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Ramabai

A Great Life in Indian Missions

Pandita Ramabai

HER VISION, HER MISSION
AND TRIUMPH OF FAITH

BY

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Prefatory Note.

THE re-issue of the life story of Pandita Ramabai, revised and brought up to date, must give the liveliest satisfaction to all lovers of missionary literature and the missionary enterprise. This truly is a great chapter in missionary romance, and a noble example of that faith, sacrifice and sanctified talent by means of which the most enduring spiritual history has been made. Pandita Ramabai had a fine mind, a richly sympathetic heart, an intimate acquaintance with the problem she handled, great spiritual insight, shrewd business ability, and, suffusing all, a daring faith in God. She was the Müller of India, and her sublime trust was honoured there, as his was here. In her wonderful work of preservation, rescue, instruction and evangelisation, she was ably supported by her daughter. They both have been called to their heavenly reward, but the work at Mukti is their monument; and the God who so honoured the founder will not forsake her successors. A high honour and a heavy responsibility falls to Miss Lissa Hastie, whom I have known and highly esteemed for over sixteen years, and it is with confidence that I bespeak for her and her associates in the work, the prayer and support which were accorded their predecessors.

W. GRAHAM SCROGGIE.

EDINBURGH.

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PANDITA RAMABAI.

CHAPTER I.

A Brief Historical Retrospect.

WHEN living in Bombay during the years 1888 to 1899 it was my privilege to become acquainted with Pandita Ramabai, who returned from a long stay in England and the United States of America about 1887. Before going abroad she had attained some degree of notability among her country people on account of her learning, so extraordinary among Indian women. The newspapers, both British and Indian, acclaimed her arrival, for news of her intention to open an educational institution for high caste women had preceded her. A suitable house on the Chowpatty Sea-face at Bombay was taken for this purpose, and a board placed at the gateway announced that this was the *Sharada Sadan*, or "Abode of Wisdom."

Six years previously Ramabai had left India a Brahmin widow, but during her absence she had undergone a change, and now publicly avowed herself a Christian, having been baptised as a member of the Church of England.

There was excitement among the Christian community of Bombay. Would Ramabai now throw in her lot with them, or would she fraternise with the Hindus, for whose benefit the proposed institution was intended?

The fact of her having become a Christian made all except the reform party among the Hindus inclined to stand aloof from her, while the announcement that her school was to teach only secular subjects did not attract the Indian Christians in Bombay.

However, Ramabai's appearance at the meetings of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, then at the zenith of its popularity under Frances Willard, gave her an introduction among the Christians, and it was at these meetings that I first met Ramabai.

But the foremost welcome to India came to Ramabai from the Reform Hindus, known as the Brahmo Samaj. The leaders in this fraternity were largely the product of missionary education. They had been trained in missionary colleges. Their intellects had been convinced of the benefits of Christianity and of its social superiority to Hinduism; but they had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. They no longer believed in the preposterous fables of their Hindu *Shastras*. They adopted many Christian customs and imbibed a mixture of mild Hinduism and Unitarian doctrines; laid down rules permitting the remarriage of widows, and raising the age at which girls might remain unmarried. In short, they established a sort of halfway-house to Christianity which turned many a promising youth aside and deadened his conscience as effectually as if he had remained in the toils of idolatry.

It was from this class of people that Ramabai's early pupils came. They wanted their daughters to have the higher education proffered by Ramabai, but they had as much real aversion to Christianity as the more bigoted Hindu.

Thus taking pupils from this class was as much a peril as an opening for Ramabai. The money to start the school had been given largely in the United States. Naturally it was the benevolent public who were not specially interested in missions and the salvation of souls who were most keen on the establishment of an educational institution for Hindu women which was not to Christianise them.

The Ramabai Association,* with headquarters in Boston, U.S.A., had guaranteed the support of the school for ten years, after which Ramabai was sanguine that her country people would be so convinced of the benefits of an education for their daughters that they would be glad to support it themselves. The personnel of the Committee was composed of such as would be called "liberal." Many were warm-hearted women, foremost in philanthropic labours. Frances Willard was very keen on the work, and her coadjutors were among its most ardent and liberal supporters.

Though I occasionally met Ramabai I did not know much of her for several months till Miss Soonderbai H. Powar, an Indian Christian lady engaged in mission work in Bombay, called one day and brought the news that she had ventured on a visit to Ramabai and had been introduced to her pupils; that Ramabai having occasion to leave the room, Soonderbai had taken the opportunity to read to them from the Bible, and that Ramabai's little daughter, then about eight years old, had averred that she was a Christian and that the Bible was her *Shastra*.

Not long afterwards Ramabai removed her school to Poona, in which city living was cheaper, and which was in many ways more suitable for her purposes than Bombay. The American Committee approved the change and supplied the means for the

* In a book entitled "The High Caste Hindu Woman," written while studying in Philadelphia, Ramabai had told out of the fullness of her heart of how the iron-bound customs of centuries had ground the women of India into a position of servitude and ignorance, making her at one and the same time the slave of man and his greatest hindrance in rising to full-orbed manhood. This book made a great sensation and created the keenest interest in Ramabai and her work, and it led to the formation of the Ramabai Association.

purchase of an eligible bungalow, surrounded with an ample compound which gave the needed privacy with abundant space for outdoor exercise without going outside the walls.

It was not long before pupils began to come in, genuine Hindu widows with shaven heads, plain brick-red garments, and no jewellery. All the internal arrangements of the Home were designed to give perfect facility for Hindu customs to be carried out. Ramabai herself maintained her Hindu ways of living as regards food and clothing, though having become a Christian she was not permitted to eat with the Hindu pupils or even to enter their cookroom or touch their food lest she defile it! From the first there were two classes of pupils: the widows aforesaid; and the daughters of reformed Hindus, the Brahmas, who were less particular about keeping caste and who ate at the same table as Ramabai. The latter included a number of destitute young women whom Ramabai had rescued from moral danger, and for whose support she had made herself personally responsible and who were looked upon as her adopted daughters.

The friendship between Ramabai and Soonderbai Powar grew and strengthened till, at Ramabai's request, Soonderbai relinquished her work in Bombay and came to the Sharada Sadan in the capacity of general friend and helper. She was called by the pupils Aka (Akka), "elder sister," as Ramabai was familiarly termed Bai, which means "sister," or "lady," and is the general term for the mistress of the house, from which also the termination "bai," attached to women's names, is derived. Every adult woman is entitled to that appellation, as Miss or Mrs. is used in the English language.

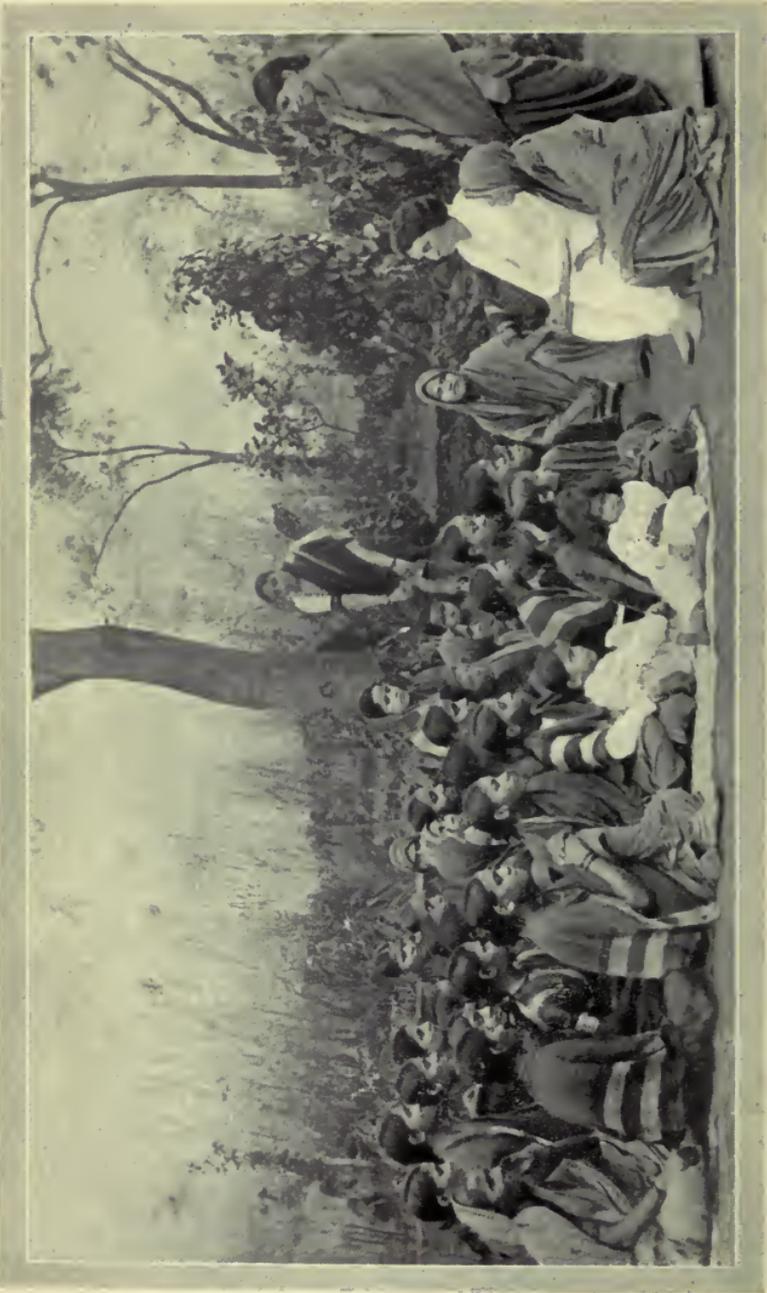
When I visited the Sharada Sadan in 1892, at the



MRS. RACHEL NALDER

PANDITA RAMABAI

MANORAMABAI



PUPILS OF PANDITA RAMABAI AT THE SHARADA SADAN, POONA

formal opening of its newly-acquired buildings, there were about forty pupils, including a specially bright group of little girls from ten to twelve years of age. It was difficult to believe that the latter rested under the cruel ban of widowhood.

"This is not an institution in which all the best rooms are reserved for the teaching staff," remarked Ramabai when showing a party of visitors over the house. "My pupils," she continued, "are as free to come and go into the drawing-room as in any other part of the house. The Sadan, with all its privileges, has been instituted for their benefit. They come from homes where they have been treated as outcasts; no love bestowed upon them, and no comforts provided for them. I wish them to see the contrast in all things where love rules. I wish them to become acquainted with as many good people as possible; to learn what the outside world is like from pictures and books, and to enjoy the wonderful works of God as they ramble in the garden, study with the microscope, or view the heavens from the veranda on the roof."

This truly represented the atmosphere of the Sharada Sadan. Out of school hours the girls followed Ramabai about and clustered around her like bees, while Soonderbai's little room was usually crowded with pupils coming and going, sure of a hearing in any difficult phase of work or lessons.

The loving spirit that prevailed and the all-pervading energy of the bright little woman at the head of the house were two features of the work that remained with me. There was never any trace of Oriental languor about Ramabai. She was all life and energy, the centre and circumference of all that was going on.

Ramabai's first plans in the founding of the Sharada Sadan did not reach further than the educa-

tion and emancipation of high caste widows. But she saw these in vision becoming in their turn pioneers of education, and thus working out the social salvation of the community. She saw them opening schools here and there, and gradually letting the light into darkened minds, as her own had become enlightened with contact with the women of America and England.

But Ramabai was to build better than she knew. The Almighty God, whom she had then but dimly apprehended, had His hand upon her, and was about to satisfy her longing soul with Himself and then lead her out into a wider and more far-reaching work for her people than she could have imagined in those early days.

In a booklet written in 1907 Ramabai herself gives a graphic delineation of the way the Lord led her. In this, her "Testimony," she tells how the hard experiences of her early life were all His preparation for her life-work, and how she was brought into the full enjoyment of salvation; saved through the precious blood shed on Calvary; filled with the Holy Spirit; and given a commission from on High to be a leader of her people, and thus transform multitudes of them in their turn into heralds of salvation.

Before Ramabai went to England she had already been thoroughly disillusioned in regard to the religion she had learned in childhood. But in this "Testimony," being written specially to reach her own country people, she goes over the whole ground step by step, and shows how the light dawned by degrees on her soul.

It is instructive to note that whatever personal experience of salvation may have been theirs who first undertook to enlighten her, it was eight years after she had been intellectually convinced of the

truth of Christianity before she by faith entered into the enjoyment of a full salvation.

But God had given Ramabai the germ of salvation, "a faithful spirit," and it is entirely in line with both Old and New Testament teachings that as she walked in the light as revealed to her, so it increased from the first glimmer of apprehension to the full Gospel noontide.

While Ramabai strictly adhered to her original programme of full religious liberty for her Hindu pupils, she did not hide the fact that she was a Christian. From the day the school was opened family worship was always held in Ramabai's own room with her daughter and any other Christian who might be in residence. The door was not closed, and the pupils were as free to come and go as at any other time. At first when they heard the reading they peeped in at the door, then one by one they ventured a little farther. Occasionally one would sit down; all would leave when the Christians knelt, but after a time they began to kneel also, and looked forward to the hour of worship, which Ramabai concluded with a loving kiss to her child, a caress soon extended to all who came. It was shortly noised abroad among the Hindus that Ramabai was breaking her pledge and teaching Christianity.

Ramabai stoutly maintained her right to act as a Christian in her own home. She refused to close her doors to the pupils who were free to come in at any other time. The pupils were then forbidden by their friends to attend the prayers, and some obeyed, others were removed.

A series of storms passed over the head of Ramabai on this account during the first few years of the work. Meanwhile, like an ever-advancing tide, the influence of the Holy Spirit was continually felt, and a work of

grace began in many hearts along with Ramabai's own spiritual enlightenment. Several of the girls before mentioned as Ramabai's adopted daughters, who were not under bondage to any Hindu relatives, confessed themselves Christians. At a camp meeting held at Lanouli in 1896, fifteen of these girls were present with Ramabai, whom she looked on as her spiritual children and rejoiced over them, but her heart only yearned for more.

Then she had a wonderful prayer given her from the Lord, that this number might be squared (*i.e.*, increased to 225) before the next annual camp meeting. Humanly speaking, this seemed an impossibility. The school would only accommodate about sixty pupils, and some were leaving after the holidays, and but few fresh ones were in sight.

But the Lord, who is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and is still the covenant-keeping God, was bringing Ramabai to the threshold of a new departure. He abundantly answered this prayer and fulfilled His promises, of which more must be told at length in the succeeding chapters of this book.

When called to leave India in 1899, it was laid on my heart to do something while in England for Pandita Ramabai in order to bring her work before the Lord's people in this country. When I laid the concern before the late Robert Scott, of Morgan & Scott, Publishers, London, he keenly entered into the project, and the result was the publication in 1900 of my book, "Pandita Ramabai: The Story of Her Life." This book has been greatly used by the Lord in making the work known, so that we can say of Ramabai, as the Apostle Paul said to the Romans, "I thank my God...through Jesus Christ, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world."

But the Lord has laid the work and needs of

Ramabai on the hearts of other Christian women besides myself, who have toiled nobly and willingly to uphold her hands, and who have given lavishly of their time and means to interest others in the cruel fate of the Hindu widows and in Ramabai's brave endeavour to bring the light of salvation into their darkened lives.

In this respect must be specially mentioned Mrs. Rachel Nalder, who, in her early widowhood, left her home in Nova Scotia and has spent upwards of fourteen years in travelling from place to place and country to country speaking for Ramabai. Commencing in 1905 in Great Britain, Mrs. Nalder spent two or three years in traversing this land, crossed over to Ireland, and then, returning to Canada for a rest, subsequently went on to the United States, sailing from San Francisco to New Zealand in 1912.

After speaking in the chief cities of New Zealand and Australia, she landed in India in January, 1915, for the first time to see the country and people who had been so long laid on her heart. It was through a visit of Ramabai in 1898 to her home in Nova Scotia that her sympathies were first enlisted. A minister of the Gospel who heard Mrs. Nalder in California in 1918 says that seven times he listened to her addresses to interested audiences and she never repeated herself. He wrote: "I never heard a better speaker with a greater subject. Her work never gets between her and the Cross, but is sealed with the witness of the Spirit."

Many of the dear sisters who have been the devoted helpers of this work have already passed within the veil and heard the "well done" from the Master's lips. Others have stepped into the gaps, daughters have taken up the work done by their mothers, and so the Lord provides for all needs.

CHAPTER II.

How Pandita Ramabai found Christ.

RELATED BY HERSELF.

"Jesus...saith,...Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark 5. 19).

"Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul" (Psa. 66. 16).

My father was a native of Mangalore district, but he chose a place in a dense forest on the top of a peak of the Western Ghats, on the borders of Mysore State, where he built a home for himself. This was done in order that he might be away from the hubbub of the world, carry on his educational work, and engage in devotion to the gods in a quiet place where he would not be constantly worried by curious visitors.

He used to get his support from the rice fields and cocoanut plantations which he owned. The place he had selected for his home happened to be a sacred place of pilgrimage, where pilgrims came all the year round. He thought it was his duty to entertain them at his expense, as hospitality was a part of his religion. For thirteen years he stayed there and did his work quietly, but lost all his property because of the great expense he incurred in performing what he thought was his duty.

So he was obliged to leave his home and lead a pilgrim's life. My mother told me that I was only about six months old when they left their home. She placed me in a big box made of cane, and a man carried it on his head from the mountain top to the valley. Thus my pilgrim life began when I was a

little baby. I was the youngest member of the family.

My father, though a very orthodox Hindu and strictly adhering to caste and other religious rules, was yet a reformer in his own way. He could not see why women and people of Shudra caste should not learn to read and write the Sanskrit language and learn sacred literature other than the Vedas. So he, at the risk of being excommunicated by the Brahmins, made up his mind to teach Sanskrit to his wife.

He thought it better to try the experiment at home instead of preaching to others. He found an apt pupil in my mother, who fell in line with his plan and became an excellent Sanskrit scholar. She performed all her home duties, cooked, washed, and did all household work, took care of her children, attended to guests, and did all that was required of a good religious wife and mother. She devoted many hours of her time in the night to the regular study of the sacred Puranic literature, and was able to store up a great deal of knowledge in her mind.

The Brahmin pundits* living in the Mangalore district round about my father's native village tried to dissuade him from the heretical course he was following in teaching his wife the sacred language of the gods. He had fully prepared himself to meet their objections. His extensive studies in the Hindu sacred literature enabled him to quote chapter and verse of each sacred book which gives authority to teach women and Shudras. His *misdeeds* were reported to the head priest of the sect to which he belonged, and the learned Brahmins induced the *guru* to call this heretic to appear before him

*In this volume, the word Pandit (teacher or learned man) is spelt *Pundit*, to facilitate right pronunciation.

and before the august assemblage of the pundits to give his reasons for taking this course or be excommunicated.

