which this service could be held. With the permission of the commanding officer the regimental schoolroom was put at his disposal, and during the first two years this was used. But it was apparent that a church was needed, and an application was made for land in the cantonment on which to build, which was at first refused, but subsequently, as in every other enterprise, the very best site in the place was given rent free, and on that a church and prayer room costing four thousand rupees was built from private funds. The first service, which was dedicatory, was held on the sixth of April and the prayer room was opened on the thirteenth.

This cantonment church and prayer room have been a great help in the work. The prayer room, especially, has been a center in which the better-disposed men of the various regiments which have successively occupied the Mathura cantonments could meet, and, as a coffee shop and reading room were also connected with it, they could spend a profitable

hour when off duty. In it meetings have been held daily, while in the larger room a parade service is held on Sunday mornings and a voluntary service on Sunday and Wednesday evenings. There is no doubt that such English work is helpful to the general missionary work in India. The natives see the difference between the real and the nominal Christian. Often soldiers in India become interested in mission work and help to support it, while the help to them personally is incalculable.

4. *Medical Work* has been carried on in the Mathura Mission almost from the beginning. Miss Dr. McDowell opened the work in 1889, and had a dispensary in the city which was well attended. In 1891, when Dr. McDowell was called away to Bareilly, Miss Dr. Sheldon continued the good work. Concerning this she wrote: "With longer hours the attendance at the dispensary has been increasing steadily. Once a week medical work is carried on in Brindaban. One little woman and her daughter of high caste, who were for some time patients in the hospital, now come regularly to our school, and have a great thirst for knowledge. They seem Christians at heart, have given up the worship of idols, and pray to God

in Christ's name." Much medical work has been done among the Christians in Mathura and in the district of which we have no written record. But the permanent work has been carried on from Brindaban as a center. This bigoted place has been opened to the mission in a wonderful way. Mohammedans are relegated to the suburbs, and the Brahmans determined that neither Mohammedans nor Christians should own property within the sacred limits. Its thousand temples and multitude of priests stood guard over this Holy Land of Krishna. But in 1889 Miss Fannie Sparks, the first superintendent of the Training School at Mathura, who had received funds for that purpose from friends at Ocean Grove, purchased from a Brahman widow, Champi, a most desirable site near the large temples and close to the railway station. For this she paid eleven hundred rupees, and found that it had been mortgaged to a trustee of the Gobind Deva temple for almost the full amount. This was paid and a deed was written and registered, possession given, and a mission house commenced. But immediately a counter claimant appeared, the Brahmans rallied to his support, and litigation was commenced which continued for several years. The prop-



THE DEACONESS HOME AND TRAINING SCHOOL, MATHURA



erty was deeded to Miss Sparks, C. L. Bare, and the writer, and their successors, to be held in trust for the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. Miss Sparks retired from the mission in 1890, Mr. Bare went on leave to America, and the battle with the Brahmans was left as a legacy to the writer. The mission lost the case in the subordinate court before a Hindu judge; it was appealed to a higher court and the decision reversed by an English judge, when it was again appealed to the High Court and the latter decision confirmed thereby, whereupon an application was made to carry the matter to the Privy Council, but the application was not entertained and the mission remained in possession.

In 1897 Miss Scott, M.D., joined the mission and was sent to Brindaban. For a time she visited Brindaban from Mathura, and then, at great personal inconvenience, lived in a native house in the town of Brindaban, opening up an extensive work not only in Brindaban, but in the district as well, and gaining a hold upon the hearts of the people. In that year Mrs. L. A. Calder, of Evanston, Illinois, gave money to build a Home and dispensary at Brindaban, to be called the Mabel Colvin Memorial Home and Dispensary. These build-

ings were completed by the end of 1898, when they were formally dedicated. The card of invitation to the dedication read as follows: "The pleasure of your company is requested at the opening of the Mabel Colvin Memorial Home and Dispensary, Brindaban, on Thursday, December 15, at 3 P. M. A special train will leave Mathura at 2 P. M., returning at 5:15 P. M. The Rev. Colvin S. Valentine, F.R.C.S.E., LL.D., Principal of the Medical Missionary Training Institute, Agra, will deliver an address." There was a large company assembled in a pavilion erected in the grounds adjoining the buildings which gave good attention to the excellent address delivered by Dr. Valentine. The buildings were then formally dedicated, after which the company inspected the dispensary and partook of refreshments on the veranda of the Home. It would be impossible to tell of all the good work which has been done from this great center during the past ten years. Thousands of patients have been treated, hundreds of lives saved, many homes opened up to the gospel, the prejudices of ages removed, and a good influence extended not only in the town but among the surrounding villages. Soon a hospital is to be added which will further extend

the influence of this noble institution. Concerning his visit to Brindaban on August 8, 1901, Dr. J. E. Robinson wrote:

“Another pleasant function was a trip to Brindaban to attend the dedication of the first Methodist Episcopal church to be erected in that place. A modest, inexpensive structure, with walled courtyard, to serve as church and schoolhouse, was set apart for the service of the Triune God by Bishop Warne with appropriate ceremony according to the ritual. He afterward administered the rite of baptism to over forty persons, not exactly the ‘first fruits’ to Christ in Brindaban, but a portion of the advance guard of a great multitude of people in that needy region who are to be gathered into the fold of Christ in the near future. It was a pleasure to partake of the hospitality of the Ladies’ Mission Home after the dedication, and to recall the story of the protracted struggle in the law courts to secure the site on which it stands. By the final decision of the High Court the mission’s title to the site it had lawfully purchased was confirmed. All deeply regretted the absence of Miss Dr. Scott, whose labors in connection with the dispensary have been so useful. We cannot forbear mentioning the noble sacrifice of Miss

Scott and other ladies when the epidemic of cholera broke out in the famine girls' orphanage at Ajmere, in charge of Miss Marks and Miss Tryon, and fifty, including the matron, died. This necessitated the removal of the whole establishment to a cholera camp in a jungle four miles from the orphanage dormitories. Joined by Miss Scott from Brindaban, the ladies named, together with their assistants, heroically fought the fell disease and endured without flinching the indescribable hardships of the camp, happily saving most of the women and children. Subsequently Miss Scott was shut up in an old disused cotton press with several hundreds of emaciated creatures for several months, living in a *godown* (outhouse) and subsisting on scanty vegetable diet. At last, worn out with work, care, and anxiety, she was stricken down with enteric fever and dysentery, with which she fought for weeks, finally gathering sufficient strength for a voyage to America, where after many months her health was restored.