My father appeared before the *guru*, the head priest, and the assembly of pundits, and gave his reasons. He quoted ancient authorities and succeeded in convincing the *guru* and the chief pundits that it was not wrong for women and Shudras to learn Sanskrit Puranic literature. So they did not put him out of caste, nor was he molested by any one after this. He became known as an orthodox reformer. Some people honoured him for what he was doing and some despised him. He cared little for what people said, and did what he thought was right. He taught and educated my mother, brother, sister, and others.

When I was about eight years old my mother began to teach me, and continued to do so until I was about fifteen years of age. During these years she succeeded in training my mind so that I might be able to carry on my own education with very little aid from others. I did not know of any schools for girls and women existing then where higher education was to be obtained.

Moreover, my parents did not like us children to come in contact with the outside world. They wanted us to be strictly religious and adhere to their old faith. Learning any other language except Sanskrit was out of the question. Secular education of any kind was looked upon as leading people to worldliness, which would prevent them from getting into the way of Moksha or liberation from everlasting trouble of reincarnation in millions and millions of animal species, and undergoing the pains of suffering countless millions of diseases and deaths. To learn the English language and to come in contact with the



PANDITA RAMABAI WHEN 7 YEARS OF AGE, WITH HER FATHER, MOTHER, AND BROTHER
Her father, Ananti Shastri, was a pioneer in the emancipation of Indian women



Sonderbai H. Powar

PANDITA RAMABAI'S VALUED FRIEND AND FIRST
CO-WORKER

Mlechchhas, as the non-Hindus are called, was forbidden on pain of losing caste and all hope of future happiness. So all that we could or did learn was the Sanskrit grammar and dictionaries, with the Puranic and modern poetical literature in that language. Most of this, including the grammar and dictionaries, which are written in verse form, had to be committed to memory.

Ever since I remember anything my father and mother were always travelling from one sacred place to another, staying in each place for some months, bathing in the sacred river or tank, visiting temples, worshipping household gods and the images of gods in the temples, and reading Puranas in temples or in some convenient place.

The reading of the Puranas served a double purpose. The first and the foremost was that of getting rid of sin and of earning merit in order to obtain Moksha. The other purpose was to earn an honest living without begging.

The readers of Puranas—Puranikas, as they are called—are the popular and public preachers of religion among the Hindus. They sit in some prominent place, in temple halls, or under the trees, or on the banks of rivers and tanks, with their manuscript books in their hands and read the Puranas in a loud voice with intonation so that the passers-by or visitors of the temple may hear. The text, being in the Sanskrit language, is not understood by the hearers. The Puranikas are not obliged to explain it to them. They may or may not explain it as they choose. And sometimes when it is translated and explained the Puranika takes great pains to make his speech as popular as he can by telling greatly exaggerated or untrue stories. This is not considered sin, since it is done to attract common people's

attention, that they may hear the sacred sound, the names of the gods, and some of their deeds, and be purified by this means. When the Puranika reads Puranas the hearers, who are sure to come and sit around him for a few moments at least, generally give him presents. The Puranika continues to read, paying no attention to what the hearers do or say. They come and go at their choice.

When they come the religious ones among them prostrate themselves before him and worship him and the book, offering flowers, fruits, sweetmeats, garments, money, and other things. It is supposed that this act brings a great deal of merit to the giver, and the person who receives does not incur any sin. If a hearer does not give presents to the Puranika he loses all the merit which he may have earned by good acts. The presents need not be very expensive ones; a handful of rice or other grains, a pice, or even a few cowries, which are used as an exchange of pice (sixty-four cowrie shells are equal to one pice) are quite acceptable. A flower, or even a petal of a flower, or a leaf of any good sacred tree is acceptable to the gods. But the offerer knows well that his store of merit will be according to what he gives, and he tries to be as generous as he can. So the Puranika gets all that he needs by reading Puranas in public places.

My parents followed this vocation. We all read Puranas in public places, but did not translate or explain them in the vernacular. The reading and hearing of the sacred literature is in itself believed to be productive of great merit—"Punya," as it is called by the Hindus. We never had to beg or work to earn our livelihood. We used to get all the money and food we needed, and more; what remained over after meeting all necessary expenses was spent

in performing pilgrimages and giving alms to the Brahmins.

This sort of life went on until my father became too feeble to stand the exertion, when he was no longer able to direct the reading of the Puranas by us. We were not fit to do any other work to earn our livelihood, as we had grown up in perfect ignorance of anything outside the sacred literature of the Hindus.

We could do no menial work, nor could we beg to get the necessities of life. Our parents had some money in hand. If it had been used to advance our secular education we might have been able to earn our living in some way. But this was out of the question. Our parents had unbounded faith in what the sacred books said. They encouraged us to look to the gods to get our support. The sacred books declared that if people worshipped the gods in particular ways, gave alms to the Brahmins, repeated the names of certain gods and also some hymns in their honour, with fasting and performance of penance, the gods and goddesses would appear and talk to the worshippers and give them whatever they desired. We decided to take this course of meeting our temporal wants. For three years we did nothing but perform these religious acts. At last all the money which we had was spent, but the gods did not help us.

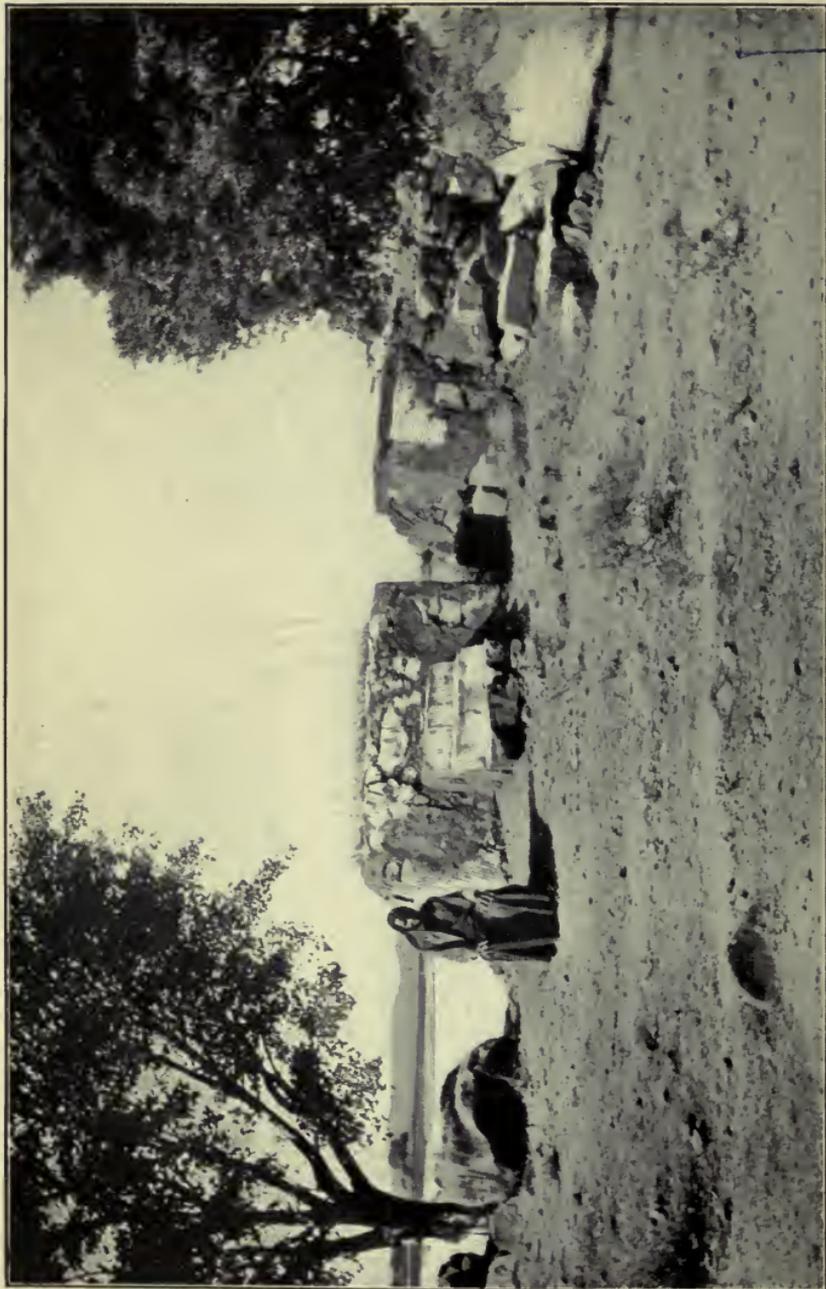
We suffered from famine, which we had brought upon ourselves. The country, too, *i.e.*, the Madras Presidency, where we lived at that particular time had begun to feel the effects of famine. There was scarcity of food and water. People were starving all around, and we, like the rest of the poor people, wandered from place to place. My father, mother, and sister all died of starvation within a few months of each other.

I cannot describe all the sufferings of this terrible time. My brother and I survived and wandered about, still visiting sacred places, bathing in rivers, and worshipping the gods and goddesses in order to get our desire. We had fulfilled all the conditions laid down in the sacred books and kept all the rules as far as our knowledge went, but the gods were not pleased with us and did not appear to us. After years of fruitless service we began to lose our faith in them and in the books which prescribed this course and held out the hope of a great reward to the worshippers of the gods. We still continued to keep caste rules, and worshipped gods and studied sacred literature as usual.

But as our faith in our religion had grown cold we were not quite so strict with regard to obtaining secular education and finding some means of earning an honest livelihood. We wandered from place to place, visiting many temples, bathing in many rivers, fasting and performing penances, worshipping gods, trees, animals, Brahmins, etc., for more than three years after the death of our parents and elder sister. We had walked more than four thousand miles on foot without any sort of comfort, sometimes eating what kind people gave us and sometimes going without food, with poor coarse clothing, and finding but little shelter except in *dharma shalas* (i.e., free lodging places for the poor), which are common to all pilgrims and travellers of all sorts except the low caste people. We wandered from the south to the north, as far as Cashmere, and then to the east, and went to Calcutta in 1878.



PANDITA RAMABAI DISGUISED AS A LOW-CASTE WOMAN
FOR PURPOSES OF INVESTIGATION AND RESCUE



"SUTTEE" PILES

At such places in former times Hindu widows were burnt alive, according to custom, with the dead bodies of their husbands

CHAPTER III.

First Contact With Christians.

WE stayed in Calcutta for about a year and became acquainted with the learned Brahmins. Here my brother and I, for the first time, came in contact with Christians. We were invited to attend a Christian social gathering.

We looked upon the proceedings of the assembly with curiosity, but did not understand what they were about. After a little while one of them opened a book and read something out of it, and then they all knelt down before their chairs and some said something with closed eyes. We were told that was the way they prayed to God. We did not see any image to which they paid their homage, but it seemed as though they were paying homage to the chairs before which they knelt. Such was the crude idea of Christian worship that impressed itself on my mind.

The kind Christians gave me a copy of the Holy Bible in Sanskrit, and some other nice things with it. Two of those people were the translators of the Bible. They were grand old men. I do not remember their names, but they must have prayed for my conversion through the reading of the Bible. I liked the outward appearance of the book and tried to read it, but did not understand. The language was so different from the Sanskrit literature of the Hindus, the teaching so different, that I thought it quite a waste of time to read that Book; but I have never parted with it since then.

While staying in Calcutta we became acquainted

with many learned pundits. Some of them requested me to lecture to the Pardah women on the duties of women according to the Shastras. I had to study the subject well before I could lecture on it, so I bought the books of the Hindu law, published in Calcutta. Besides reading them I read other books which would help me in my work. While reading the *Dharma Shastras* I came to know many things which I never knew before. There were contradictory statements about almost everything. What one book said was most righteous, the other book declared as being unrighteous. While reading the *Mahabharata* I found the following: "The Vedas differ from each other; Smrities (*i.e.*, books of sacred laws) do not agree with one another; the secret of religion is in some hidden place, the only way is that which is followed by great men."

This I found true about everything, but there were two things on which all these books—the *Dharma Shastras*, the sacred epics, the Puranas and modern poets, the popular preachers of the present day, and orthodox high caste men, all were agreed—that women of high and low caste, as a class, were bad, very bad, worse than demons, as unholy as untruth, and that they could not get Moksha as men. The only hope of their getting this much-desired liberation from Karma and its results, viz., countless millions of births and deaths and untold suffering was the worship of their husbands. The husband is said to be the women's god; there is no other god for her. This god may be the worst sinner and a great criminal, still HE IS HER GOD and she must worship him. She can have no hope of getting admission into Svarga, the abode of the gods, without his pleasure, and if she pleases him in all things she will have the privilege of going to Svarga as his slave,

there to serve him and be one of his wives among the thousands of the Svarga harlots who are presented to him by the gods in exchange for his or his wife's merit.

The woman is allowed to go into higher existence thus far, but to attain Moksha or liberation she must perform such great religious acts as will obtain for her the merit by which she will be reincarnated as a high caste man in order to study the Vedas and the Vedanta, and thereby get the knowledge of the true Brahma and be amalgamated in it. The extraordinary religious acts which help a woman to get into the way of getting Moksha are utter abandonment of her will to that of her husband. She is to worship him with whole-hearted devotion as the only god, to know and see no other pleasure in life except in the most degraded slavery to him. The woman has no right to study the Vedas and Vedanta, and without knowing them no one can know the Brahma; without knowing Brahma no one can get liberation, therefore no woman, as a woman, can get liberation (*i.e.*, Moksha).

The same rules are applicable to the Shudras. The Shudras must not study the Veda, and must not perform the same religious act which a Brahmin has a right to perform. The Shudra, hearing the Veda repeated, must be punished by having his ears filled with liquified lead. The Shudra who dares to learn a verse or verses of the Veda must be punished by having intensely hot liquor poured down his throat. This would no doubt be done to the Shudra violating the sacred law if he were left to the tender mercies of the Brahmin.

As for the low caste people, the poor things have no hope of any sort. They are looked upon as being very like the lower species of animals, such as pigs;

their very shadow and the sound of their voices are defiling; they have no place in the abode of the gods, and no hope of getting liberation, except that they might perchance be born among the higher castes after having gone through millions of reincarnations.

The things which are necessary to make it possible for them to be born in higher castes are that they should be contented to live in a very degraded condition, serving the high caste people as their bondservants, eating the leavings of their food in dirty, broken earthen vessels, wearing filthy rags and clothes thrown away from the dead bodies of the high caste people. They may sometimes get the benefit of coming in contact with the shadow of a Brahmin, and have a few drops of water from his hand or wet clothes thrown at them, and feel the air which has passed over the sacred persons of Brahmins. These things are beneficial to the low caste people, but the Brahmins lose much of their own hardly earned merit by letting the low caste people get these benefits!

The low caste people are never allowed to enter the temples where high caste men worship gods. So the poor, degraded people find shapeless stones, broken pots, etc., smear them with red paint, set them up under trees and on roadsides, or in small temples which they build themselves—where Brahmins do not go for fear of losing their caste—and worship in order to satisfy the cravings of their spiritual nature. Poor, poor people! How very sad their condition is, no one who has not seen can realise. Their quarters are found outside every village or town where the sacred feet of the pious Brahmins do not walk.

These are the two things upon which all Shastras, etc., are agreed. I had a vague idea of these doctrines of the Hindu religion from my childhood, but

while studying the *Dharma Shastras* they presented themselves to my mind with great force. My eyes were being gradually opened; I was waking up to my own hopeless condition as a woman, and it was becoming clearer and clearer to me that I had no place anywhere as far as religious consolation was concerned. I became quite dissatisfied with myself. I wanted something more than the *Shastras* could give me, but I did not know what it was that I wanted.

One day my brother and I were invited by Keshab Chandra Sen to his house. He received us very kindly; took me into the inner part of the house and introduced me to his wife and daughters. He and his family showed great kindness to me, and when parting he gave me a copy of one of the *Vedas*. He asked if I had studied the *Vedas*. I answered in the negative, and said that women were not fit to read the *Vedas*, and they were not allowed to do so. I would be breaking the rules of religion if I were to study the *Vedas*. He could not but smile at my declaration of this Hindu doctrine. He said nothing in answer, but advised me to study the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*.

New thoughts were awakening in my heart. I questioned myself why I should not study the *Vedas* and *Vedanta*. Soon I persuaded myself into the belief that it was not wrong for a woman to read the *Vedas*. So I began first to read the *Upanishads*, then the *Vedanta*, and the *Veda*.

In the meanwhile my brother died. As my father wanted me to be well versed in our religion, he did not give me in marriage when a little child. He had married my older sister to a boy of her own age, but he did not want to study or to lead a good religious life with my sister. Her life was made

miserable by being unequally yoked, and my father did not want the same thing to happen to me. This was of course against the caste rules, so he had to suffer being practically put out of Brahmin society. But he stood the persecution with his characteristic manliness, and did what he thought was right, to give me a chance to study and be happy by leading a religious life. So I had remained unmarried till I was twenty-two years old.

Having lost all faith in the religion of my ancestors I married a Bengali gentleman of the Shudra caste. My husband died of cholera within two years of our marriage, and I was left alone to face the world with one baby in my arms.

I stayed in Bengal and Assam for four years in all, and studied the Bengali language. While living with my husband at Silchar, Assam, I had found a little pamphlet in my library. I do not know how it came there, but I picked it up and began to read it with great interest. It was Luke's Gospel in the Bengali language.

There lived a Baptist missionary, Mr. Allen, at Silchar. He occasionally paid visits to me and preached the Gospel. He explained the first chapter of the Book of Genesis to me. The story of the creation of the world was so very unlike all the stories which I read in the Puranas and Shastras that I became greatly interested in it. It struck me as being a true story, but I could not give any reason for thinking so or believing in it.

As I had lost all faith in my former religion, and my heart was hungering after something better, I eagerly learnt everything which I could about the Christian religion, and declared my intention to become a Christian if I were perfectly satisfied with this new religion. My husband, who had studied

in a mission school, was pretty well acquainted with the Bible, but did not like to be called a Christian. Much less did he like the idea of his wife being publicly baptised and joining the despised Christian community. He was very angry, and said he would tell Mr. Allen not to come to our house any more. I do not know just what would have happened had he lived.

CHAPTER IV

The Search for a Satisfying Religion.

I WAS desperately in need of some religion. The Hindu religion held out no hope for me; the Brahmo religion was not a very definite one, for it is nothing but what a man makes for himself. He chooses and gathers whatever seems good to him from all religions known to him, and prepares a sort of religion for his own use. The Brahmo religion has no other foundation than man's own natural light, and the sense of right and wrong which he possesses in common with all mankind. It could not and did not satisfy me; still I liked and believed a good deal of it that was better than what the orthodox Hindu religion taught.

After my husband's death I left Silchar and came to Poona. Here I stayed for a year. The leaders of the reform party treated me with great kindness and gave me some help. Miss Hurford used to come and teach me the New Testament in Marathi. I had at this time begun to study the English language, but did not know how to write or speak it. She used to teach me some lessons from the primary reading books, yet sometimes I was more interested in the study of the New Testament than in the reading books.

I went to England early in 1883 in order to study and fit myself for my life work. When I first landed in England I was met by the kind Sisters of Wantage, to one of whom I had been introduced by Miss Hurford at St. Mary's Home in Poona. The Sisters took me to their Home, and began to teach me both secular and religious subjects. I owe an everlasting

debt of gratitude to them and to Miss Beale, the late Lady Principal of Cheltenham Ladies' College. These ladies took great pains with me, and taught me the subjects which would help me in my life.

The Mother Superior once sent me for a change to one of the branches of the Sisters' Home in London. The Sisters there took me to see the rescue work carried on by them. I met several of the women who had once been in their Rescue Home, but who had so completely changed, and were so filled with the love of Christ and compassion for suffering humanity that they had given their life for the service of the sick and infirm. Here for the first time in my life I came to know that something should be done to reclaim the so-called fallen women, and that Christians, whom Hindus considered outcasts and cruel, were kind to these unfortunate women, degraded in the eyes of society.

I had never heard, or seen, anything of the kind done for this class of women by the Hindus in my own country. I had not heard any one speaking kindly to them, nor seen any one making any effort to turn them from the evil path they had chosen in their folly. The Hindu Shastras do not deal kindly with these women. The law of the Hindu commands that the king shall cause the fallen women to be eaten by dogs in the outskirts of the town. They are considered the greatest sinners, and not worthy of compassion.

After my visit to the Homes at Fulham, where I saw this work of mercy carried on, I began to think that there was a real difference between Hinduism and Christianity. I asked the Sister who instructed me to tell me what it was that made the Christians care for and reclaim the "fallen" women. She read the story of Christ meeting the Samaritan woman,

and His wonderful discourse on the nature of true worship, and explained it to me. She spoke of the infinite love of Christ for sinners. He did not despise them, but came to save them. I had never read or heard anything like this in the religious books of the Hindus. I realised, after reading the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, that Christ was truly the Divine Saviour He claimed to be, and no one but He could transform and uplift the downtrodden womanhood of India and of every land

Thus my heart was drawn to the religion of Christ. I was intellectually convinced of its truth, and was baptised in the latter part of 1883 at Wantage. I was comparatively happy, and felt a great joy in finding a new religion which was better than any other I had known. I knew full well that it would displease my friends and my countrymen very much, but I have never regretted having taken the step. I was hungry for something better than what the Hindu Shastras gave. I found it in the Christian's Bible and was satisfied.

For five years after my baptism and confirmation I studied the Christian religion more thoroughly with the help of various books written on its doctrines. Although I was quite contented with my newly-found religion, so far as I understood it, still I was labouring under great intellectual difficulties, and my heart longed for something better which I had not found. I came to know, after eight years from the time of my baptism, that I had found the Christian religion, which was good enough for me; but I had not found Christ, who is the Life of the religion and "the Light of every man that cometh into the world."

CHAPTER V

Good News for a Hindu Woman.

It was nobody's fault that I had not found Christ. He must have been preached to me from the beginning. My mind at that time had been too dull to grasp the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. The open Bible had been before me, but I had given much of my time to the study of other books about the Bible, and had not studied the Bible itself as I should have done. Hence my ignorance of many important doctrines taught in it. I gave up the study of other books about the Bible after my return home from America and took to reading the Bible regularly.

Following this course for about two years I became very unhappy in my mind. I was dissatisfied with my spiritual condition. One day I went to the *Bombay Guardian* Mission Press on some business. There I picked up a book called "From Death unto Life," written by Mr. Haslam, the evangelist. I read his experiences in this book with great interest. He, being a clergyman of the Church of England, had charge of a good parish, and was interested in all Christian activities connected with the Church. While he was holding conversation with a lady, a member of his Church, she told him that he was trying to build from the top. The lady meant to say he was not converted, and had not experienced regeneration and salvation in Christ.

I read his account of his conversion and work for Christ, then I began to consider where I stood and what my actual need was. I took the Bible and read portions of it, meditating on the messages which

God gave me. There were so many things I did not understand intellectually. One thing I knew by this time, that **I needed Christ, and not merely His religion.**

There were some of the old ideas stamped on my brain; for instance, I thought that repentance of sin and the determination to give it up was what was necessary for forgiveness of sin; that the rite of baptism was the means of regeneration; that my sins were truly washed away when I was baptised in the Name of Christ. These and such other ideas, which are akin to Hindu mode of religious thought, stuck to me. For some years after my baptism I had been comparatively happy to think that I had found a religion which gave its privileges equally to men and women; there was no distinction of caste, colour, or sex made in it. But I had failed to understand that we are "of God in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1. 30). I had failed to see the need of placing my implicit faith in Christ and His atonement in order to become a child of God by being born again of the Holy Spirit and justified by faith in the Son of God. My thoughts were not very clear on this and other points. I was desperate; I realised that I was not prepared to meet God, that sin had dominion over me, and I was not altogether led by the Spirit of God, and had not therefore received the Spirit of adoption, and had no witnesses of the Spirit that I was a child of God.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8. 14-16).

What was to be done? My thoughts could not, and did not, help me. I had at last come to an end of myself, and unconditionally surrendered myself to the Saviour, and asked Him to be merciful to me and to become my Righteousness and Redemption, and to take away all my sin.

Only those who have been convicted of sin and have seen themselves as God sees them under similar circumstances can understand what one feels when a great and unbearable burden is rolled away from one's heart. I shall not attempt to describe how and what I felt at the time when I made an unconditional surrender, and knew I was accepted to be a branch of the true Vine, a child of God by adoption in Christ Jesus my Saviour. Although it is impossible for me to tell all that God has done for me, I must yet praise Him and thank Him for His lovingkindness to me, the greatest of sinners. The Lord first of all showed me the sinfulness of sin and the awful danger I was in, of everlasting Hell-fire, and the great love of God with which He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." And He gave this Son to be the propitiation for my sin, for does not the inspired Apostle say, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2. 1-2).

The Bible says that God does not wait for me to merit His love, but heaps it upon me without my deserving it. It says also that there is neither male nor female in Christ.

"The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely

by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3. 22-26).

Compared to her experience

I do not know if any one of my readers has ever had the experience of being shut up in a room where there was nothing but thick darkness, and then groping in it to find something of which he or she was in dire need. I can think of no one but the blind man, whose story is given in John 9. He was born blind, and remained so for forty years of his life, and then suddenly he found the Mighty One, who could give him eyesight. Who could have described his joy at seeing the daylight, when there had not been a particle of hope of his ever seeing it? Even the inspired evangelist has not attempted to do it. I can give only a faint idea of what I felt when my mental eyes were opened, and when I, who was "sitting in darkness, saw great light," and when I felt sure that to me who, but a few moments ago, "sat in the region and shadow of death, light had sprung up." I was very like the man who was told, "In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." "And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God."

I looked to the blessed Son of God who was lifted up on the Cross and there suffered death, even the death of the Cross, in my stead, that I might be made free from the bondage of sin and from the fear of death, and I received life. Oh, the love, the unspeakable love, of the Father for me, a lost sinner,

which gave His only Son to die for me! I had not merited this love, but that was the very reason why He showed it toward me.

How very different the truth of God was from the false idea that I had entertained from my earliest childhood. That was, that I must have merit to earn present or future happiness, the pleasure of Svarga, or the utterly inconceivable lost condition of Moksha or liberation. This I could never hope for, for a woman, as a woman, has no hope of Moksha according to Hindu religion. The Brahmin priests have tried to deceive the women and the Shudras and other low caste people into the belief that they have some hope; but when we study for ourselves the books of the religious law, and inquire from the higher authorities, we find that there is nothing, no nothing, whatever for us.

They say that women and Shudras and other low caste people can gain Svarga by serving the husband and the Brahmin. But the happiness of Svarga does not last long. The final blessed state to which the Brahmin is entitled is not for women and low caste people. But here this blessed Book, the Christian's Bible, says:

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...For...when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. 5. 6-10).

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us,

and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4. 9, 10).

How good, how indescribably good! What good news—for me, a woman; a woman born in India among Brahmins, who hold out no hope for me and the like of me. The Bible declares that Christ did not reserve this great salvation for a particular caste or sex.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1. 12, 13). "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2. 11). "The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3. 4, 5).

No caste, no sex, no work, and no man was to be depended upon to get salvation, this everlasting life; but God gave it freely to any one and every one who believed on His Son, whom He sent to be the "propitiation for our sins." And there was not a particle of doubt left as to whether this salvation was a present one or not. I had not to wait till after undergoing births and deaths for countless millions of times, when I should become a Brahmin man, in order to get to know the Brahma. And then, was there any joy and happiness to be hoped for? No, there is nothing but to be amalgamated into nothingness—Shunya, Brahma.

The Son of God says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5. 24).



JIVUBAI, WITH MISS ABRAMS



MR. AND MRS. M'KENZIE, NEW ZEALAND Page 148

“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that *ye have eternal life*, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God” (1 John 5. 9-13).

The Holy Spirit made it clear to me from the Word of God that the salvation which God gives through Christ is present, and not something future. I believed it, I received it, and was filled with joy.

* * * * *

Sixteen years ago a new leaf was turned in my life. Since then I have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, and have the joy of sweet communion with Him; my life is full of joy, “For the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.” Now I know what the prophet means by saying, “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” I can scarcely contain the joy and keep it to myself. I feel like the Samaritan woman who “left her waterpot and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

I feel I must tell my fellow-creatures what great things the Lord Jesus has done for me, and I feel sure as it was possible for Him to save such a great sinner as I am He is quite able to save others. The only

thing that must be done by me is to tell people of Him and of His love for sinners and His great power to save them.

My readers will not therefore find fault with me for making this subject so very personal. The heart experiences of an individual are too sacred to be exposed to the public gaze. Why then should I give them to the public in this way? Because a "necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9. 16). I am bound to tell as many men and women as possible that Christ Jesus came to save sinners like me. He has saved me, praise the Lord! I know "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7. 25).

God has given me a practical turn of mind. I want to find out the truth about everything, including religion, by experiment. I experimented on the religion in which I was born; I did not leave a stone unturned, as it were, as far as I knew, not only in the way of studying books, but of doing myself what the books prescribed. I have seen many others also doing the same thing. I saw them doing everything that was commanded them. The sad end was that I found they were not saved by it, nor was I. It was a dire spiritual necessity that drove me to seek help from other sources. I had to give up all pride of our ancestral religion being old, etc., which is preventing many of my countrypeople from finding Christ, although they know well that they have not got the joy of salvation. They can never have it except in Christ.

There are, I know, many hungry souls, and maybe some of them might be helped by reading this account. I would urge upon such brothers and sisters to make haste and come forward and accept the great love of

God expressed in Christ Jesus, and not to neglect "so great salvation," which God gives freely (Heb. 2. 1-3).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4. 12).

Do not therefore lose time through pride or because of any other difficulty. The caste may put you out, your near and dear ones will perhaps reject you and persecute you, you may very likely lose your temporal greatness and riches; but never mind, the great salvation which you will get in Christ by believing on Him and confessing Him before men is worth all the great sacrifices you can possibly make. Yes, and more than that, for all the riches, and all the gain, and all the joys of the world, do not begin to compare with the JOY OF SALVATION.

On the other hand, of what use are all the riches and greatness of the world if you are condemned to the second death, and are to live in the lake of fire for ever and ever, suffering indescribable agonies from which there is no relief?

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8. 36-37).

I would urge on you, dear brother and sister, to make haste and get reconciled with God through Christ. For the great day of judgment is fast coming on us, so make haste and flee from the wrath of God, which you and I have justly merited. God is love, and He is waiting patiently for you to accept His great salvation, so despise not "the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering," and know "that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2. 4).

CHAPTER VI.

Spiritual Helps from Various Sources.

It would make the story too long if I were to tell all that happened to me after I found Christ. I was greatly helped in my spiritual life by attending several mission services conducted by Dr. Pentecost, Mr. Haslam, Mr. Wilder, Mr. Reeve, and other missionaries. I received another spiritual uplift by attending religious services conducted by Rev. Gelson Gregson in 1895 at the Lanouli Camp Meeting.

I found it a great blessing to realise the personal presence of the Holy Spirit in me, and to be guided and taught by Him. I have experienced the sweet pleasure promised by the Lord in Psalm 32. 8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye."

The Holy Spirit taught me how to appropriate every promise of God in the right way and to obey His voice. I am sorry to say that I have failed to obey Him many a time, but He tenderly rebukes and shows me my faults. Many a time He finds it most necessary to punish me in various ways. His promise is: "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30. 11). I have many failures, and am corrected as the Lord sees fit. It is always helpful to be shown that His hand is in everything that happens. Then no room is left for murmuring. Whenever I heed and obey the Lord's voice with all my heart I am very happy, and everything goes right. Even the tests of faith, and difficulties, and afflictions become great blessings.

Since the year 1891 I have tried to witness for



MAMI (RAMABAI'S SISTER-IN-LAW) AND KRUPA,
HER ADOPTED DAUGHTER



A LITTLE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

Krupa was picked up on the road as a small baby, and taken to Pandita Ramabai, where she grew into this fine little girl of four years old. About this time some famine waifs, who had been brought to Mukti, were formed into an infant class. Observing that their teacher had tried in vain to arouse their interest, Ramabai sent for Krupa, who soon had the little ones beating time with their hands, and singing after her, "Jesus loves me "

Christ in my weakness, and I have always found that it is the greatest joy of Christian life to tell people of Christ and of His great love for sinners.

About twelve years ago I read the inspiring books, "The Story of the China Inland Mission," "The Lord's Dealings with George Muller," and "The Life of John G. Paton, founder of the New Hebrides Mission." I was greatly impressed with the experiences of these three great men, Mr. Hudson Taylor, Mr. Muller, and Mr. Paton, all of whom have gone to be with the Lord. I wondered, after reading their lives, if it were not possible to trust the Lord in India as in other countries. I wished very much that there were some missions founded in this country which would be a testimony to the Lord's faithfulness to His people and the truthfulness of what the Bible says in a practical way.

I questioned in my mind over and over again why some missionaries did not come forward to found Faith Missions in this country. Then the Lord said to me, "Why don't you begin to do this yourself, instead of wishing for others to do it? How easy it is for any one to wish that some one else would do a difficult thing instead of doing it himself." I was greatly rebuked by the "still, small voice" which spoke to me. I did not know then that there were some Faith Missions in India. Since then I have come to know that there are a few; and I thank God for setting them up here and there as great beacon lights.

At the end of 1896, when the great famine came on this country, I was led by the Lord to step forward and start new work, trusting Him for both temporal and spiritual blessings. I can testify with all my heart that I have always found the Lord faithful. "Faithful is He that calleth you" (1 Thess. 5. 24).

This golden text has been written with the life-blood of Christ on my heart. The Lord has done countless great things for me. I do not deserve His loving-kindness; I can testify to the truth of Psalm 103. 10: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

Here are some of the things which the Lord has been teaching me since He brought this Mukti Mission into existence:

1. "Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him" (Isa. 64. 4).
2. "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. 1. 20).
3. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. 11. 29).
4. My unbelief shall not "make the faith of God without effect" (Rom. 3. 3).
5. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Psa. 25. 14).
6. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1. 7).
7. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1. 15).

In short, the Lord has been teaching me His Word by His Spirit, and unfolding the wonders of His works day by day. I have come to believe the Word of God implicitly, and I have found out by experience that IT IS TRUE. I praise God and thank Him for His mercies to me and mine. Hallelujah!

I feel very happy since the Lord called me to step out in faith, and I obeyed. To depend upon Him for everything, for spiritual life, for bodily health, for advice, for food, water, clothing, and all other necessities of life—in short, to realise by experiment that the promises of God in Philippians 4. 6, 19, and in other parts of the Holy Scriptures, are true is most blessed.

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“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. 4. 6).

“I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it” (Psa. 81. 10).

“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes” (Psa. 118. 8, 9).

I am spared all trouble and care, casting my burden upon the Lord. There are over 1500 people living here; we are not rich, nor great, but we are happy, getting our daily bread directly from the loving hands of our Heavenly Father, having not a *pice* over and above our daily necessities, having no banking account anywhere, no endowment or income from any earthly source, but depending altogether on our Father God; we have nothing to fear from anybody, nothing to lose, and nothing to regret. The Lord is our *inexhaustible treasure*.

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deut. 33. 27). We are confidently resting in His arms, and He is loving and faithful in all His dealings with us. How can I express in words the gratitude I feel toward such a Father, and the joy that fills my heart because of His goodness?

“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Psa. 103. 1-5).

CHAPTER VII.

The Second Advent. A Delightful Experience.

NINETEEN years ago I started from the city of Philadelphia and went to San Francisco in response to the kind invitation sent by some good friends who took a deep interest in the well-being of the women of India. I lived in the latter city for more than four months, and sailed from the "Golden Gate" for Bombay, via Japan and China.

God, in His great goodness, gave me faithful and true friends in America, who promised to help me in my work. That work, in the beginning, was a purely educational one, and religious liberty was to be given to the inmates of my school, and all plans were made to start the Home for Widows as soon as I should land in Bombay.

The day for sailing from San Francisco arrived. I felt as if I were going to a strange country and to a strange people. Everything seemed quite dark before me. I fell on my knees, committed myself to the care of our loving Heavenly Father, and sailed.

When starting from San Francisco, and on landing in Bombay, I had resolved in my mind that although no direct religious instruction was to be given to the inmates of my Home, yet I would daily read the Bible aloud and pray to the only true God in the Name of Christ; that my countrywomen, seeing and hearing what was going on, might be led to inquire about the true religion and the way of salvation. There were only two day pupils in my school when it was started. No one was urged to become a Christian, nor com-

pelled to study the Bible. But the Book was placed in the library along with other religious books. The daily testimony to the goodness of the true God awakened new thoughts in many a heart.

After the first ten years of our existence as a school our constitution was changed slightly. Since then every pupil admitted in the school has been receiving religious instruction, retaining perfect liberty of conscience.