“A pleasant feature of the work at Brindaban is the annual Christian *mela* in March of every year, instituted some years ago by Dr. Scott. Over a hundred workers, belonging to five or six different missions, spend a week

together in blessed service for their common Lord. Meetings are held daily in a large central tent, and preaching is carried on from a dozen different centers in the *mela*. Who can estimate the good accomplished by this united effort among the thronging thousands from many parts?"

5. *The School of the Prophets*. This would not be a complete account of the Mathura mission without some reference to the School of the Prophets, or Summer School, held annually at Mathura in the hot season for the purpose of training the lower-grade workers of the district. The workers of this class, both men and women, are called in in July and August and pursue a course of study under the tuition of the older and more experienced workers and attend lectures given by experts, and at the close of the school are examined and graded accordingly. The Mathura Summer School was perhaps among the very first schools of this class, which are now being held in almost every district in North India with great profit. In 1891 the missionary at Mathura wrote about his convention, which subsequently became the more elaborate School of the Prophets, which often continued in session for six weeks:

“I had to hurry home from Ajmere to attend the Workers’ Convention, which convened in Mathura at six o’clock on the morning of the twentieth of May, and closed on the twenty-fifth. This convention was most interesting and profitable throughout. Great harmony prevailed, and the spiritual fervor seemed to increase constantly to the close. Dr. Hoskins, J. Lyon, Miss Rowe, Mrs. Scott, and Dr. Sheldon were present throughout, and contributed much to the profit of the occasion. Three hours of solid normal work were done in the morning, and the evenings were given up to lectures. The free discussions, the criticisms, the questions called forth, the information given, the enthusiasm manifested throughout, must be left to the reader’s imagination. The five services on Sunday and the two Quarterly Conferences of Monday were occasions of great profit, spiritually and practically. This convention will have greater influence upon our work than an Annual or a District Conference. It demonstrates what can be done in the hot weather. It helps to keep us all active the year round. The older preachers enjoyed it as a time of mental stimulus, and the young converts fairly shone under the light which they got. It cost Mathura

only about six rupees, and she got paid back many fold in the good received by her own people.

“In July and August, 1893, the School of the Prophets was held at Mathura. This school formally opened on Monday, the ninth of July, and was continued until the thirteenth of August, or thirty-five days, concluding with an examination. The personnel of the school is interesting. The men came from Agra, Ali-garh, Mathura, Bharatpur, Digg, Hathras, and about twenty other places in the Agra District. They were mostly sweeper Christians, with a few Chumars and several from the higher castes, and only one from among the Mohammedans. There were not half a dozen of them who were Christians five years ago. Some of them had been Christians six months. One man had not been converted a month. There was one man who was at least seventy years of age. One man was entirely blind, and another had only one eye that would work. But both these men were among the best in the class. The blind man, especially, had a wonderful memory. Nearly all the men had completed the first book in Hindi when they joined the school. Most of them had learned to read after becoming Christians.

They were all well-dressed, well-behaved, and exceedingly anxious to learn.

“Some forty-five teachers and exhorters availed themselves of the privilege of attending the school. In addition to these there were five local preachers, and the evening lectures were attended by the twelve members of the Bible Woman’s Training School. Some of the wives of the pastor-teachers and exhorters also came with their husbands and were taught separately. So that it is safe to say that between sixty and seventy were reached and helped by the school. The finances of the school were easily managed. The pay of the men was allowed to run on, and the only additional expense incurred was the cost of coming and going to and from the school, and about seven rupees for grass, matting, books, slates, etc. During the progress of the school useful and interesting lectures were given to the men by Dr. Scott, of Bareilly, and by Brother Clancy, of Allahabad. This school has done the district great good, not only in the amount of instruction imparted, but in unifying and stimulating the workers, and in creating an *esprit de corps* that could only come by being together daily for a month and a half. This special school was followed

by a Workers' Convention for everybody and by a District Epworth League."