Many hundreds of the girls and young women who have come to my Home ever since its doors were opened for them have found Christ as I have. They are capable of thinking for themselves. They have had their eyes opened by reading the Word of God, and many of them have been truly converted and saved to the praise and glory of God. I thank God for letting me see several hundreds of my sisters, the children of my love and prayer, gloriously saved. All this was done by God in answer to the prayers of faith of thousands of His faithful servants in all lands, who are constantly praying for us all.

✓ I was led by the Lord to start a special prayer circle at the beginning of 1905. There were about seventy of us who met together each morning and prayed for the true conversion of all the Indian Christians, including ourselves, and for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all Christians of every land. In six months from the time we began to pray in this manner the Lord graciously sent a glorious Holy Ghost revival among us, and also in many schools and churches in this country. The results of this have been most satisfactory. Many hundreds of our girls and some of our boys have been gloriously saved, and many of them are serving God witnessing for Christ at home and in other places.

I have responded to the Lord's challenge, "Prove

Me now" (Mal. 3. 10), and have found Him faithful and true. I know He is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. His promise, "My people shall never be ashamed" (Joel 2. 16), and all the thousands of His promises are true. I entreat you, my readers, to prove the Lord as I have proved Him.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Psa. 34. 8-10).

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy: and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa. 107. 1-9).

This has been literally fulfilled in me and mine. I praise the Lord who has done great things for us. Hallelujah, Amen.

The most precious truth which I have learnt since my conversion is the second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. I firmly believe, as taught in the Bible, that the Lord Jesus Christ is Coming soon. He will most certainly come, and will not tarry.

The signs of the times in the last decade have taught me to be waiting for Him. I was totally ignorant of this particular subject. It is not generally taught in this country. The missionaries connected with some denominations do not believe in it at all. They believe that Christ will come to judge the quick and the dead at the time of the last judgment, but they do not think He will come for His servants before the time of the resurrection of the dead and before the final judgment.

Shortly after my conversion I began to read many books on the subject: the works of Mr. Middleton, Mr. Newberry, Dr. Grattan Guinness, and others. I have studied and continue to study the Book of Revelation with greatest interest and spiritual profit. There is nothing like the Word of God, which teaches everything clearly. There is nothing so helpful as to study the Bible itself, aided by a good Concordance.

The hope of the appearing of our Saviour to take His redeemed ones to be with Him has been a great help to me in my Christian life. I praise the Lord for the great promise of His Coming and His counsel to watch and pray (Matt. 24. 42, and Mark 13. 33).

One day, as I was getting ready for my afternoon work, one of my fellow-workers came to the door of the office, followed by the Collector of Poona. Both told me that His Excellency the Governor of Bombay had come to visit Mukti. I was taken by surprise, for I never thought that the Governor would ever come to such an out-of-the-way place and visit an unpretending institution which had not earned popularity by great achievements, or by courting the favour of the great men of the country. In a few moments my surprise vanished, giving way to perfect pleasure at finding the Governor so simple and

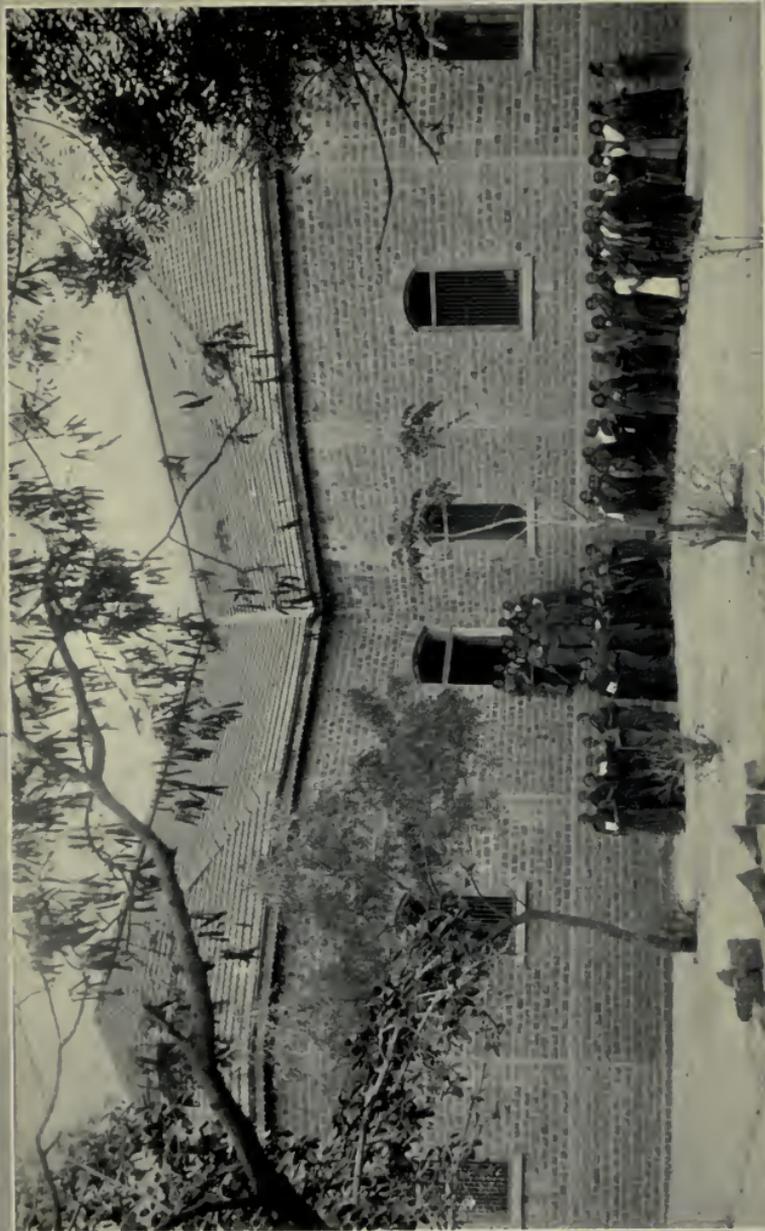
natural in his manner, though he was very dignified and grand.

It was delightful to see the greatest man of this Presidency taking kindly notice of every one who happened to come in his way, inquiring with interest of every little detail concerning the work. He seemed to be well acquainted with what was going on here. After inspecting all parts of the Mission, he bade us good-bye and went away. It was a very pleasant surprise, and we shall never forget his visit and kindness to us all.

As we did not know about his visit we had not made any preparations to receive him, so he saw us as we were; some walking about, some idly sitting where they were, some doing their work properly, some sweeping the ground and doing other house-work, some dressed well and tidily, others in rags with unkempt hair, some giving themselves to their lessons and industry with diligence, and some just looking into the air, doing nothing and thinking about nothing particular.

It does one good to be taken by surprise in this way. The one great thought that filled my heart while the Governor was here, and after he went away, leaving a very pleasant impression on our mind, was that our Lord Jesus Christ is Coming some day just in this manner, and those of us who are prepared to meet Him will have the joy of being caught up in the air to be with Him. How blessed it will be not to have anything to be afraid of, or anything that belongs to the enemy, to be able to say with our blessed Saviour, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,



GIRLS COMING OUT OF THE CHURCH AT MUKTI



A MUKTI FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN YOUNG WOMEN ORGANISED BY
MISS MARY BERKIN, WHO IS SEEN ON THE RIGHT

righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2. 11-14).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21. 34-36).

If I were to write all that the Lord has done for me, even as much as it lies in my power to do so, the book would be too large for a person to read, so I have made the account of my spiritual experience as short as possible. I am very glad and very thankful to the Lord for making it possible for me to give this testimony of the Lord's goodness to me. My readers will scarcely realise the great spiritual needs of all my countrywomen, and of my countrymen, too. The people of this land are steeped in sin, and are sitting in a terrible darkness. May the Father of lights send them light and life by His chosen ones! We need witnesses for Christ and His great salvation, freely offered to all men.

Dear brother and sister, whoever may happen to read this testimony, may you realise your responsibility to give the Gospel of Jesus Christ to my people in this land, and pray for them that they may each and all be cleansed from their filthiness and from all their idols, that they may find the true way of salvation.

My prayer for those readers who have not yet been saved is that they may seek and find Christ Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, for the salvation of their souls.

“Our citizenship is in Heaven; from whence also we wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3. 20).

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1. 5, 6).

RAMABAI.

MUKTI, KEDGAON, POONA DISTRICT,
July, 1907.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Famine that Brought Salvation.

IN her "Testimony" Ramabai has briefly foreshadowed much that remains to be elucidated in the following pages. I take up the thread of events six months after the Lanouli Camp Meeting, in which that remarkable assurance of increase was given to her by the Holy Spirit.

Immediately on her return an early morning prayer meeting was instituted at the Sharada Sadan. The little band of Christians joined with Ramabai and her faithful friend, Soonderbai Powar, in waiting on the Lord. In those early morning hours they pleaded promise after promise before the Throne of Grace, and both teachers and pupils learned better than ever before the blessedness of asking great things of God, and praising Him for prayers answered and promises fulfilled.

The Lord was already working by a way that Ramabai did not at first recognise. In the autumn of that year, 1896, a serious famine arose in the Central Provinces of India. Simultaneously with this a time of straitness had set in at the Sharada Sadan. Less money had come from America, and expenses had to be curtailed. Ramabai was preparing herself for some new departure, she scarcely knew what, but she felt God would have her give up the salary she had hitherto received from the Boston Association, and trust Him to supply her personal needs. She began to inure herself to endure hardness, sleeping on the floor and banishing every semblance of luxury from her own apartments.

When the news reached her of the increasing famine in the Central Provinces, the thought came to her of the possibility of some widows suitable for her school coming from those parts. She put the thought aside. How was she to get the widows? And how were they to be supported?

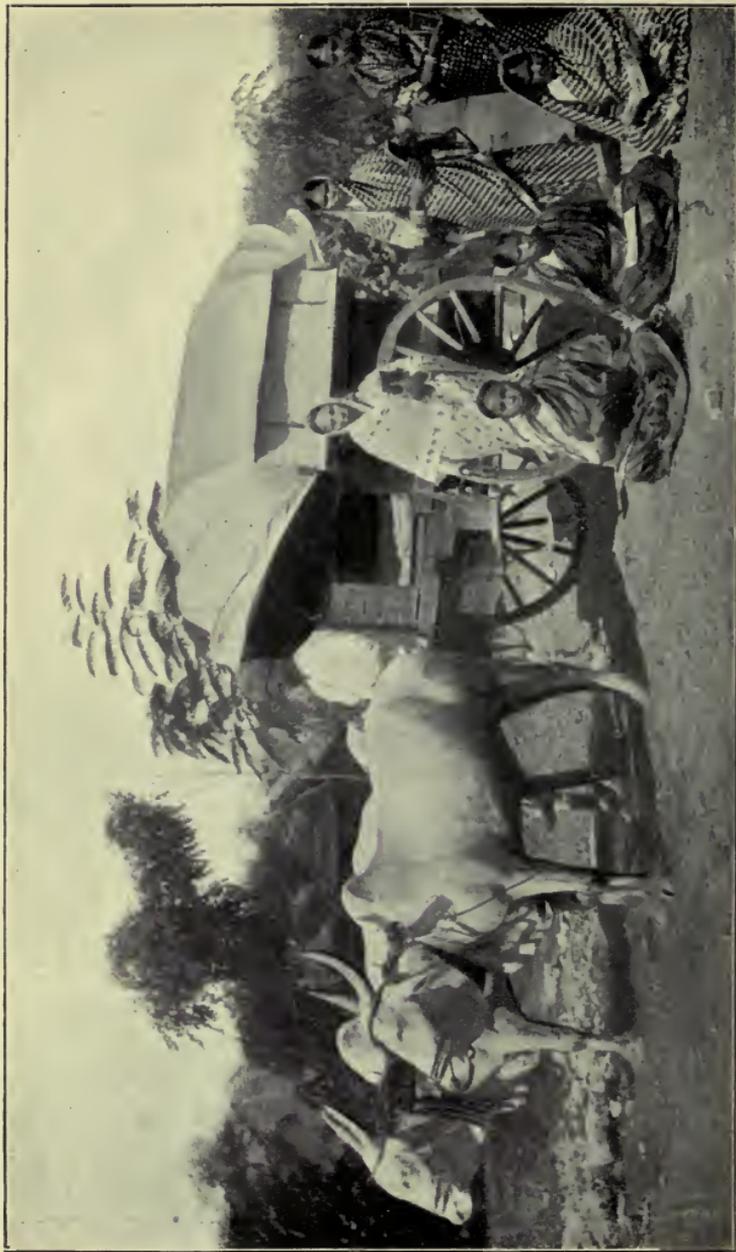
But the conflict in her mind became severe. Her own earthly experiences, the sufferings and death of her parents and sister came back to her mind with overwhelming force. She realised that God was speaking to her. She could not rest day nor night. At length she gathered what money she had in hand and started out in faith. In this the Lord was testing her. As soon as it was known that she had started to gather widows from the famine districts, one of His servants in Bombay sent money to help defray expenses; another called at the Sharada Sadan and left 100 rupees for current needs.

Ramabai was soon in the midst of such scenes of suffering as one can scarcely imagine. She described her feelings as those of agony and dismay. The Government had already begun to dispense relief in various centres. Hastily improvised buildings were erected, called "Poorhouses." Thither Ramabai and the friend who accompanied her resorted. She wrote: "The first Poorhouse we saw was no house at all. It was a grove in the outskirts of the town. Groups of famished people were sitting all around, and some were lying in heaps, or sitting or lying on ashes on the bare ground. Some had rags to cover their bodies, and some had none. Many were ill, too weak to move about.

"Old and young, bad men, immoral women, pure young girls, innocent children, all mixed together. They slept in the open air, and ate the scanty food provided by Government. This food was nothing



A BAND OF BIBLE WOMEN GOING IN TO THE CHURCH TO PRAY, BEFORE STARTING
FOR THE VILLAGES



MUKTI BIBLE WOMEN SETTING OUT TO VISIT THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES

but dry flour and salt. The orphan children, who had no one to cook for them, had either to eat the dry flour or depend on the tender mercies of the older people, who took much of the food away from them. Some of the parents even ate all the food and left their children to starve. Parents were seen offering their girl children for sale."

Ramabai was greatly distressed by the way in which the emissaries of the Evil One were at work in these camps. She said the officers employed by Government to look after these dying thousands were hard at work, but it was not possible for them to know what went on behind their backs. Wicked men and women were everywhere on the look out for young women and girls, who had been obliged to leave their homes and wander away in search of food.

Two girls were found on the roadside, aged about twelve and fourteen. The elder girl said she would like to come into Ramabai's Home, but begged with tears in her eyes that she should be allowed to lead a pure life and be put with good people. Since her father died many bad people were after her. Even while she was talking they were surrounded with bad men who tried to frighten them from going with Ramabai. But the Lord saved these sisters from the evil men, and they went to the refuge He had provided for them.

The condition of the rescued girls and women was most pitiable. No small task confronted Soonderbai Powar and the other workers who received them at the Sharada Sadan to restore them to anything like order and decent habits.

All were filthy in the extreme, clad in rags, suffering from sores, and all kinds of ailments. In the work of cleansing their bodies, shaving their heads, etc., the matrons and elder girls of the Sharada

Sadan rendered loving and unstinted service. The poor things needed constant watching, as the food given them failed for some time to satisfy their cravings. To have given them all they could eat would have been fatal. They had lived on garbage so long that they did not see why they should not continue to eat it.

When I saw them three months later, encamped under the trees in a pleasant country district a few miles out of Poona, they looked a promising party of young people. They were then beginning to put on flesh

When Ramabai had secured sixty girls and women from the famine area she returned to Poona. By this time she was deeply impressed with the clamant needs of the victims of famine. At this time she wrote the history of her own family's experiences of starvation twenty years before and of the condition of things as she had just found them in the Central Provinces, emphasising the fearful moral dangers to which young girls were exposed, and told how the Lord was calling her to save three hundred of these poor girls and train them for Him.

Ramabai's appeal reached the hearts of missionaries all over the country. It was printed as a Supplement to the *Bombay Guardian*, a Christian weekly paper of which my husband was the editor. Edition after edition was disposed of and sent to England, America, and elsewhere, and became no small factor in arousing sympathy for India's sufferings in Christian hearts the world over.

A *Bombay Guardian* Famine Fund was opened, and money began to come in freely. Orphanages were opened in all Missions in the famine area. In some places orphans were gathered and sent to other Missions in districts where there was no scarcity.

Ramabai's letter was like the disciples beckoning to their partners who were in the other ship. All wanted to have a hand in the good work of saving the children. Its influence will go on to all eternity!

Ramabai had scarcely started out on her second journey of rescue when she was called back to Poona through an outbreak of Bubonic Plague which had been raging in Bombay for several months.

New buildings to accommodate the girls from Central India had been commenced in the ample compound of the Sharada Sadan, but now the Municipal Authorities intervened and forbade the number of resident pupils to be increased. It was therefore needful to make other plans. Ramabai was equal to the emergency. She hired a number of tents, and sent the whole establishment into the country for the hot season under the care of Miss Soonderbai Powar.

A few years previously, while planning for the future support of the school, when the ten years should have elapsed for which the friends in America had undertaken its support, the plan came to Ramabai in answer to prayer, as she believed, to purchase a piece of ground in the country and plant it with fruit trees, the produce of which should yield a fair income after some years.

Two years later the money was in hand, and the purchase of the fruit farm an accomplished fact. The property was duly put in trust under the same board which held the Sharada Sadan. It consisted of a hundred acres, in which a good well had been dug and a kitchen garden planted to supply the school with vegetables. The major portion was occupied by hundreds of young orange, lime, and mango trees.

One very rocky portion remained which seemed

difficult to utilise. Ramabai's thoughts now turned to this piece of ground, a mere treeless waste, with no buildings on it. Yet it was here that the Lord was guiding her to begin the MUKTI MISSION.

Accordingly, when the rains began in June, the rescued girls of school age who were sufficiently recovered were lodged in a hired house near the Sharada Sadan, where they could share its benefits; while the older women, and those not yet fit for school were sent to the farm at Khedgaon, where sheds and grass huts were put up for their reception.

Some trustworthy young women from among the older converted girls were placed in charge, and the building of a large barn was put in hand in order to get a substantial roof over their heads as soon as possible.

Ramabai was much in prayer for guidance. She specially felt the need of some experienced Christian woman to take the oversight of this new colony. Those now in charge were but babes in Christ, not long out of heathenism themselves, and could not be expected to teach as well as care for the new comers.

Miss Minnie F. Abrams, who came to India in 1887 as a missionary of the M.E. Church, U.S.A., was for a considerable period in school work in Bombay. She had, however, been led to give up her salary for the maintenance allowance of a deaconess, and to itinerate in the country districts of Western India in order to reach the women in places where only men evangelists had hitherto worked. She was engaged thus with a tent and a Bible-woman when Ramabai began to gather the famine widows, and while located in Poona for the rainy season had taken charge of a band of older women at Ramabai's request. She was just beginning to arrange for another camping season when the Lord

unmistakably spoke to her and told her to go to Khedgaon.