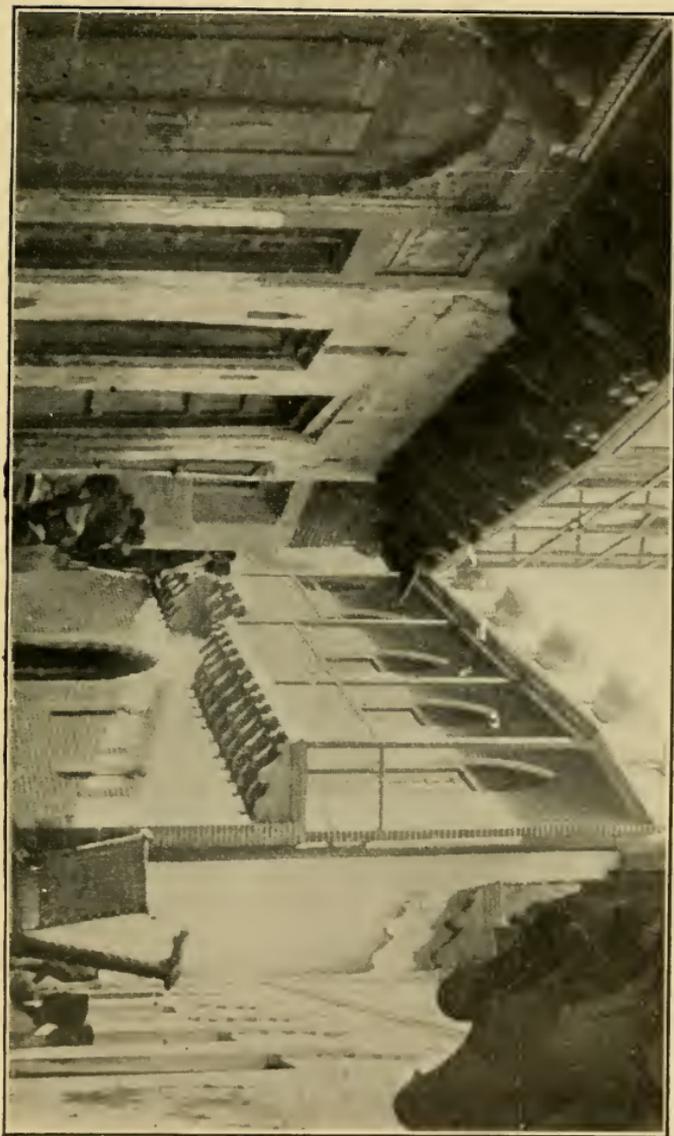
The editor of the Indian Witness wrote concerning this school in August, 1901, as follows:

"We cannot close this article without a brief reference to the Summer School conducted by Presiding Elder Scott for five or six weeks every rainy season. Scores of workers of all grades, local preachers, exhorters, pastor teachers, etc., come in from the surrounding villages and go through a vigorous process of solid instruction in biblical knowledge and methods of work, during parts of July and August. It was our fortune to be present at the closing exercises of this successful School of the Prophets on the seventh of August. Nearly a hundred pastor-teachers and exhorters, with a number of their wives, were in attendance for five busy weeks. They came from a wide extent of territory, nearly every one the fruit of the mission work of the past few years. It was interesting to look into the faces of these people who are the teachers of nearly ten thousand village Christians. No wonder the presiding elder looks upon this department of his work with peculiar anxiety as well as gratification. No

wonder he puts himself into it body and soul, and works it for all it is worth. He wisely recognizes it as a means of unifying and solidifying the work and of filling the workers with a most helpful *esprit de corps*. The success of this Summer School plan has been most pleasantly demonstrated in many districts of northern India. The man who discovered it should have a statue erected in his honor."

6. *School for Evangelist Teachers*. Many of the workers get their training in this school, keeping up their studies throughout the year under the direction of their preacher in charge. In a large work like this Mathura Mission, extending over parts of three civil districts, it was necessary to multiply the number of workers who could teach the simple village people in their homes. These were called pastor-teachers, combining the functions of the pastor and the teacher in each village Christian community or among several villages to which he had been assigned. In order to train such workers a Training School for Evangelist Teachers was started at Mathura, having a course of study extending over two years and affording opportunities for practical work in the wards of the city and in the sur-

SIDE VIEW OF FLORA HALL, MATHURA CITY





rounding villages, under the direction of an experienced teacher. Mr. Blackstone took a great interest in this school, and entirely supported it from his own and the contributions of friends for a number of years.

7. *The Melas.* Another great evangelistic agency especially emphasized in the Mathura Mission is the camp meeting. The camp meeting falls in with native custom. The great religious *melas* of India keep alive the traditions of the past, unite the people in their worship, instruct them in their religion, and arouse in them zeal and enthusiasm for worship. The great Ganges bathing festivals and the *melas* of Benares, Hardwar, Mathura, and Brindaban are institutions of the country, and are looked upon by the Hindus as a part of their life. The Christian camp meeting is just as essential, and has in this congenial soil a wonderful future. As soon as the Christians about Mathura and Hathras commenced to multiply the camp meeting was started. The first one, as we have seen, was held at Hathras on October 8 to 10, 1889, and was continued at that place annually thereafter for a number of years, and became famous. They were especially noteworthy between 1891 (when the Agra and Kasganj Districts were organ-

ized) and 1897, in which latter year the separation of Aligarh into a separate district threw Hathras out of the center. After 1897 the camp meeting was held annually at Mathura except in 1901, when the Kasganj and Mathura Districts again united at Hathras. Mr. Blackstone, who was ever the friend of every form of evangelistic work, and who, besides providing Mathura with buildings, had generously supported the Training School, and provided funds to build much-needed village chapels and support for a large number of pastor-teachers, generously came forward and supplied the district with two large camp meeting tents, one for the general work and the other for the Woman's Conference. Into this larger tent were often gathered a thousand or twelve hundred Christians seated on the carpet with which the ground was covered. In the development of the Mathura work the camp meeting was an element of power. Concerning the Hathras camp meeting held in 1892 the following telegram was sent from the campground to the Indian Witness:

"Hathras Christian *mela* began November 29—closed December 5—between five and six hundred Christians present. Agra and Aligarh District Conferences assigned about three

hundred workers to their various fields—many more laborers needed to keep up with the growing demand. The Conferences were harmonious and the reports interesting—about five thousand baptisms this year, to date. The Christian community has more than doubled. Given the additional needed workers, thousands more would have been baptized. All in the work believe it is of God and must succeed. The religious services were full of freshness, life, and power; the prayers were very fervent, and the testimonials as to the spiritual life original, simple, and marked with much clearness. Quite a number professed spiritual conversion. The oldest workers present claimed they had never seen a *mela* with so much spiritual interest. The workers went forth with renewed and strengthened purpose to labor for the spiritual regeneration of the converts coming in.