Being accustomed to listen for and obey the voice of the Spirit, Miss Abrams called at the Sharada Sadan and told Soonderbai of her leadings. With tears running down her cheeks Soonderbai said, "This is what Ramabai and I have been praying for, for months. Ramabai was on the point of asking you, and then she said, 'No, let the Lord do it all, and then there will be no mistake.'"

When Ramabai returned after her temporary absence her practical question to Miss Abrams was, "When can you come?"

God marvellously removed all hindrances, and by the 15th of October Miss Abrams was installed at Khedgaon with her small family of widows and Bible-women.

The work of gathering in the victims of famine had continued with some interruptions during this period as far as Ramabai was concerned, but when she was detained in Poona it was taken up by her faithful Bible-woman, Gungubai, who visited Poorhouses, Relief Camps, and Mission Stations in the affected districts, and altogether gathered from five to six hundred starving women and children.

After all the girls and women really suitable for the Sharada Sadan had been selected, Ramabai passed on the remainder to various Mission Orphanages. She found she was left with just the three hundred that God had told her to take.

It was not the education of these girls from the famine districts with which Ramabai was most concerned, but their salvation from sin, and that they should turn from their idols and serve the living and true God, and wait for His Son from Heaven.

Their enlightenment was prayerfully sought from

the day they came under the roof of the Sharada Sadan, and the teaching of the Word of God and prayer soon began to make itself felt in their lives. None of them had ever been previously in contact with Christians. Ramabai had invited Rev. W. W. Bruere, of Poona, to hold special services at the Sharada Sadan in October, when the Spirit of God worked mightily and many asked for baptism. At the same time Miss Abrams was holding services at Khedgaon, preparing the way for a further mission by Mr. Bruere. Before that month closed seventy-three from the Sharada Sadan were baptised at Poona, including a number of the older girls and Mr. Gadre, Pandita Ramabai's clerk. He was a Brahmin of good education, who had long been convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, but had avoided facing the question of his personal salvation.

On the evening of 30th September Mr. Gadre had gone as far as Dhond Junction to see Ramabai off by train to Allahabad. There Miss Bruce, a missionary from Satara, met them. "Mr. Gadre," said she, "when are you going to decide for Christ?" Soon Miss Bruce took one train and Ramabai another, and while Mr. Gadre awaited a return train to Khedgaon that question pierced him through and through. The sins of his whole life confronted him. He felt he had come to his last opportunity, and decided to confess Christ before the midnight hour. This he did by dispatching a telegram to Ramabai as soon as his train reached Khedgaon.

Thus it came to pass that he and his younger children were among that first baptismal party. This was a rich reward to Ramabai for all the long-suffering patience with which she had treated Mr. Gadre when he had acted against her interests in

cases where his co-religionists, the Brahmas, were concerned.

Mr. Bruere's mission at Khedgaon was equally successful. The young women there had never been in a Church, nor had any sort of education. They had to be taught how to read as well as how to kneel and pray, and to sing. Miss Abrams said, "The Holy Spirit alone could cause them to understand the spiritual meaning of worship. After a number had the witness that they were saved we had a praise meeting, but they did not know how to praise God. One large, ungainly young woman, most illiterate, clasped her hands and began to pray in a very awkward way, so that the girls near her began to titter. She heeded them not, but poured out such a list of sins in confession, pleaded the atoning blood, and closed with the most beautiful volume of praise ever heard. When she sat down the girls were all in tears; it dawned on them that Kashebai had really praised God! From that time on they were able to join in a praise meeting."

Mr. Bruere said that 6th November was the red-letter day of his life, when seventeen cartloads of the converts went to the Bhima River, six miles distant, and were immersed in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They sang all the way to the river for very joy, which could not be suppressed.

On Christmas Day Ramabai gathered all the girls for their first real Christmas, and related to them the story of how she had been led and sustained by God in gathering them and caring for them.

On the following Sunday Mr. Bruere and Miss Abrams organised the Mukti Church, appointing some of the older women as officers, and taking the Bible only as their creed. A Sunday school was also organised, and thus began a work which has con-

stantly grown and furnished many workers, not only for Ramabai's work, but for many other Missions. Ramabai rejoiced so at those spiritual developments that she could not wait for another Lanouli Camp Meeting, but said she must have one of her own at Khedgaon.

A goodly number of missionaries and Indian Christians gathered in response to her invitation when the New Settlement was dedicated to God by the name of MUKTI (*i.e.*, Salvation). The large barn served for meetings, and the visitors were accommodated in grass huts.

CHAPTER IX.

New Departures and More Famine.

THE ten years for which the Ramabai Association in America had pledged the support of the Sharada Sadan came to an end in March, 1898. Ramabai was then urged to visit America to assist in re-organising the work and placing it on a firm basis in view of recent developments and increasing needs. With Miss Abrams in charge at Mukti, and Soonderbai Powar at Poona, it became possible for her to accept the invitation. She left India in January, and returned the following August.

During the ten years alluded to the Ramabai Association had sent her \$91,500, with which she had helped nearly 500 widows, deserted wives, and destitute girls, and at its close she had property valued at \$60,000. The Association was disbanded and the property transferred to Ramabai without a legal trust, which indicates the reliance on her faith and ability.

The Association was now reorganised to support the Sharada Sadan indefinitely, but Ramabai decided that it was best not to hold the property in her name, so transferred it back to the new Association.

Up to the date of her departure money had come in to meet all needs, permanent buildings were put in hand, the rocky portion of the ground being quarried yielded an ample supply of most desirable building material, and the Lord had provided an honest man to oversee the work. Miss Abrams was left in charge, with instructions to proceed as far as funds were forthcoming, but to stop the work rather than go into

debt. On one or two brief occasions the work was stopped, but the Lord appeared in times of difficulty and disaster was averted.

The times were not propitious for work in America, and Ramabai longed to return. On the way home she was privileged to attend the Keswick Convention. She said: "While there I received much blessing, and was greatly refreshed in my spirit. My heart was filled with joy to see nearly 4000 people seeking and finding the deep things of God. At that time the Lord led me to ask those present to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all Indian Christians. Five minutes were given me to speak, and I made the very best use of them. I requested God's people to pray that 100,000 men and 100,000 women from among the Indian Christians may be led to preach the Gospel to their country people."

As Ramabai travelled back to India this thought dwelt on her mind. On arrival she enlarged upon it in a letter to a Bombay Christian paper. She said how glad she was to be once more in her own country, and as she had set her foot ashore in a great downpour of rain, so she had asked the Lord "to pour down heavy showers of the Holy Spirit, that the land might be cleansed from all its sins and idols." She impressed on the Indian Christians their bounden duty to give the Gospel to their heathen fellow-countrymen. "Saved to serve" was ever the thought pressed upon her own converts.

While in America Ramabai met Mr. and Mrs. Albert Norton, missionaries, who had already spent a long term of service in India. The needs of their own family of sons had detained them in America, but these were now pushing out into the world for themselves. Ramabai encouraged the parents to return to India, and they did so a few months later.

A Christian lady living in the same city (Rochester, New York), who with her sisters carried on a local mission combined with a Training Home for Workers, was impressed by the Holy Spirit that she should accompany them, though what she was to do in India was not revealed to her.

On arrival she proceeded to Mukti with the Nortons, as she thought to see the work and then go up north to visit one of her own trained workers who had come to India a few months previously. Ramabai gave Mrs. Baker the same cordial welcome which she always extended to missionary visitors, and she became greatly interested in the work at Mukti. Still she did not at first realise that God had sent her to do anything there, but every time she essayed to move she was held back.

Among the famine girls received by Ramabai were several who had been sinned against by wicked men, who, for reasons of health and morals, could not be safely placed among the other pupils. The condition of these poor girls was laid upon Mrs. Baker's heart while praying and inquiring of the Lord what was the reason she could not move on. God made her feel He wanted Ramabai to add a department to her work specially for such girls.

It had long been laid on Ramabai's heart to do something for them, but her way had seemed hedged up. Together they prayed over the matter. One of Ramabai's chief difficulties had been the want of a worker qualified for the post of superintendent of such a department, but as they prayed light arose. Mrs. Baker wrote to her friend in North India who had come out to work among the same class of girls. The opening at Ramabai's appealed to her; she came, and a Home was opened, an old building being utilised for the purpose.

Miss Edmonds had been matron of a similar Home in America. When she took charge of these poor girls, the six that were already at Mukti, they asked: "Are you the one your God has sent to take care of us? When Ramabai said she could not keep us, but must send us away, where could we go? We knew there was no place for us in India, so we prayed to the English God, to Ramabai's God, to send some of His people to help us and take care of us so that we could live right; and did He send you in answer to our prayers?"

"Think of it," said Mrs. Baker, "these poor heathen girls crying to an unknown God for some one to help them lead a pure life! And who will not say that in answer to that cry God sent me from far-away America, and Miss Edmonds, from a thousand miles north of Khedgaon, to help Ramabai with what was long upon her heart, but which her full hands made impossible."

The six girls soon increased to twenty, and a special building was wanted; but Ramabai had no funds as yet for this special work, and thought she should wait till money came in. Shortly before, Ramabai had purchased a plot of twenty-two acres of ground on the opposite side of the Government road adjoining the Mukti property in order to prevent a liquor dealer from settling there. This was now set apart for the site of the Rescue Home, and a well being the first necessity was commenced with the first available money.

Mrs. Baker now felt that her mission was accomplished, and prepared to return to America. She said to Ramabai that she had hoped to see the foundation of the new Home laid before she left. A few hours afterwards Ramabai came to her and said the Lord was telling her to lay the corner-stone in

faith. Accordingly a day or two later all the teachers and helpers gathered with Ramabai at sunset, and an impressive service was held. The stone was laid by Mr. Norton, Mrs. Baker and others taking part. Ramabai, standing on the mound of earth thrown up by the excavation, told the story of the new Home. About one hundred workmen were present who were employed on other buildings about the place.

Ramabai talked like one inspired, described the sad condition of those for whom this Home was intended, and of the love of God for the sinning, the forsaken, and the outcast. She told them how she was laying the foundation of a building which would cost thousands of rupees with an empty pocket, but with a mighty God back of it all, and of the way the Lord had led in beginning the work.

Mrs. Baker returned to America, where (and in England also) she told the story and helped to obtain the money for the completion of the Rescue Home, which three years later was filled with 300 inmates.

Miss Edmonds remained for about a year at Mukti, establishing the rescue department and seeing some fruit of her labours, when she left to establish a similar work in another part of the country, the Lord sending other workers to continue at Mukti what she had begun.

The interest aroused in Mrs. Baker's circle at Rochester, New York State, has continued through all these years. Mrs. Baker received her home-call in 1914, but her sisters still carry on an institution on faith lines which sends missionaries to many unevangelised countries. In every contribution list they publish there is always a portion for Ramabai.

Another Severe Famine

visited India in 1900. This time it was not the Central Provinces it affected so much as the Bombay

Presidency, including the large and fertile Province of Gujerat, in which there had been no famine for the previous hundred years. It surged up to Ramabai's very doors. There had been scarcity for three years, and the building work at Mukti had already been a boon to the surrounding villages. In August, 1899, famine was officially declared; the wells dried up, the fruit trees planted round them withered away, the cattle yielded so little milk that it could only be provided for the babies, as there was no grass, and vegetables were an impossibility.

Ramabai wrote: "One morning nearly two hundred starving people came into our compound as I went out early to see what could be done to save the dying fruit trees. The people literally besieged me; the women took hold of my hand and begged for work. I was so overcome by this sight that I could only say a few words to comfort them, and invited them to come into our barn and join in prayer to God for the salvation of their souls and bodies. All followed me silently and sat down in as orderly and reverent a manner as any Christian congregation to hear the Gospel and to ask God for rain and food. All heard the glad tidings of a Saviour's love, and of God the Father of us all, who is ever ready to hear and answer prayer...

"Sixty were employed at once, and others told to come later on as there was no work for them this week. Some went away disappointed, others sat around as if determined never to leave the premises till they got work. Little boys and girls spoke in such a piteous manner that I could not but promise to employ them all. But they would not leave till all their names were written on the roll, and they got a positive promise of employment next week.

"Here was a living illustration of perseverance in

prayer. I thought to myself: If I, being evil, cannot do less than help these people as far as in my power, 'how much more' (yea, how infinitely more) will our Heavenly Father do for us here at Mukti if we would besiege His Throne with one accord? We can only help a few of these starving men and women. The Lord has put it in the heart of a generous friend to send us money for the Mukti school building. It has come just in time to help these poor people. The laying of the foundation has commenced. One Hindu man has confessed his faith in Christ, and was baptised in the presence of more than two hundred villagers, the first fruit of Mukti Mission as far as outsiders are concerned."

It is delightful to know how the Lord provided for His children during that year of drought. In her report for 1900, Ramabai wrote: "Two of our large wells were quite dried up, and very little water left in our other two wells. Many of our friends were praying that God would give us water—and so He did. Although there was none for cultivating the vegetable garden, God gave water for all our people. More than 1900 people, besides over one hundred cattle and the buildings that are fast going up, required a great deal of water. Each of the two wells had all its contents used up every day; every evening one could see the bottom of the wells, and would wonder where the water would come from for tomorrow! But there came a fresh supply in the morning in each well, and it lasted all day.

"So day by day the Lord gave us water and the bread that was needed to fill so many hungry mouths. We cannot but wonder at the loving kindness of our Father in Heaven, and praise Him every moment of our lives."

Although Ramabai could not now leave the large

work at Mukti to gather famine waifs from other places, she sent nearly twenty helpers into different districts. Eight of them were women who had been saved from starvation in 1896. They had learned to know the Lord, and now went forth constrained by the love of Christ to help their sisters in distress.

In 1896 the pupils of the Sharada Sadan had willingly cared for the famine sufferers and nursed them back to life and health. Now the Central India girls, together with them, gladly took their turn in helping the newcomers, and thus the need of workers was supplied. Ramabai wrote: "It seems to me that these girls were sent here by special providence of God to get training to care for their sisters who have come from this present famine. God has given me out of these Central India girls a band of at least 150 noble young women who are working for their Gujerathi sisters incessantly day and night. There are forty-five matrons, each one has thirty girls under her care, to whom they are proving real mothers."

From this famine Ramabai took in more than 1500 girls from Gujerat, Rajputana, and the surrounding country, besides hundreds rescued by her workers and sent to various Mission Orphanages. Mr. and Mrs. Norton opened a Boys' Orphanage at Dhond, ten miles from Mukti, where the brothers of many of the girls who were kept at Mukti were sent. These numbered eight hundred at one time.

While the work of gathering girls and young women was going on some zealous friends asked Ramabai how long it was to continue? Should she not be satisfied with five or six hundred, as her resources were so limited? Her reply was characteristic. "It is true that my resources are limited; not only that, but *I* am literally penniless, with no income of any kind. I own nothing on earth but a few clothes and



BEFORE AND AFTER

A victim of the dreadful famine as she came to Pandita's.

After being cared for and trained, now a noble Bible Woman



FAMINE'S SAD WORK
A BENGALI CHRISTIAN WOMAN, MINISTERING TO A GIRL SUFFERER

my Bible. My friends may well wonder how I am going to support and educate all these girls for years to come. It is not difficult to answer the questions that are rising in my mind and the minds of my friends.

“I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. His resources are limitless, and He has promised to supply all my needs. ‘The silver and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts,’ and He will send all that is necessary; not because I desire it, but because He is so loving and merciful. ‘Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is in God.’”

The survivors from this 1900 famine numbered more than 1350 girls and young women, 150 being under seven years of age, 500 between seven and fourteen, 600 from fourteen to twenty, the rest older, but under thirty years of age. These were all illiterate, so the first thing was to organise a school and enlarge and add to the industries, so that all might learn some useful work.

Fifty of the brightest of the Central India girls were organised into a Normal school for training teachers. The new girls were divided into fifty classes, with the kindergarten taking 400 of them, and thus all were soon busy, half a day in the industrial department and the rest of the time at their books. The garden and fields, the oil press and dairy, the laundry and bakery, the making of plain Indian garments, caps, lace, buttons, ropes, brooms and baskets, the spinning of wool and cotton, the weaving of blankets, rugs, *saries*, and other cloth, embroidery and various sorts of fancy work, thread winding, grain parching, tinning of cooking vessels, and lastly a printing press, furnished employment suited to all capacities.

CHAPTER X.

Life Stories of Some Mukti Pupils.

UNDER the title of "The Angel who Brought Me a Message from the Unknown God," Ramabai has written the story of her first widow, Thakubai, whom she befriended when herself a young widow living in Poona. This child, brought to her by a neighbour, was about twelve years old, a poor little Brahmin orphan, deserted by her relatives, she was picking up a precarious living on the streets of Poona. She was most unprepossessing in appearance, had a cast in her eyes, very dark and plain of feature. Married at the age of five, her boy husband died shortly after, and the mother-in-law said she had a demon and had swallowed her husband!

The day she was brought to Ramabai had been a very hard one. She had been cruelly persecuted by some bad boys, who chased her and threw stones and mud. She told Ramabai that she would rather die of starvation than wander about begging for food. She was afraid of these bad boys and of the pariah dogs which flew at her heels. Ramabai's heart was touched for the poor child; she took her in to share her own humble fare, with the proviso she must cook her own food, as she was keeping caste and Ramabai was not.

Ramabai's kind heart was full of joy to see the look of happy gratitude that came over the poor little wizen face as she realised she now had a home and a friend; and thoughts came crowding into her mind as to the blessedness of doing something for poor forsaken widows. Gradually these thoughts took

shape, and the plan of a Home for widows was formed in her mind. Afterwards she felt this was a message to her soul from the unknown God, who was thus foreshadowing her life-work, and showing how the great hollow in her heart could be filled up with a great purpose.

She mentioned her thoughts to the leaders of the Reform Hindus, among whom she was working in Poona, but failed to arouse any practical sympathy on this part. When she left India for England a few months later one friend in this community who was interested in the effort agreed to support Thakubai during her absence, but he died within two years, and Thakubai was again thrown on the world. -Some one got her into a school, but she was shortly turned out of the primary department, as all thought her too stupid to learn. She then worked for a school teacher for a time till some one told her Ramabai had returned to Bombay. She got a letter written for her, and was soon welcomed as a pupil of the Sharada Sadan.

She was not an intelligent pupil, but persevering, and gradually developed into a useful woman, and after five years of training was able to teach a primary class. Then she was converted, which made all the difference, and she went to work with a missionary for a time. But when the work was opened at Khedgaon, and Ramabai was in need of trustworthy helpers, she sent for Thakubai, who for three years worked at Mukti as Bible-woman and preached with acceptance to the crowds of women who daily came for famine relief which she helped to distribute. She taught in the Sunday school and lived a good consistent life. Then she married one of the teachers, a widower with a family of children, to whom she made a good mother.

In 1907 her husband went to Berar on business and took Thakubai with him, when she was seized with a fatal sickness and passed away quite suddenly. In writing the story of her life Ramabai said she was much mourned for by her husband, step-children, and neighbours, as well as by the women among whom she worked. "But her work was done, and she went home to the Redeemer whom she loved. Her memory is precious, as she was a living example of 1 Corinthians 1. 26-29. She was called by God to bring a message to me. I heard His voice through her calling me to serve Him by giving my life and strength for the service of the despised widows of India. Then He called her to give His message to hundreds and hundreds of the poor famine women and show them the way of life."

Soon after Ramabai removed the Sharada Sadan from Bombay to Poona, she made a journey to that part of South India where her father's ancestral home was situated, and returned accompanied by several widows and others, mostly family connections. One of them was the widow of her step-brother, who was accompanied by a bright, merry little girl of seven. Subhodra was not her own child, but when thrown away to die by her people in infancy as an unwanted girl, the childless wife had rescued the forsaken baby and cared for it as her own.

When a wave of salvation visited Poona both Mami and her little charge opened their hearts to the Spirit of God, and with others confessed the Lord Jesus Christ. Subhodra was about twelve when the famine victims from the Central Provinces were brought to the Sharada Sadan. Among them were several tiny girls who had lost their mothers. One day Ramabai called attention to these poor little mites, and invited the elder girls each to adopt one



GIRLS SETTING UP TYPE IN THE PRINTING DEPARTMENT AT MUKTI



GIRLS WORKING THE PRINTING PRESSES AT MUKTI

and give it a mother's care. Some were pretty children with taking ways, and were soon appropriated by the volunteer mothers. But Subhodra picked out the most unlovely child of the group, and when twitted by the others on her choice of a baby with a monkey face, she replied, "Not to take a pretty and attractive child, but to take a wretched and unattractive one, is love."

Subhodra made good progress with her studies, and became a true and earnest Christian. Her relatives, who had thrown her away in infancy to die, now began to agitate for her to be returned to them that they might get her married. Her brother came to Poona to fetch her, but time had flown faster than he had reckoned on, and when he saw his sister he found she was past the age prior to which the Brahmins of his caste consider it their duty to give their girls in marriage. So, to the satisfaction of all concerned, Subhodra remained at the Sharada Sadan, where she soon rose to be pupil teacher and worked up to matriculation. As the head girl of the school, and leader in all kinds of Christian work, she had a great influence for good over the other pupils, and was instrumental in leading many to Christ.

In Manoramabai's absence Subhodrabai acted as Principal of the High School at Mukti. Later on, desiring to devote her time to Christian work, she was duly set apart as a deaconess of the Mukti Church. She is now happily married to a college professor in a large Indian city. Her adopted mother, known as Mami at Mukti, accompanied her to her new home. Life at Ramabai's had expanded this dear woman, who had suffered severely during her husband's lifetime at the hands of his elder wife. But her years of companionship with Ramabai made Mami a most capable woman. In 1903 Manoramabai wrote: "She

settles the disputes, comforts the lonely, prays with the sick, gives food to the hungry, and makes special arrangements for the sick and delicate. She teaches the little children to pray and tells them Bible stories; in fact, there is hardly anything that she does not do." Just before the writer left India a beautiful baby girl who had been thrown away was brought to Mukti. Mami adopted this child, and suckled her with a goat. She grew a fine, healthy girl, intelligent beyond most, and was called Krupa, meaning Grace. One of our illustrations shows her as a child of four.

Another young woman who came to the Sharada Sadan with the same party from South India as the foregoing was Rukminibai, a victim of cruel and continuous illusage from her mother-in-law. She was cruelly beaten for the slightest fault. She was many a time locked in a room filled with smoke, with pepper burning on the fire, or was hung upon a pole half-way between the floor and ceiling, leaving her there till, quite exhausted, she should fall on some thorny branches placed for the purpose on the floor beneath. It required some perseverance and diplomacy on the part of Ramabai to rescue this poor girl, as she trusted no one, and it took a long time to win her confidence. But love prevailed, and for years she has been a head matron at Mukti.

Jivu, the youngest daughter of a prosperous cultivator in South India, was given in marriage when quite small to a man who already had grey hairs in his head. He expressed himself as willing to wait for his wife till she should be grown, but a wicked woman, who had tried in vain to get him to marry her daughter, managed to administer to the unfortunate man one of those subtle poisons which saps the life in a mysterious way and brings on slow

but certain death. The husband's widowed sister lived with him and kept his house, but when he sent for Jivu when she was nine years old, and seemed disposed to pet her and make much of her, his sister took offence and left him. Thenceforth Jivu had to work like a slave, cooking for and waiting on her husband and his old father.

Astrologers and priests were consulted as to the poor man's increasing illness. They said it was undoubtedly caused by poor Jivu's sins in a former existence, but if she would worship the gods in a certain way they would avert his death. Now, in addition to all the work of the house and caring for her sick husband, Jivu had to spend four or five hours daily in a ceremonious round of ablutions and prostrations before various idols. One temple she had to circumnavigate one hundred times, but the details of this worship, some of it of a disgusting character, is too tedious to relate. Her husband got worse instead of better. One day he told Jivu to hurry home early. In the endeavour to obey Jivu did not stop to get out of the way of one of the sacred bulls coming out of the temple, who pushed her down and scattered the flowers, fruit, and pot of earth which she was carrying. She arrived home crying, only to find her husband at the point of death. After telling his old father to give all his money to Jivu, he passed away.

The members of the family assembled, wailing and beating their breasts, and told Jivu to hide her face in a dark corner, and said she had eaten up her husband. Jivu's brother-in-law pretended to join in the mourning, but secretly managed to abstract all of the dead man's money he could lay his hands on, and then went away to see the dead body burned.

For ten days after her husband's death Jivu was

kept shut up in the room in which he had died, where she had a number of ceremonies to perform. On the eleventh day she was taken to the river. There the priests made three balls of boiled rice and ordered Jivu to worship them. The biggest represented the soul of her deceased husband. They then ordered her to take off her jewels and bangles, and divested her of the patch of vermilion on her forehead, which indicated that she was married, and present it all to her husband (*i.e.*, the biggest of the rice balls!). Then they made her step into the river till the water touched her chest and dip her head one hundred times. The poor child nearly fainted, but the priests had no pity for her. They said she must do it or her husband would go to Hell.

A few days later Jivu was taken home by her parents, who, though they loved her much, did not like her being a widow. Within six months of her return ten members of her family passed away, and every one chided and cursed poor Jivu, and attributed it to her sins in a former life. She not only had eaten her husband, but ten other persons also. One of her brothers was to be married. All went to the wedding except Jivu, who was shut up at home. She managed to escape, however, and went to the place where her father was and sat down by him. The horrified family cursed and scolded her and went home to assemble on another and more auspicious day, as the presence of a widow among them presaged misfortune. Next time Jivu was left under lock and key. Thus her life was made very unhappy, but while her parents lived they shielded her from the worst consequences of widowhood.

When Jivu was thirteen years old a visitation of cholera carried off both parents, and Jivu was left to the tender mercies of the relatives. Now the

hardships of her life were increased tenfold. Her family made her a drudge. She had all the housework, care of the children and cattle. She had to go to the mountain daily to cut grass and bring it home on her head. She was cursed and beaten frequently. Her cruel sister-in-law refused to give her proper food, but before his death her father had given her a cow and a cocoanut tree; also from time to time he had given her money, and she had a little store of rupees hidden away in a safe place. So she drank the milk from her cow and daily climbed the tree for a cocoanut. One day as she was climbing the tree she found she was cut and bleeding. This cruel sister-in-law had fixed sharp pieces of glass all around the tree so that she could no longer climb it.

There was a festival going on in the village, and one day Jivu took the children to the outskirts of the crowd, where she was attracted by hearing a missionary preaching the Gospel. To make time to hear these good words again Jivu took two of her rupees from her secret store and went and bought grass to feed the cattle instead of going to cut it. This she did for several days, and so made time to listen to the missionary preaching. He invited her to his house, where his wife told her more of the Gospel story and gave her some tea and bread, which she partook with them and thus broke her caste.

It was not long before her brother found this out, as she had ceased to worship the family idol in their compound. Being very angry with her for breaking caste, he ordered her to worship the idol or he would beat her; and he shut her up in the little room with the ugly idol all night. Not afraid, because of the new-found joy, Jivu sat in a corner of this room all night and read the New Testament which the missionary had given her. In the morning her brother

brought her out and asked her if she had done "*puja*," and when Jivu replied that she could no more worship the idol he beat her severely and ran the point of an ox goad into her side, from which she bled so profusely that she fainted, and was left then, cast out by her family.

Feeling very miserable and ill and wanting only to die, she managed to crawl to the river to try and drown herself, but being a good swimmer did not succeed. Next she thought of a tiger's cave on the hill, and climbed up and lay down in it, hoping the tiger would come and eat her up. But he did not appear that day. Her brother, now alarmed at her disappearance, reported it to the police in case he should get into trouble. They searched for and took her to the police station, where she lay for some time too ill to be moved.

The superintendent of police was a kind-hearted man, and managed to get the truth out of Jivubai about her brother's cruel behaviour, and advised her to prosecute him, which she refused to do. He then told her of Pandita Ramabai's Christian school at Poona, and asked her if she would like to go, to which she gladly consented. Having written out an order allowing her to travel to Poona, he hired a cart to take her to the nearest port, where she could get a boat for Bombay, and told her to take great care of the passport he had given her. Her brother, hearing of this, hired two men to intercept the cart and bring her back, so at a lonely place they stopped the cart and ordered the man to take her back to the village. While they were arguing with the driver, Jivu, who had noticed a police station on the road, slipped out at the back and, grasping her precious paper, soon returned with two policemen, at sight of whom the hired men fled. The police then ordered the driver

to go on to the port with Jivu, who was soon on board the vessel. The coast line wound considerably just there, and when the boat reached the next stopping place the two men hired by her brother came on deck armed with a strong rope to carry her off. But the captain interfered and forbade them to touch her. The brother then wired to Bombay, where one of his friends met the boat and, under the pretence of taking Jivu to the station for Poona, took her to a house in the native part of the city and locked her in an empty room at the top of the building. Here she was left all night, but in the early morning managed to attract the notice of a friendly policeman, who released her and told her where to find the station for Poona.

At the station she providentially—shall we not say, in answer to the cry of her heart, which had constantly ascended to her newly-found Friend in Heaven—met with a missionary lady who put her in the right train, when in a few hours she reached Poona. Arrived, she looked about for Ramabai, whom the police superintendent in her own village had said he would write to, asking Ramabai to meet her. Ramabai had waited long at the station, but owing to her detention in Bombay Jivu did not arrive when expected. She finally got courage to ask a *tonga* driver to take her to the Sharada Sadan. When he put her down before a large bungalow she thought that could not be the right place, sat down on the roadside and began to cry. Hearing her crying, Ramabai herself came out and asked what the trouble was. "I want Ramabai," Jivu said. "I am Ramabai," was the reply in Canarese, Jivu's own language, and taking her in her motherly arms, she kissed her and took her into her home. For weeks after Jivu was ill with fever, but Ramabai herself nursed her till she fully recovered.

When Ramabai went to America in 1898 she took with her several young women who were in moral danger from their relatives, of whom Jivu was one, as her brothers were again trying to get possession of her. After two or three years at school in America she returned to India, and is a faithful matron at Mukti till the present day.

After Jivubai had grown into a fine young woman, Pandita Ramabai gave her a holiday to go and visit her own people and preach the Gospel to them. This time she travelled without mishap. Her people welcomed her, and would have kept her with them, being a fine, well-educated and travelled young lady. But after staying with them two weeks, and faithfully giving them the Gospel, she said she was going home. "This is your home," they said. "No," she replied, "my home is in Poona with Pandita Ramabai."

While in the neighbourhood she made inquiries about the missionary from whom she had first heard the Gospel. He had died, and his wife had gone home to America. So he never knew what became of the child-widow to whom he had told the Gospel story. But some day, what a reaping, what a reward, will be his, when from the one grain of seed that he planted shall be gathered in the golden sheaves!

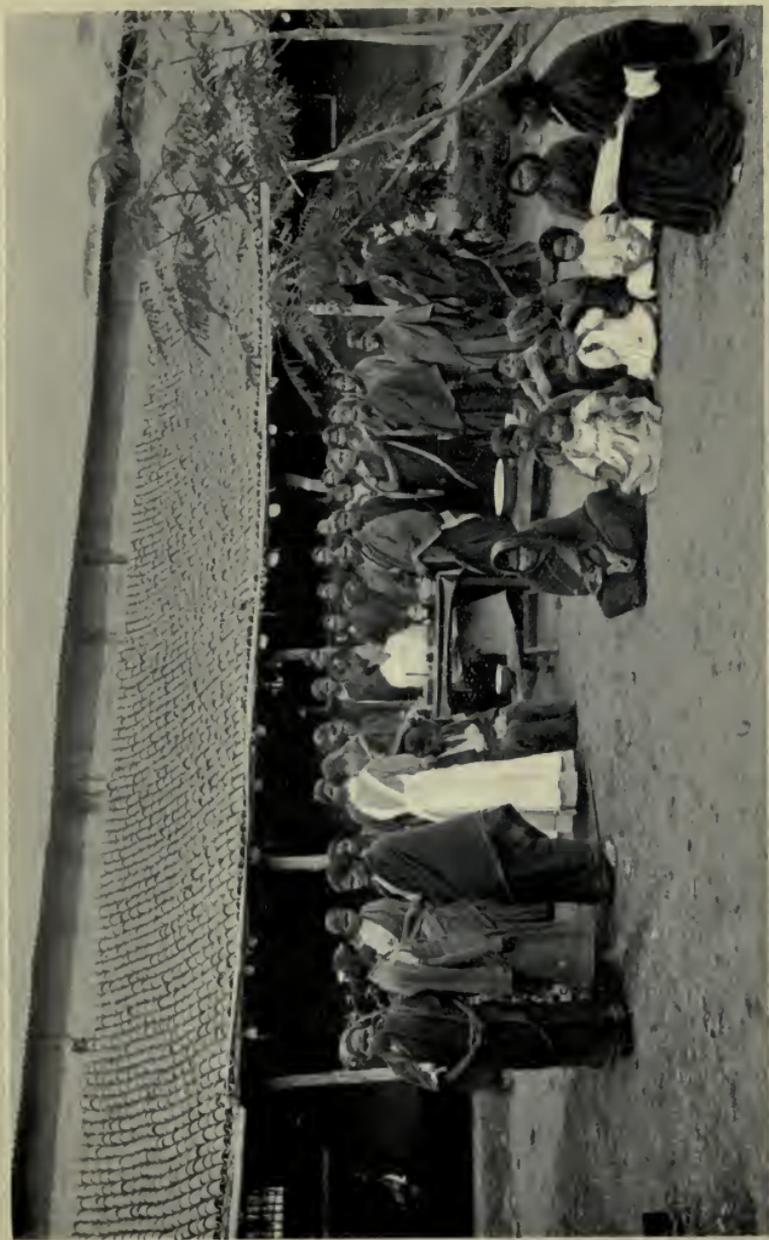
THE PRAYER OF A CHILD-WIDOW.

I'm a little child, yet none will save.

When five years old betrothed to age,
To age with one foot touching the grave,
Yet when he dies the family rage.

The family storm, and curse, and swear;
The little wife has caused his death!
How shall I tell how widows fare?

O God, I have not power nor breath.



PATIENTS AT THE DISPENSARY AND HOSPITAL, MUKTI



THE MUKTI CHURCH. A PORTION OF THE INTERIOR

Sold into bondage, a helpless slave!
One hundred rupees! the paltry sum
My parents took; the old man gave,
And I was his whate'er might come!

And oh, the sorrows when he died!
The blows, and words as hard as blows,
E'en red-hot iron their hands applied,
The scars my injured body shows.

When but eleven, from my head
They shaved the soft, dark locks of hair.
They counted me as with the dead;
The dead! I wish that I were there.

Yes, with the dead I long to be;
There, surely, I'll find rest and peace.
Come, oh my God! and set me free;
In death's cold arms give me release.

—*By a little Brahmin Widow.*

CHAPTER XI.

Progress : Material and Spiritual.

PANDITA RAMABAI'S daughter, Manoramabai, had been pursuing her education in England and the United States during these strenuous and eventful years. She had finished her High School course, and was about to enter Mount Holyoak College with the view of working up to the B.A. degree when it was suggested by Ramabai's friends in Boston that she should return to India for a period to help to lift the burden of the work, as her mother had been for some time under a heavy strain in reorganising the school to provide for the education and training of so many pupils. Manoramabai was very willing to do this. She arrived in India again in the autumn of 1900, and was soon in charge of the High School department.

A friend wrote me at the time that Manoramabai was head and shoulders beyond any other Indian young woman in the institution. Her ability in managing the school, and as a teacher, seemed to give her mother fresh life and vigour. Her return to America to finish her studies was postponed indefinitely, and indeed never took place. Some years later, by persevering study, she graduated at the Bombay University and received the B.A. degree in 1917. In order to meet Government requirements this was necessary, so that the Mukti High School, of which she had become Principal, should pass out certificated teachers. After sufficient accommodation had been provided at Khedgaon for the whole establishment, the Sharada Sadan was removed thither from Poona, the Government

purchasing the Sharada Sadan premises, which have since been utilised for official purposes.

Some friends were grieved when Ramabai's tried and trusted fellow-worker, Soonderbai Powar, was led by circumstances to withdraw from the work; but later it was clearly seen that "the cause was from the Lord," as it set Soonderbai free to step out into a work of her own, in which she has been eminently successful (*i.e.*, that of training the daughters of Indian Christians to supply the great need of furnishing fully-equipped Bible-women to other missions, subsequently adding a number of famine orphans to the establishment, which is called the Zenana Training Home, Poona).