“From the ninth to the sixteenth of November, 1891, the District Conference and Isai *mela* (camp meeting) was held at Hathras city. The first two days were given up to examinations, the third and fourth to Conference work, and the rest of the time to camp meeting services. I had the honor of preaching the opening sermon on Monday evening

and dedicating the splendid new tent kindly put at our disposal for the meeting by Dr. Parker. Presiding Elders H. R. Khan and Butcher preached on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and Brother Lyon, of Ajmere, on Wednesday evening. Thereafter there were four services a day, as well as the District Conference, under the direction of Bishop Thoburn. Bishop Thoburn took the morning services at 8 o'clock; Dr. Hoskins led meetings for new Christians at 12 M. At 3 P. M. services were led by Miss Rowe, Dr. T. J. Scott, and Dr. Sheldon. On Saturday the District League was held at 12 M., and a temperance meeting, led and addressed by Dr. T. J. Scott, was held at 7 o'clock. On Sunday the love feast was held by H. R. Khan at 8 A. M., and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered by Bishop Thoburn at 7 P. M. Revs. Bateman (C. M. S.) and Rockey preached on Friday at 3 and 7 o'clock P. M. respectfully. Mrs. Scott had charge of the music, in rendering which the Mathura Training School did excellent service. Between five and six hundred Christians were in attendance, about one hundred and fifty of whom, belonging to Agra and Aligarh Districts, were regular workers. There were twenty-five baptisms,

and several inquirers came forward during the meetings. The great rush was on the last day, when not fewer than a thousand Hindus crowded the tent, and preaching was kept up for six hours, when the people were quietly dismissed. The camp meeting has been a great blessing. Our new converts have been greatly helped. Our workers have been filled with zeal for the cause; we have been able to plan for larger things, and our whole work has been strengthened and unified."

Bishop Thoburn was present for several days, and wrote about it in his Notes by the Way as follows:

"Hathras, November 11, 1891.—I reached this place yesterday about one o'clock, and found Dr. J. E. Scott waiting for me at the station. As the train was slowing up I noticed the camp of two District Conferences, which were to meet at this place, with the words '*Isai Mela*' printed in large characters on a piece of white bunting fronting the railway. A drive of a quarter of a mile brought us to the camp, where I found kind friends and abundant hospitality.

"The two districts of Agra and Aligarh hold their Conferences here, meeting in joint session at times, but for the most part sitting

separately. The Rev. J. E. Scott, Ph.D., is presiding elder of the former, and the Rev. Hasan Raza Khan of the latter. Both men are new to their office, and both the districts are also new, having only been organized in January of the present year. The Rev. J. Lyon, of Ajmere, is also here, and also Miss Dr. Sheldon and the ladies of the Deaconess Home at Mathura. The membership of each Conference at the opening this morning was nearly fifty, the Aligarh District being a little in advance of the Agra.

“The brethren of both districts are to a great extent new men. Some of them had been baptized since the beginning of the year. It was at times a little touching when the examinations of such men were reported. The brother, perhaps, had failed on nearly everything. ‘How long since you were baptized?’ I would ask. ‘About fifteen months, sahib;’ or, ‘About nine months, sahib.’ ‘Were you able to read or write then?’ ‘No, sahib, not at all.’ ‘And you have learned to read and have prepared part of your examination since you became a Christian?’ ‘Yes, sahib.’ One or two of these men had made remarkable progress. The new workers are not all here. Perhaps one half or more have been unable to come. Their

pay is small—four or five rupees—and they live at a distance.

“Monday, November 16.—Dr. T. J. Scott arrived in our camp on Saturday afternoon, and in the evening held a successful meeting in the interests of temperance, in the broad sense of abstinence from drink, opium, *charas*, *bhang*, and tobacco. The large pavilion was well filled, and all listened with close interest to Dr. Scott’s address. At the close blue and red ribbons were produced, and all who were willing to pledge themselves to abstinence from intoxicating drink were asked to accept a badge of blue. A large number responded, and for a time much enthusiasm prevailed. A very perceptible lull, however, followed when the red badges were produced, and it was explained that these included both drink and tobacco. For a minute or two there was an ominous silence, but when one rose others took courage, and after a short time a goodly number were adorned with the badge of the ‘*Lal Fita Fauj*’ (Red Ribbon Army).

“The love feast was held at 8 A. M. yesterday, and was a very interesting occasion. Many of those present bore their testimony for the first time in the presence of so large a congregation. The people were more than

willing to speak. Many, including myself, failed to get an opportunity to say even a word, and the meeting closed with two or three on their feet waiting for their turn. Some of the testimonies were more or less crude, but others were extremely interesting. The brethren from Ajmere, or the 'Rajwaris,' as they call themselves, were the most ready speakers. Some of them used the ordinary Hindi idiom, but for the most part it required close attention to get their meaning. Many of them had put on the blue ribbon the night before, while a few wore the red. The recent converts, for the most part, do not seem to be very faithful patrons of the bath, but they will become more cleanly as the months and years go by. Perhaps twenty or more testified that they had found the witness of the Spirit since coming to this meeting. A frequent form of testimony would be something like this: 'I first heard the gospel at such a place. I felt the work in my heart and was baptized at such and such a time and place. I escaped from the devil and all my sins, and began to lead a new life. Then at such a time I found Christ in my heart, and now I love him and am glad to serve him.'

"In the evening we had a most impressive



A NATIVE CAMP MEETING



communion service. The people were seated in rank, leaving an open space between the lines, and instead of calling them forward to receive the bread and wine the sacred symbols were taken to them by eight officiating ministers. A large crowd of Hindus from the town stood looking upon the scene in the most perfect silence. Nothing since the beginning of the meetings has seemed to make as deep an impression upon the spectators, who attend in large numbers.