A missionary friend, who visited Mukti in 1901, recorded his impressions of the work as it had developed after the second famine. He wrote: "I had heard much about this great work, but the half was not told. Here are nearly 2000 girls and women in this home of safety, purity, and peace. Within these extensive grounds are well-ventilated, comfortable dormitories; here are kitchen and dining-rooms, occupying a building 425 feet long by 30 feet wide; storehouses, bakery, hospital, school-rooms, rooms for industrial work, plain dwellings for the Pandita and her assistants, offices, guest rooms, and a great Church. Nearly all the buildings are of stone with tiled roofs, well planned and well built. There are five large wells with an abundant supply of pure water, and throughout the grounds are many beautiful young shade trees and fruit trees, and gardens producing large supplies of vegetables. Five years ago there was nothing here but an open field.

"The Church is a plain but sightly structure, designed to seat, when completed, from four to five

thousand people. It is built of dark grey stone and tiled with Mangalore tiles. It is 232 feet long, inside measurement, and 42 feet wide, and has two transepts, each 107 feet long. The floor is of teak wood, beautifully smooth. The foundation stone bears the following inscription in Marathi:

"PRAISE THE LORD."

"NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD."

"THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST."

"UPON THIS ROCK WILL I BUILD MY CHURCH."

"JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE; IN WHOM ALL THE BUILDING FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER GROWETH UNTO AN HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD: IN WHOM YE ALSO ARE BUILT TOGETHER AN HABITATION OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT."

"THAT OUR SONS MAY BE AS PLANTS GROWN UP IN THEIR YOUTH; THAT OUR DAUGHTERS MAY BE AS CORNER-STONES, POLISHED AFTER THE SIMILITUDE OF A PALACE."

2ND SEPTEMBER, 1899.

The visitor to whom we are indebted for this description adds: "Some of the noticeable features of this institution may be briefly mentioned:

"1. **The happiness** that evidently reigns in the place. The little ones were full of childish glee, and gladness appears in the faces of nearly all the women, the gladness of those who have escaped from misery and abuse and terror into this peaceful haven.

"2. **The order and discipline**, so quiet, but so effective. Everything seems to move on like clock-work, without any noise or harsh commands. One quiet but firm authority exercised in love is over all, and all are controlled and swayed by it.

"3. **The sacredness of the place**. A stranger is at once impressed with the fact that everything here is for the Lord. He is first in all things. He is recognised and honoured in all that is done; it is all in His service and for His glory.



WINNOWING GRAIN IN INDIA



WOMEN GRINDING FOR THE MUKTI FAMILY

"The fact greatly to rejoice over in all this is that the chief agent in it all is a daughter of India, an Indian widow, moved by the Spirit of God, is the human instrument in this mighty work."

Encouraged by the promise in Psalm 144. 12, Ramabai was led to open a boys' department to her work in 1902, and though it has not increased to large dimensions it is still continued.

Side by side with the development of the school work and industrial training, and given a more important place than either, was the instruction in Bible knowledge and the prayer life. No one ever visited Mukti without being impressed with this. Another visitor, a missionary from China, wrote: "We reached Khedgaon after dark, and well do we recall the bright lights, the cheery guest-room, the Indian food brought in as soon as we were ready for supper, and, best of all, a call a little later of the Pandita and her accomplished daughter. Her deafness usually causes her to remain only a short time with her guests, but years of street preaching as a missionary in China made it quite possible for her to hear us. Apparently she appreciated our ability to shout, and for an hour or more she sat on the floor, with her daughter close at hand. We enjoyed the interchange of thought and aspiration as fully as we did any experience of our fifteen months' tour of mission lands. Of the girls and women who constitute her charge we saw nothing that night, though we heard a great deal. In our ignorance it seemed as if from everywhere came the hum of pupils studying aloud. Inquiry concerning this apparent diligence brought the response that it was simply the voices of multitudes in prayer which we had heard.

"Daylight revealed the extent and nature of the work. Many buildings of varied architecture and

decided plainness indicated that something large was to be expected. Chief among them was the great Church, with part of its roof still unfinished, yet amply sufficing for the whole colony. I noticed that Ramabai's room was as plain, and scarcely better furnished than that of her least assistants. Indeed it is her policy to be made like unto her sisters. Always when hunger threatens the faith-sustained colony she is the foremost to feel its pinch.

"Outside the settlement proper are broad fields, irrigated by large wells, which are named 'Joy,' 'Peace,' 'Harmony,' etc., and are suggestive of the pervasive Scripturalness of everything at Mukti."

While welcoming all ministers of the Gospel as Christian brethren, Ramabai refrained from affiliating her Church at Mukti with any particular denomination. The spiritual oversight of the work devolved largely upon Miss Abrams, but from the first great help had been received from Rev. W. W. Bruere, stationed at Poona, who has already been mentioned in connection with the baptisms at Mukti. In 1899 he went on furlough to America.

After much prayer Ramabai decided that Rev. W. E. Robbins, of the same Mission, was the one to be asked to fill his place, but he was stationed at Kalyan, too far distant to come to Khedgaon every other week as Mr. Bruere had done. Ramabai intended to call on the presiding elder in Poona and tell him her needs, but was prevented. One night this brother was so burdened about the Mukti Church that he could not sleep. He awoke his wife and said: "I feel I ought to station Mr. Robbins in Poona in order that he may help the Pandita." They prayed about it, and the result was that Mr. Robbins appeared in time to take the services on the following Sunday. The Lord had thus a second time

provided a pastor for Mukti, free of charge, and Ramabai was able to praise Him for the need supplied. Mr. Robbins continued in this position for some years, and was used of God in the salvation of a goodly number of souls. His kindly manner and venerable appearance soon won the hearts of the community.

It was on an Easter Sunday that the first foreign missionary meeting was held at Mukti. Notice was given in the morning service that a missionary meeting would take place that afternoon, the subject of which would be the China Inland Mission. Two girls were appointed as collectors, one for the pupils and one for outsiders, who were to bring the money to the meeting at four o'clock.

It was not intended to ask the Hindus for money, but through some mistake the collector went to them also, and many gave their pice to send the Gospel to other lands. So they also had to be invited to hear about the China Mission. After speaking of the work of J. Hudson Taylor, and telling of the widows' mite (Mark 12. 42), Ramabai said: "We have been great receivers, and we ought to be large givers. This morning I was wishing I had some money to give, but there was none in hand. At noon I fell asleep, and when I awoke I found a letter on my pillow enclosing thirty rupees from a kind Christian friend. It said the money was a personal gift, not to be mentioned in my report or to be accounted for to any one. Now girls, I will make you a present of this money; you may spend it on sweetmeats, or get up a big dinner party, or make any use of it you like."

Immediately a hundred voices shouted, "Send it to Hindustan," meaning to send the Gospel to their own Central India people. Equal to the occasion, Ramabai said, "That is like making sugar and eating

it all yourself!" The girls saw what she meant, and at once asked that it should be sent to China. One matron gave half her month's salary; another gave all she had, and over three pounds was sent to China.

A year or so later Ramabai decided to tithe all the money given by God's people for the support of Mukti. A committee composed of some of the leading Christians in the Church was appointed to decide what should be done with the money. A large sum was given to the Church building fund, some was sent to other missions in India, and more than 5000 rupees was sent to China to relieve those who had suffered through the Boxer riots, and which sum was distributed through several societies working in China. Later the girls adopted some orphans in Armenia, and thus they were taught the blessedness of giving. Many gave up one meal on Sundays in order to have something of their own to give to the poor and needy in the villages around their own doors. Ramabai says that the Lord has never allowed her girls to suffer through having given to His work.

At the same time it must be mentioned that times of trial, and even of scarcity, have come upon the work from time to time; trials, doubtless, sent to prove faith and teach lessons not to be learned in any other way. But our God is the God of deliverances, and Ramabai herself testifies that she would have to write a large book to tell every instance in which deliverance has been sent.

Miss Abrams has written the story of some of these financial trials, in which the Lord showed His hand in the early years of the work. It was Christmas time, when one of the girls lately rescued from famine had gone into consumption, and lay at the point of death. Funds were low, and prayer had

been going up that God would send the means for new clothing for the girls for New Year's Day. The day before letters had come to Mukti with money, and Miss Abrams sent them by special messenger to Poona, where Ramabai had been spending Christmas at the Sharada Sadan, together with an urgent message to hold on to the Lord concerning the poor sick one whose life appeared to be ebbing away. Miss Abrams said: "We had had many healings, but none of consumption, and the Lord had laid it heavily on my heart that this girl should be healed. When the servant arrived in Poona by the night train a watchnight service was in progress, at which Pastor Bruere was present. They laid hold on God for the life of the sick one, and the Christians at Mukti were also praying.

"When Ramabai arrived the following day with the new clothing the sick one revived and asked for her clothes, then for food, and began to get better at once, and in a few months was quite well."

On another occasion Miss Abrams was herself praying for money, as she needed to go to the hills during the hot weather. Knowing that Ramabai's funds were low, she refrained from speaking to her on the subject. The stores were exhausted, and they were living on the cheapest kind of food; the day had come when there was but one day's food in hand when Ramabai received a remittance of Rs. 150. She took the cheque, spread it out before the Lord, and asked what she was to do with the money. The Lord said, "Give it to Miss Abrams." She waited a few minutes to be perfectly sure, endorsed the cheque, and then sent it over to Miss Abram's room. She sent it back to Ramabai, saying she could not receive it when there was such need. But it was again returned with the message that God had sent it, and

she had nothing to do but to obey. The next morning, in time to get food for that day, Ramabai received by post a cheque for a thousand dollars!

It was in the days prior to the founding of the Rescue Home that Ramabai had placed twenty-five young women unsuitable for Mukti with an officer of the Salvation Army at some little distance, making herself responsible for their maintenance. One day this sister sent word that they were out of food. There was no money in hand; Miss Abrams went into the cookhouse and found Ramabai baking bread, and she remarked, "I am trying to learn the meaning of 'Thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'" She had asked God for the money to supply this need; this verse came to her, and she began to live that day by the Word of God, and rested her soul on His faithfulness. That night a messenger from the post office came over with one solitary letter; it was not usual to deliver the letters in the evenings, but God can do the unusual. This letter contained the money to supply the need.

After the girls from the Gujerathi famine had got settled into the institution, Ramabai put all the surplus funds into buildings, to meet the requirements of the enlarged family. For some time funds came in in sufficient amounts to continue the building, but then came a time when money again became scarce, and the strain of living from hand to mouth, and buying supplies in small quantities, and doing without many things that were needed became very wearisome. Among the cold weather visitors to India that year was a Gospel minister, carrying on a large work in London, interested more than most in foreign missions. He came to Mukti and took photographs; but practised as he was in detecting

signs of poverty, he came to the conclusion that Ramabai's work was not supported as it should be. After going on to Bombay he was impelled to return, and, in answer to his queries, Ramabai told him how, confiding in a promise of money which never materialised, she had become hampered financially, and though not insolvent, for her property would far more than realise her indebtedness, she was in great and urgent need of money for clothes, blankets, and many necessary things. Happily this friend was both able and willing to relieve the most pressing needs, and after his return to England he made the story public, and so pleaded for Ramabai's work that one wealthy friend sent money enough for all the clothes needed, and funds for current expenses were sent in in sufficient amounts to relieve anxiety.

So the Lord helped them over that difficult time, but out of the want and privation grew sickness. The health officers came in to investigate matters and to find out why the health of the girls and women was so poor. At this time Ramabai took refuge in God's Word in Habakkuk 3. 17, 18. Although greatly tried and discouraged, the Lord brought her to a place of rejoicing. In the time of sickness the girls turned to God and humbled themselves under His hand. So He turned that trial into a blessing rather than a curse.

Out of the trial another victory came. Up to that period a number of Indian Christians had been employed at Mukti as teachers, clerks, etc., who were necessary to the work of the institution, who were all receiving salaries. After the time of straitness was over and the victory won Ramabai printed a leaflet which was distributed to all these workers, saying she had to depend on the Lord for all she received, and that she could no longer *guarantee* their salaries.

She gave each one a month's notice, saying that any who wished to remain at the work could do so, and as long as the money came in their salaries would be paid; but if at any time the money failed she would not hold herself responsible to pay them. Some of the best workers left at that time, and others after a further period of testing, but a number remained, and when funds got short they learned what it was to wait upon God for their daily bread.

Tests and trials, others than those financial, have come to the institutions. Ramabai says that often, when trials were looming over her, the Lord has caused her to know of their approach; frequently by bringing comforting passages of Scripture to her mind, garrisoning her, as it were, beforehand against the attacks of the enemy.

One evening, just before the rainy season began in 1903, such a forewarning came upon her when Psalm 60. 5, 11 was given her. It was a beautiful cool evening, and after inspection of the premises all seemed to be well, and every one retired and went to sleep. Suddenly, before midnight, a thunderstorm began and rain came down in torrents.

A new house was under construction, three-quarters of it was finished and occupied by nearly three hundred little girls. But a long row of rooms on the east side had not been tiled. (The dormitories at Mukti are built in squares, the inside of these squares leaves an open space for play and exercise.) When the storm broke the unfurnished rooms came down with a crash—walls, roof, and all. Much fright and confusion was caused, but no one was hurt. The children were quickly removed and housed in the Church, and all praised God for preserving their lives.

The part of the building that was finished was

again occupied, and the part that was destroyed by the storm began to go up. Ramabai had no suspicion that the roof of the first part was not all right. But one day a strong feeling came over her that she must remove all the girls from that building. She realised that God was speaking, and promptly obeyed. It was vacated in eight hours. The next day Ramabai sent for the foreman carpenter who was engaged on the work, and instructed him to examine it and finish what remained to be done. More than fifty carpenters, masons, etc., were employed thereon. He found a faulty corner of the roof, and was endeavouring to repair it when it suddenly collapsed and ten men were caught under it.

Doctor and nurses were soon at hand from the Mukti staff; two men were badly injured, the man at fault was the most seriously hurt, and both were sent to the Government hospital at Poona. Others were hurt but soon recovered. How thankful all were that Ramabai's ear had been attuned to hear the warning voice which led her to remove the children, many of whom must have been crushed to death if the roof had fallen on them.

Some *chappars* (grass huts), put up to accommodate extra patients in the compound of the Rescue Home, were set on fire one night during the Hindu "Holi" festival. This is a season when the Hindus give themselves up to every kind of mischief and unruly conduct. It was supposed that a match had been thrown in the thorn hedge at the back of the buildings. Not many sick girls were sleeping there, and they were soon got out, but the boxes of the school-girls were within as their dormitory was crowded. The workmen and teachers were quickly on the scene, and pulling down the burning buildings the fire was soon extinguished. The girls fetched water

and rescued what things they could. The matron worked hard, never thinking of herself, but when the fire was out she found the girls had carried all her things to a place of safety and she lost nothing.

These are just samples of the many times when the Lord has stretched out His hand of love in protection of those who put their trust in Him.

CHAPTER XII.

The Story of the Great Revival.

IN answer to united and continuous prayer from both workers and the Christian converts at Mukti, the Lord wonderfully answered and poured down showers of blessing. In December, 1901, and the following January, about twelve hundred were baptised; but the workers felt the need of a much deeper work of grace to be manifested in the lives of converts and continued to cry to the Lord. The following July a further revival of blessing came down from above. For nearly three weeks meetings, daily increasing in size, were held, till nearly six hundred shared in the blessing and were led out into the joy of the Lord.

The news of the revival in Australia in 1903 aroused Ramabai to send thither her daughter and Miss Abrams, in order that they might catch the inspiration of the revival fire and form praying-bands for Mukti among the Australian Christians. The burden of the message which Ramabai sent by them to the newly-revived Australian Churches was, "Brethren, pray for us."

That has been the burden of all the messages that Ramabai has sent to her friends in all parts of the world. About the same time she organised among her friends far and near a system of prayer circles. The names of ten girls or women were given to each circle. Thus all were being prayed for daily by name. Her magazine, *The Prayer Bell*, carried the same message.

Several months were spent in Australia and New Zealand by Miss Abrams and Manoramabai. An

Australian edition of Ramabai's book, "The High Caste Hindu Woman," was issued, and the foundation was laid for a valuable auxiliary, which has continuously furnished workers and means for Mukti, in addition to the prayer partnerships so much desired.

The news of the revival in Wales brought much gladness to Ramabai. In January, 1905, she told her pupils about it, and called for volunteers to meet with her daily for special prayer for a revival in India. Seventy came forward, and from time to time others joined. In June five hundred and fifty were meeting twice daily in this praying band.

Rejoicing still more that the revival had reached the Welsh missions in the Khasia Hills in Assam, Pandita Ramabai then asked for volunteers from her Bible school to give up their secular studies and go out into the villages to preach the Gospel. Thirty young women volunteered, and were meeting daily to pray for the enduement of power when the revival came upon them.

Miss Abrams had been giving some definite teaching on the subject of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as power for service, and one morning she was awakened by one of the senior girls, saying, "Come over and rejoice with us. J. has received the Holy Spirit. I saw the fire, ran across the room for a pail of water, and was about to pour it over her when I discovered she was not on fire."

When Miss Abrams arrived all the girls in that compound were on their knees, weeping, praying, and confessing their sins. J. sat there exhorting the girls to repent, and telling them she had received the Spirit. There was real power in her testimony. She said, "O Lord, I am full of joy, but forgive and cleanse my sisters as you have me; give me strength

to bear this sorrow for their sins." Then she would exhort them and break out into new and beautiful praise. She said, "O Lord, we must have a revival; we must have it; begin it to-day."

The next evening, while Ramabai was expounding John 8 in her usual quiet way, the Holy Spirit descended with power, and all the girls began to pray aloud so that she had to cease talking. Little children, middle-sized girls, and young women wept bitterly and confessed their sins. Some few saw visions and experienced the power of God and things too deep to be described. Two little girls had the spirit of prayer poured on them in such torrents that they continued to pray for hours. They were transformed with heavenly light shining on their faces.

"From that time," said Miss Abrams, "our Bible school was turned into an inquiry room. Girls, stricken down under conviction of sin while in school, or in the industrial school, or at their work, were brought to us. Lessons were suspended, and we all, teachers and students, entered the school conducted by the Holy Spirit."

Prayer continued all night in the various compounds on more than one occasion. The Bible school was filled with those crying for mercy. Such repentance, such heart-searching, such agony over sin, and tears, as they cried for pardon and cleansing and the baptism of the Holy Ghost! Then a baptism like fire within came upon them. They seemed to have their eyes open to see the "body of sin" in themselves. Then came a strong realisation of Christ's work upon the Cross; then peace, followed by intense joy. It often took a soul hours to pass through all these experiences. The Lord used the Word greatly, and the work went on rapidly for three days. Satan was also busy, and tried to counterfeit all he

saw. Some who beheld the joy thought they could get it by imitating what they had seen the others do. Yet the work went on, and a spirit of prayer and supplication for a revival in India was poured out like a flood.