"This morning I had charge of the meeting and was preaching to the people on prayer, when I noticed that Hindus were coming in by groups and gradually filling the entrance. I changed the subject and preached a sermon better suited to them. They continued to press in, and I preached till I was tired. The people were packed in front like so many herrings, such an audience as I have seldom seen. Dr. Hoskins took my place, and was followed by Dr. Scott, a good deal of singing being interspersed among the addresses. For a long time the people listened in perfect silence, but at last rose and left. Others, however, took their place, and as I write the meeting is still in progress. The people have probably come from some *mela* or other gathering, as unusual

numbers are passing along the road. I have seldom witnessed a more interesting meeting thus far, and the end is not yet.

“P. S.—After the above was written I remained on the ground all day, and I learned the cause of the unusual concourse. It chanced to be a Hindu holiday, and the people having leisure flocked out of the city, and crowded not only our pavilion but all the space in front all day long. It was an extraordinary spectacle, and the day’s work was extraordinary in every respect.”

In 1897 Bishops Foss and Thoburn and Dr. Goucher attended the Hathras camp meeting. More than a thousand people were in attendance, and at the close Bishop Foss and Dr. Goucher baptized more than one hundred candidates. In 1891 many camp meetings were held in different parts of the district. In March occurred the Brindaban *mela*, when there was not only preaching to the non-Christians but meetings were held daily for the large number of Christian workers. In May a series of meetings were held at Hathras attended by a maximum of four hundred. In July and August were held at Mathura the School of the Prophets and the District Convention. During the last week of November the Ma-

thura District Conference was held, followed by a Christian *mela* attended by a large number from Mathura, Agra, and Kasganj. These were times of refreshing.

8. *Years of Toil.* The years since 1888 had been years of hard work, much anxiety, and much success. As far back as 1891 the work was hindered for lack of workers. In that year the missionary wrote:

“The lack of workers hinders us. We cannot follow up the work. We have to make our workers as we go along. ‘Growing pains’ are certainly better than paralysis—more endurable and not dangerous—but in some respects distressing, nevertheless. We need more ordained men who can administer the sacraments. A few weeks ago I had to travel sixty miles one day in an *ekka* to reach a community that desires to become Christian. One little native pony dragged me the whole distance, and did not seem so tired as I was when we got back. We found our inquirers living in a hamlet surrounded with water which had risen around the place in the rains. I mounted a pony and was soon over the water safely. The native brother with me was not so fortunate, for, attempting to ride over on the shoulders of a friend, he fell into the water and so waded

to the other side. Usually we have to go to the people, sometimes long distances, in order to reach them; but recently I had a case when a man came to the mission house from a village for baptism, not willing to await the visit of the missionary. He and his friends had been inquirers for some time, but, no ordained man being within reach, he said to the native preacher, 'Take me to the *Padri Sahib*, for I want to acknowledge Christ and be known as a Christian now.' And so he came just as the evening shades were appearing. I spread a carpet on the veranda, and kneeling down we asked God to bless us, and upon the profession of his faith I performed the rite, and he went away a happy man. A Christian church has been organized in his community."

There were now inquirers on every hand, and there had been nearly two thousand baptisms during the year. It was almost impossible to follow up the work. What with building at Mathura, and the chaplaincy of the troops, and lack of funds, the missionary found his strength taxed to the uttermost as he went from village to village organizing the work, teaching the people, and gathering in the harvest. In 1895 the missionary wrote:

"Living in about three hundred villages in

these eleven circuits are about six thousand Christians who have put themselves under our teaching. Who are these people who have come to us? For the most part they are simple villagers. They come from the lower castes. They are illiterate. Not one in a hundred can read. They are unspeakably poor. As a rule they own no property. For the most part they work in the fields, and are paid in kind. Hence the golden age of self-support will never be brought in by cash collections. Many of these people never see money. They live from hand to mouth, with very little in the hand. These are the people who come to us and say: 'We want to be taught. We want to rise higher. We want to escape from social ostracism and the tyranny of caste. We want to have our children educated.' Who is the man who dare do such a dastardly thing as to quench this smoking flax? Sixteen hundred people on this district have, during this past year, expressed a desire to be Christians, and have received the rite of baptism. I would rather have fifteen hundred and fifty of these come out blindly than by my indifference or lack of faith as a missionary be the cause of the other fifty never coming out at all. These people are in earnest. Some of them have

gone to prison, the subjects of false accusation, persecuted for righteousness' sake; some have been beaten; parents have lost children, husbands wives, and wives husbands; cultivators have been turned out of their fields; policemen have lost their places, village watchmen their hereditary employment. I saw five Christian villagers with the blood streaming down their faces, who, out of pure religious animosity, were set upon by their neighbors. I rescued from prison a number of innocent Christian men who had been sent there through the perjury of fellow townsmen. But some have the feeling that these people are so low down morally and in the social scale that they are incapable of being Christianized. Let them disabuse their mind of the delusion. These people make splendid Christians. They have great faith, and many of them a child-like trust and a simplicity in worship that puts an Occidental to shame. Never having really prayed before, they soon learn to breathe the very spirit of prayer. But are they capable of development? Why not? Who are some of the leading alumni of the Theological School? Men who a few years ago were driving conservancy carts or sweeping the streets. Who are some of our most suc-

cessful preachers and influential pastors? Converted sweepers and leather dressers. The fact is when we want workers we take these men and train them. These are the men who are doing the work. These men and women out in the villages, among the people, coming in daily contact with the people, training the converts but little newer than themselves, teaching the schools, and bringing in inquirers, are the men and women who but a few years ago were raw heathen, at the very bottom of the social scale. 'Greater things shall ye do because I go unto my Father.'"

9. *Woman's Work.* The work of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in Mathura began in 1888. Prior to this the native pastor's wife had visited a few houses about her home in a social way, but no systematic religious work nor secular teaching was attempted. These houses were also outside the city proper. Concerning this work Mrs. Scott wrote as follows:

"It was only after repeated efforts we at last gained admittance to zenanas within the city limits. In this initial work there were, however, certain things in our favor, such as the less rigid seclusion of women always found in

strictly Hindu communities, the efforts of government in female education, and a little zenana visiting carried on by Miss Bland, of Agra. When once the work was opened we were overwhelmed with invitations from all parts of the city, and soon forty zenanas were regularly visited and taught, while many more could have been added to our list could we have taken them. A good school was also opened for high-caste girls.

“In March work was carried on among the women who throng the Brindaban *mela*. In this work several missionaries from a distance assisted. We found here a rare opportunity for woman’s work, because of the religious prominence given them in this place. Between eight and nine thousand Bengali widows reside in Brindaban as worshipers of Krishna, and to his shrines come thousands of female pilgrims annually. The idea of foreign ladies working for the spiritual benefit of their own sex seemed to accord so naturally with the ideas of the community that there was much less unpleasantness connected with our labors than is usually the case in *melas*. This *mela* work is now an annual event.

“April 17 a very interesting young Brindaban widow was baptized, a Rajput, and the

first fruits of these 'brides of Krishna.' After the ceremony she was sent for safety to the Widows' Home in Lucknow.

"In May the new work in Sikandra Rao and Hathras was inspected and found satisfactory. The statistics in these two places at the end of the first year were one hundred zenanas and three good schools.

"June 17 the glad news was received that Mr. Blackstone, of Chicago, had decided to establish his Deaconess Home and Training School in Mathura. July 11 a committee, consisting of Dr. and Mrs. Parker, the Misses Blackmar, English, Divine, Christiancy, and ourselves, met to select the site. The committee were unanimous in the selection of the one adjacent to the Parent Board property, but on account of the opposition of the priests this was not secured until November. Upon the acquisition of the land building was immediately begun.

"In 1889 Miss Sparkes, an experienced missionary recently returned from furlough, was appointed to open the Deaconess Home and Training School, and Miss McDowell, M.D., the medical work.

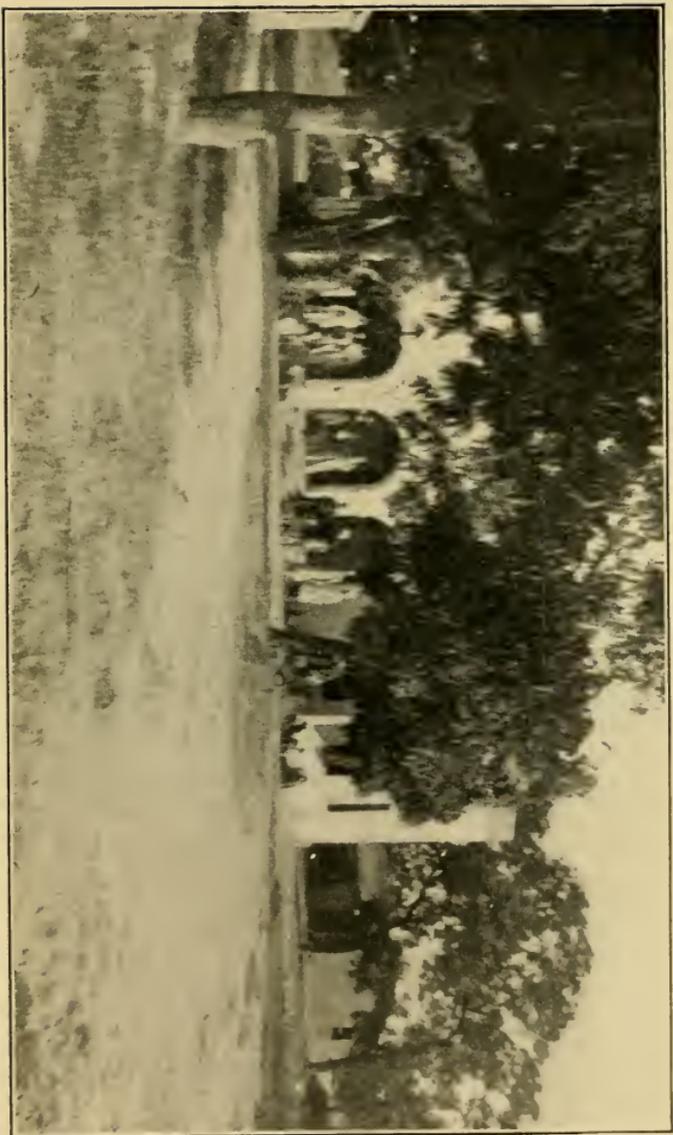
"Miss Sparkes began her work in rented property, and the very first year had three

English and eight native students, six others having been refused as unfit for the advanced training of an institution modeled after the Chicago Training School. Miss Sparkes was ably seconded in all her labors by her associate deaconess, Mrs. Matthews, who afterward at one time was superintendent of the institution, and who gave years of faithful service to Mathura.

“Immediately after the Brindaban *mela* of 1889, on March 28, the memorial stone of the new building was laid with appropriate ceremonies, conducted by the presiding elder, Dr. Parker, assisted by several other prominent missionaries. That evening a still more interesting event occurred in our drawing-room, when two more Brindaban widows were baptized. It was a very impressive service.

“The medical work under Miss McDowell, M.D., also flourished well from the very start. Her dispensary in the heart of the city was daily thronged with patients. Later a branch dispensary was opened in Brindaban; besides, occasional visits were made to Hathras.

“July 1, 1891, a boarding school for girls was opened by Miss Sheldon, M.D., to meet the needs of a rapidly growing church. At this time there was much zenana work in all



MISSION HOUSE, BRINDABAN

(It required a five years' struggle in the courts to secure site.)



the surrounding towns, but gradually it was all closed, that the Bible readers might give their undivided attention to the training of the girls and women in our Christian community. In Mathura, however, zenana work was retained, its continuance being essential to the normal training of the students in the Mission Training School. In Brindaban it was also allowed in connection with medical work. Non-Christian schools, however, were all either closed or turned over to other missions. We were fortunate in being able to give the Church of England Zenana Mission our two high-caste schools in Mathura.

“On May 20, 1891, the first Summer School was held, which annual gathering has been such a power for good in our work ever since. Gradually the women began to come with their husbands, until now the Woman’s Department is quite, if not more, important than the men’s. Here it is our evangelist-teachers and village women receive their best training.

“In 1897 Miss Scott, M.D., was appointed to Brindaban for medical work. Formerly this was a branch of the Mathura medical work, but now it was to be the center, which was wise, for a more strategic place could not be found, because of the resident widows and

thronging pilgrims. On account of having no one to look after Brindaban since Miss Sheldon's removal, both medical and zenana work had been closed. Miss Scott, therefore, had to begin anew. Her first two years were full of heroic sacrifice, first in going to and from Mathura all through the hot season, sometimes returning at 1 or 2 P. M., and later living in a native house in Brindaban, where, besides inconvenience and heat, she was compelled to abstain from meat and other articles of diet to avoid arousing the prejudices of her neighbors. Needless to say, she has won the hearts of the people as few have ever done.

"The latter part of 1898 her new Home and dispensary, the gift of Mrs. L. A. Calder, of Evanston, Illinois, were completed, whereupon an interesting dedication service was held, addressed by that veteran medical missionary Dr. Valentine, of Agra. These buildings stand on the bit of land which the priests tried to wrest from us, and which was fought through from the subordinate court up to the Privy Council.

"The Mission Training School has greatly prospered; it is now called the Blackstone Missionary Institute. During the respective superintendence of Miss Sheldon, M.D., Mrs.

Matthews, Miss Sullivan, and at present of Miss Gregg, important additions have been made to the buildings, till now it is the best equipped training institution in India. Miss Gregg was for years vice-principal of the Chicago Training School, hence is eminently fitted for the position she holds, as is also her associate, Miss McKnight, formerly a teacher in the same school. The Blackstone Institute receives patronage from all denominations.

“In describing the beginning of work and institutions it has been impossible to say much about those who have carried them on so faithfully. A report of Mathura would, however, be incomplete without reference to the work of the Misses Fistler and Baird, of the Friends Mission, who gave two years of excellent service to the Institute and medical work; of Miss Wright’s five faithful years in the Boarding School and Institute; of Miss Abbott’s efficient work as her successor; of Miss Burman’s self-denying labors in Brindaban; of Mrs. Clancy’s energetic management of the district work; of the conscientious service of a whole host of able assistants; and, lastly, of the untiring work of our deaconesses, the Misses Browne, Johnstone, and Ogilvie.

“Very special honor must also be accorded

to the incomparable work of our now sainted Miss Rowe. Though a general evangelist, much of her time was spent in Agra District. She was the means of great blessing to our native church. After she left us Miss Sullivan took up her work, and did us good service.

“How wonderful God’s dealings with Mathura! From nothing, site after site and building after building, have been given as need required, while meanwhile the superstructure of a living temple has been steadily lifting itself in beauty before our eyes. Many mothers and wives, sisters and daughters, find an honored place in this building of God, that his church may be faultless in symmetry for the Master Builder to behold.”

## III

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MISSION

I. *Retrospection.* It is interesting to trace the evolution of a Christian mission in the midst of such environments. Here lay entrenched an ancient religion strong in its multitudes of followers and in its hidebound customs and popular traditions. Here was born the most popular of all the gods whose haunts and homes, shrines and temples, priests and teachers, were found on every hand throughout the land of Braj, the Vaishnava Holy Land. This might indeed be called a hard field, but in this uncongenial soil a growing tree has been planted, and it has taken root.

In the year 1901, thirteen years after the mission was started, with Mathura as a center and reaching out into every large town throughout the Vaishnava Holy Land, exists and lives and spreads a force that is permanent and cumulative. In the beginning of 1888 the mission had no property, no schools, no workers, no converts, no money—nothing but two hearts full of courage and faith and

zeal. It seemed like an impossibility to get a foothold in such a place; and yet within three months a mission house was being built within the city limits on land owned by a Chaube Brahman!

In another year land was obtained from the same source, and the foundation of Blackstone Missionary Institute well and truly laid. In a short time land was bought in the very heart of the sacred city of Mathura, in the midst of the largest temples, and Flora Hall erected thereon. A site was secured in Brindaban, where Christians were denied the right to own property, its possession secured after a five years' struggle by the decision of the High Court, to the consternation of the priests of Krishna and the wonder of the people. A cantonment church was built, a schoolhouse and dormitories for the scholars, and an additional building for the English Training School. The best of all is that all these buildings were filled and were rendered necessary by the work. There had grown up a good Anglo-Vernacular Middle Grade School for boys in the city attended by Christians, Hindus, and Mohammedans, a girls' school of like grade occupied the dormitories connected with Gracie Hall, and the Training Schools were

flourishing. The work was not confined to Mathura city. The evangelists went abroad and preached, and in a short time the work at Hathras, Brindaban, Kosi, Mahaban, Bharatpur, Dig, and Saadabad, as well as Mathura itself, had developed into large and prosperous circuits. Converts multiplied. The little one not only became a thousand, but eight thousand. Bishop Thoburn wrote to the Indian Witness from the Hathras camp in 1891, when this work was just getting under way:

“Had such a spectacle been seen thirty years ago all India would have heard of it, and missionaries would have competed for the opportunity of hastening to them with help and comfort. Now, however, the story seems to fall on leaden ears, and cold questions are asked about the motives of the people, the depth of their convictions, the reality of the new work, and so on, ending with the remark that they are one and all low-caste people! God have mercy on our modern Christians! Baptized heathen may be found on these plains, but the Lord in mercy save us from baptized Pharisees and Levites, who have mastered the art of assuming pious airs while passing by ‘on the other side.’ The other side! Which side? God preserve intelligent

Christians from ranging themselves on the side of Christ's enemies!

"But if we accept these calls as from God what a responsibility do we meet! If we baptize these people we only begin the work among them. We must teach them, else we shall be guilty before God. Where are the teachers? Where the resources needed? God will provide. He who knows the end from the beginning has already marked a path-way out of all these difficulties. We should be keenly alive to a full sense of our obligations, but we need not borrow troubles in advance, nor fight lions which are chained by the wayside."

2. *District Formed.* In that year (1891) the Agra District was formed, including the three centers of Agra, Ajmere, and Mathura. The great mass of the Christians were about Mathura. The work spread into such proportions that soon it became necessary to divide the territory into separate presiding elders' districts.

Owing to the rapid development of the work, frequent adjustments have been made. First, in 1893, the work in Rajputana was formed into the Ajmere District. A missionary was sent to Aligarh in 1894, it being added

to the Agra District. When the writer went there to rent a house for the missionary the Mohammedan landlord called his attention to the fact that the house under inspection with a view to renting was near the cemetery, remarking with a smile that "the mission will need this." This work so grew that in 1898 it was set apart as a separate district. The civil district of Sikandra Rao, on the north, had previously been cut off and added to the Kasganj District. In 1900 Agra, with four circuits, was separated and added to the Kasganj District, and in 1902 the work in Rajputana, which had been in 1898 again added to Agra District for administrative purposes, was again separated and formed into a district.

3. *Mathura District.* Finally, in 1902, the eight large circuits about Mathura, with those about Agra, were formed into the Mathura District. Braj, the Vaishnava Holy Land, had become a presiding elder's district of the Methodist Episcopal Church! In thirteen years all this work had grown up, and the center of it all was Mathura. In and about Mathura there was property belonging to this mission to the value of fifty thousand dollars and more than eight thousand Christians. In

1901 the editor of the Indian Witness visited Mathura, and wrote editorially concerning it as follows:

“Two days at the sacred and historic city of Mathura, constituting a third visit in seven years, were full of inspiration and encouragement. The history of the planting and development of the Methodist Episcopal mission at Mathura sounds almost like a romance. It appears that some thirteen years ago the Rev. Dennis Osborne, then stationed in the northwest, in visions of the night heard a voice distinctly say, ‘Send a missionary to Mathura.’ The deep impression made by this message was intensified by its repetition several times during the night. So profoundly impressed was Mr. Osborne that he immediately wrote to Dr. E. W. Parker narrating the facts and urging that steps be taken to ‘send a missionary to Mathura.’ Dr. Parker had no wish to be ‘disobedient to the heavenly vision,’ as he also regarded it, and strongly advocated the opening of a mission in that priest-ridden citadel of Hinduism. Not a few missionaries considered the proposal an unwise one. Even Bishop Thoburn thought unfavorably of it, on the ground that it was unadvisable to open a mission in one of the strongest centers of



CHRISTIAN WORKERS AT MATHURA



idolatry in the whole empire, while favorable openings in more accessible regions were appearing on every hand. A missionary might work and spend time and money for twenty years, it was feared, without accomplishing anything in such a place. But God had gracious purposes concerning Mathura, and all difficulties finally disappeared."

The editor went on to say: "Mathura is held in the highest repute by Hindus of all castes and classes by reason of its having been the birthplace of Krishna, the most popular of all the Hindu deities. The city is crowded, and the banks of the sacred Jamuna are lined with temples whose revenues and endowments, in many instances, are enormous. Pilgrims from all parts visit Mathura to bathe in the sin-cleansing (?) waters of the majestic but muddy river that in the rainy season sweeps past in mighty volume to mingle its current with the equally sacred Ganges at Allahabad. Great enrichment accrues to the numberless priests of Mathura from the pilgrim visitors, who come in their thousands and spend money freely at the behest of the voracious temple guardians. A few miles away is Brindaban, another temple-crowded city, the scene of Krishna's famous exploits by which his moral

reputation has been blighted beyond redemption."

To besiege this Sebastopol of Hindu idolatry and superstition the Methodist Episcopal Church came in 1888. In 1891 Dr. Robinson wrote of it:

"By judicious methods, embodying a large measure of courageous faith and sanctified tact, this suggestive mission has gone on step by step in the face of the most formidable obstacles and undaunted by the really great difficulties, until at the present time there is a mission plant at Mathura and Brindaban of which any mission might be proud, and a prosperous work is in progress of a solid character, with abundant promise for the future."

The statistics for 1900 of the district, of which Mathura has been the center and administrative headquarters, show:

Mission agents.....	286
Pupils in day schools.....	2,300
Pupils in Sunday schools.....	10,100
Christian community.....	10,000
Baptisms.....	2,000
Inquirers under instruction.....	8,000
Value of property.....	Rs. 168,124

4. *Prospects.* To this interesting land of Braj a purer faith has come. The gospel will

supplant the Gita. Christ will supersede Krishna. The Puranas—"the old traditional tales"—must be laid aside for the narratives of the New Testament, and the Pushti Marga, or way of sensual enjoyment, for the way of the Lord. The preceding pages have shown what may be done even in such a Vaishnava stronghold. And the good work will go on, and a better day will dawn.

"Yes, it shall come! E'en now my eyes behold,  
In distant view, the wished-for age unfold,  
So, o'er the shadowy days that roll between,  
A wandering gleam foretells the ascending scene."





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Braj, the Vaishnava Holy Land; a jubilee

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