A letter written by one of the Mukti workers at this time says: "Even young girls are stricken down with the spirit of repentance. They cannot eat, sleep, or work till they go to the bottom of things. They seek the peace of pardon, and immediately begin to seek sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They search and weep before God, until He shows them the state of their heart. They repent, restore, confess, and finally come into such joy that it knows no bounds. They call it a baptism of fire. They say that when the Holy Spirit comes upon them the burning within them is almost unbearable. Afterwards they are transformed, their faces light up with joy, their mouths are filled with praise.

"One little girl of twelve is constantly laughing—her face, plain, even ugly, is beautiful and radiant. She does not know it. She is occupied with Jesus. You think you have looked on an angel face. Some claim to have seen the Lord—one, a blind girl. All speak of His Coming again. One sang hymns, composing them as she sang—lovely hymns to Indian tunes."

Another, writing a few weeks later, said: "There is a very true work of God going on in our midst. Some of the worst women have been changed in heart and life. Since I came it is the marvellous spirit of prayer that has been most evident. Waves of prayer go over the meetings like the rolling thunder; hundreds pray audibly together. Sometimes after ten or twenty minutes it dies away and only a few

voices are heard, then it will rise again and increase in intensity; on other occasions it goes on for hours. During these seasons there are usually some confessing their sins, often with bitter weeping which is painful to hear. The conflict seems so great they are almost beside themselves. It reminds one of the narratives in the Gospels about our Lord casting out evil spirits, and truly *evil spirits are being cast out*. There is much one cannot understand at first, but one grows by His grace into the work and learns to distinguish by the outward signs as well as by the Spirit's inward teaching the false from the true. Satan counterfeits all that the Lord does, and is working hard to hinder and spoil the work of God, but he is a conquered foe!"

One of the older girls, who had sinned against light and was greatly hardened, came under the mighty hand of God and was wonderfully saved. There was not the slightest indication of illness about her. She did her usual work and attended school. She was being instructed in the Bible school one afternoon when she was taken ill and died within an hour. Doctors and nurses gave her every attention, but her spirit fled to be with God. She was quite conscious, and said that the Lord stood by her and was calling her to come to Him.

About a month after the revival broke out Ramabai was asked to permit the account of it to be published in India, but fearing lest the work of the Spirit should be hindered, she declined to give the desired permission. She did not feel easy, however, that she had done right, and a time of depression ensued.

The workers met for special prayer, "and then," said Ramabai, "the Spirit revealed to me that the depression had come because we had refused to give

glory to God by not allowing the account to be published. I made up my mind to praise God and give Him glory in public the first time He would make it possible for me to testify before people outside of our Home." The depression left her immediately after this, and the story of the revival was sent to the *Bombay Guardian* and elsewhere, to the encouragement of many in India who were praying for a similar blessing.

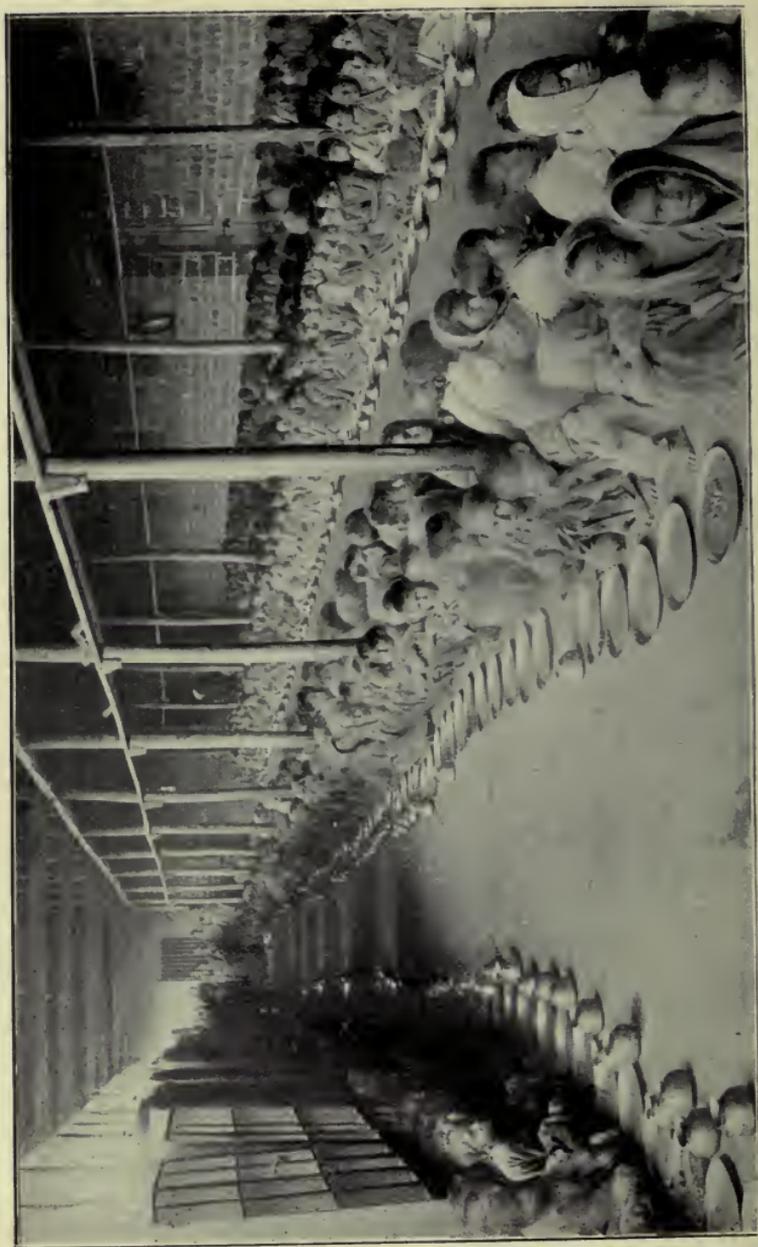
A fortnight later Ramabai took a band of her Spirit-filled helpers to Poona, and there began a series of prayer meetings with the object of reaching the Indian Christians. Three meetings were held daily, attended by Europeans, including British soldiers, as well as Christian and non-Christian Indians. At these gatherings Ramabai exalted the Cross of Christ. She confessed with sorrow that she had neglected her opportunities of preaching Christ boldly, but she was resolved by God's mercy to rectify the past, and openly and persistently magnify Christ crucified. She told how she had that day visited the learned Hindus in the city and preached Christ to them, though met by opposition, insult, and scorn.

The greatest apparent results from these meetings came to the orphanages and schools at Poona, the pupils of which were permitted to attend. It was noticed that the Spirit of God worked in a remarkable manner in those institutions, where famine waifs had been gathered. The belief held by many that God would turn the curse into a blessing by making the horrors of famine an instrument for salvation in India was seen to be well founded. It was also noticeable that the first communities of famine orphans visited with the revival were those conducted on the same principle as George Muller's famous



COOKING DEPARTMENT AT MUKTI

Ordinary Indian bread resembles pancakes in form, such as are seen spread out at the right of the picture



DINNER TIME AT MUKTI

institutions, in faith in God for daily bread and all temporal supplies.

It could not be otherwise, for this work was born of prayer. The enormous sums of money received from England, America, and Australia which enabled the Lord's servants in India to rescue so many precious lives were given in large proportion by His own people. Much of this giving was steeped in prayer and ear-marked by heroic self-denial, so that one felt it was all a part of one great plan focused on one object in the purposes of the eternal God.

Ramabai's visit to Poona was followed by deputations of praying bands being sent to other places where famine orphans had been gathered. Some of these bands were led out by Miss Abrams, and some by Manoramabai and other workers. They visited also schools and mission stations of several different denominations, and a deep work was done in many places. The object of the praying bands was defined by Ramabai to be "prayer for the Christian people living in the places to which the bands go." She said, "Our work will bear lasting fruit if we pray more and work less." While the rules were slackened as regards secular work at Mukti, Bible study was entered upon with renewed vigour. Over and over again it was remarked by visitors and helpers alike that they were never in any place where so much time was given to Bible study and prayer. A special course was now provided for the members of the praying bands.

Rev. William Franklin, of the American "Christian and Missionary Alliance" Mission, was providentially led to help at Mukti at this time. He said: "We are now seeing the results of God's work in transfigured lives, marked by intercessory prayer, Bible study, and more preaching to the heathen. Bible

study and prayer have characterised the work here from its beginning, and were the preparation for the revival, yet both have been deepened by the revival."

The first Tuesday in each month had been kept as a day of prayer at Mukti for many years. While waiting on the Lord on this special day in November, 1905, the Lord revealed to Ramabai that He would have her close school and every kind of work, and set apart ten days for waiting upon Him. As far as possible everybody at Mukti gathered in the Church four times daily to hear what the Lord had to teach them and to pray to Him. The early morning meetings were quiet, with Bible reading, messages, and silent prayer, when those who had undertaken to pray for others could leave their names before the Lord. At the other gatherings there was simultaneous and loud praying.

It seemed that the Lord came down to deepen the work. He had begun by an intense purifying, which caused some of the demonstrations to be very striking. But He had all in hand, and kept the workers quiet and still. He opened His Word and showed much of His glory, into which He desired to lead His people. Then towards the end the Lord spoke in power against a common sin in India, *i.e.*, stealing. "Then," wrote a worker, "we had a tremendous time of 'house-cleaning,' as one called it, when misappropriated things were restored to their rightful owners and other restitutions made. We European workers feel we have learned more of what heathenism means during the past few months than ever before. It is truly *awful*, yet how the grace of God is magnified as we see those who were steeped in sin cleansed by the precious blood and filled by the Holy Spirit."

This season of waiting upon Goč had an evident purpose in the further equipment of workers for

service. At this time Ramabai wrote: "You will rejoice to know that the revival is bearing fruit. Some seven hundred girls and women of the Mukti people have given themselves to prayer and the study of God's Word, that they may go to the places where God sends them to give the Gospel. They are already visiting the villages around, where they sing Gospel hymns and read the Word of God to the village people. About sixty go out daily by turns, so that each one gets her turn every twelfth day. They pray regularly for those they visit. The Lord put this plan in my heart, and He is going before. The people whose turn it is to go out, meet previously for a long prayer meeting. The Lord is strengthening and developing them."

The story of what God was doing among the widows in Mukti aroused the deepest interest in all missionary circles in India. Missionaries came from all parts of the country to see and hear for themselves. Many who came for a brief sojourn to Mukti left full of a new-found joy and power for service. One of these said: "It is not that place is anything to God. He can bless in one or another; but at Ramabai's people have time to pray for you and see you through. It is simply that they have come to recognise that first things must be first and be kept first." Said another: "I spent twelve days at Mukti, and during that time I saw the glory of the Lord, and came home in renewed strength of body and soul. I would never forget the trouble of many, especially of a Tinnevely missionary and his wife, to receive the baptism of fire; and when they received it, how they went back rejoicing to their home. Not only missionaries, but Indian Christians also came to Mukti to partake of the poured-out blessing."

To one orphanage to which she was unable to send

a prayer band at the desired time, Ramabai sent an invitation for a hundred boys, girls, and teachers to visit Mukti. They went and stayed sixteen days. The converted were revived, and most of the unconverted saved, while some of the elder ones remained ten days longer and received further blessing. Other deputations of Indian Christians came and received similar blessing.

In the results of this revival Ramabai began to feel that God was answering the prayer first voiced at Keswick in 1898 for 200,000 Indian evangelists to go up and down the land proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. At this time she was led to write a circular letter and send it to missionaries all over India to increase prayer interest in this respect. More than 3500 copies of this circular were sent out asking for names of people to be prayed for. Many responses were sent in, and in a short time more than 29,000 persons were being prayed for by name. Ramabai said, "When we were Hindus we used to repeat one or two thousand names of the gods daily, as well as several hundred verses from the so-called sacred books, in order to gain merit. This did not hinder our work or study. Why should we not, as Christians, be able to pray for many hundreds of people by name?"

An experience by Mr. Handley Bird will fittingly close this chapter on the great revival. It was written in May, 1906, almost twelve months from the commencement of this wondrous outpouring at Mukti. Mr. Bird is a well-known missionary of the people known as "Brethren," working at Coimbatore, in South India, since 1890:

"The writer has spent seventeen days recently at Mukti—days of blessing that, please God, will leave their mark on all his future life. How can one

describe the tides of feeling this first contact with the revival begat in the soul? There was *hunger*, real pain of hunger, for a share in this visitation of God; *shame*, bitter shame, at the ignorance, after long years of Christian life, of what this travailing in prayer, prevailing in prayer, being lost in prayer meant, as it was seen here in many mere children; then there was *wonder*, praiseful wonder, at the marvels of grace. Little girls were lost for hours in the transport of loving Jesus and praising Him; young Christians were counting it a rare privilege to spend many successive hours in intercessory prayer for strangers never seen or known. One face ever lives before me, a strong, rough looking girl, once the rowdy character of the institution, always in trouble, now transformed, her strong face aglow with holy joy, her loud, masculine voice ringing out in her crying to God for others, or breaking with tearful entreaty. God bless Billy Bray, as Ramabai has nicknamed this dear girl.

“Day after day it was meat and drink to gather to pray and praise. In one meeting we were seventeen hours together; the following day more than fifteen hours passed before the meeting broke up with great joy, and such songs of praise as hoarse and broken voices could utter. The work goes on. It is now eleven months since the blessing began, and yet while we were at Mukti we daily saw souls seeking and finding, coming out into blessing so full and definite as often to be almost more than could be borne, filling the mouth with laughter and the life with gladness.

“We are full of praise that we have been allowed to live to hear such sounds in India. Souls in agony, with bitter wailing and moving entreaty seeking the Lord. Hearts overflowing with joy in Jesus aban-

doned to the luxury of praising Him, sitting on the ground or kneeling, lost to all that goes on around, with clasped hands and upturned faces aglow with love, in the midst of a crowd but apart with Him, exchanging the holiest confidences of affection. This is worship, the worship the Father seeks for, and it is one of the loveliest sights one can conceive out of Heaven. When some hundreds are carried away and can only sing 'Hallelujah, Hallelujah to the Lamb' until unable to sing any more, God is surely getting His own, and His heart is refreshed."

CHAPTER XIII.

Pandita Ramabai as Translator of the Bible.

PANDITA RAMABAI has been called "The Moses of Her People." An important sense in which she exhibited a God-called leadership, is evidenced in her unremitting labours to give the pure and unadulterated Word of God to her people—the twenty millions speaking Marathi in Western India. This will be illustrated by what follows.

The Bible was translated into the Marathi language a hundred years ago by the early missionaries to India, but a revised edition has been desired by many. Some ten years ago a revision of the New Testament was issued by the Bombay Bible Society. In regard to this a missionary of long experience, Rev. M. B. Fuller, Superintendent in India of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of America, wrote :

"The earlier translations of the Bible into Marathi were naturally made largely by missionaries, and were doubtless faulty and open to the charge of being Padri (Missionary) Marathi; but Sir Narayenrao Ganesh Chandavarkar, a Marathi scholar, has made very strong and true criticism of the later translation or revised version. After speaking of the great influence of the English Bible on literature, he says of the Marathi translation: 'If that translation is to touch the heart of India and become a part of its life and literature, it must avoid both Padri Marathi and Sanscrit Marathi, but must have a touch of peasant Marathi, for the language of the Bible is the language of shepherds and peasants, as all true religious

literature has been, and that is, after all, the grand style.' ”

In regard to the new translation of the Old Testament, not then published, Ramabai wrote a strong letter of protest to the revisers. Acknowledging the indebtedness of her people to the missionaries who have given India the Scriptures in her own languages, she pointed out several particulars in which their translations could be made more accurate and more easily understood by common and unlearned people, and protested against the use of certain expressions which agree more with Hindu theology than with Christian truth. She said: “Almost all the vernacular translations of the Bible were made with the help of Hindu pundits for the sake of putting the translations into correct language, so they have many words which teach pure Hindu ideas of religion. There are some words which cannot be separated from idolatrous ideas. They make wrong impressions on non-Christian hearers, and if done knowingly it is dangerous and sinful to use them.

“In the Marathi revised version of the New Testament there are many new high-sounding words, which convey meanings foreign to Christian religious thought, but are agreeable to Hindu ideas.” Of such words Ramabai gives in this letter a lengthy list of examples, and says: “These words should not be allowed to remain in our vernacular translations of the Bible. Supposing in each chapter of the Bible there are five mistakes, or mistranslated words, then we have no less than 5945 mistakes or mistranslations in the whole Marathi Bible. Ought we to teach and preach the Bible with so many mistakes?”

A Very Grave Subject.

But Ramabai had a much more serious criticism to give regarding the new Marathi translation of the

New Testament than even the foregoing. She continued: "The great ignorance of most Indian Christians concerning the original Bible languages is pitiful. It is no less pitiful that certain missionaries who are entrusted with the translation of the Bible should try to introduce 'higher critical' thought into it by the arbitrary use of certain meanings and pronunciations of Hebrew and Chaldee words, as given in certain 'higher critical' works, setting at naught the opinions of hundreds of scholars who have prepared the Authorised Version and the English and American Revised Versions of the Bible. Why the opinions of one or two individuals should be accepted against that of greater scholars is a problem; and why the Christians in India should be compelled to depend upon the opinion of a few individuals is a greater problem....The present mixture of the Marathi Bible, half old and half new, which must of necessity be bought and read by Marathi Christians who would read the Bible at all, is arbitrarily forced upon us by the agents of the Bible Society in this Presidency."

But Ramabai not only raised her protest against this perversion of the Word of God in the printed page, but she has put the best of her time and strength into making a simple and correct version of the Bible in the Marathi language. When she wrote the letter previously quoted from she had already been for five years engaged on this work, for which she felt the Lord Himself had given her the plan and the vision, with the words, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Her version and commission was to put the Scriptures into the simplest form of Marathi speech, so that the women of the country with no mental training and a limited vocabulary could easily

understand it, so that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, should not err therein." She estimated that the work would take her seven years at least; she has spent fourteen years upon it. The New Testament was finished as far as the Acts of the Apostles in 1912, and a tentative edition published.*

Elsewhere she put forth a further protest against the inroads of so-called "higher criticism" in the mission field as follows:

"We are living in a strange time. There is famine, not of food and water, but of the Word of God. India is no exception to the rule. God's Word has been robbed of its supreme authority. Some of the missionaries who came to preach the truth as it is in Jesus to a lost people in this country are now preaching higher criticism. Our Indian Christian Churches have become cold and lukewarm. The power of the living God which brings a radical change in a converted man is not in them. The Christian religion is certainly preached, as also are other religions. It is not with us as the Apostle Paul said: 'I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified....And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.'

"Many of our preachers have nowadays determined to know everything, save Jesus Christ. They think our faith must stand in the wisdom of man. The foundation of our faith is not to be the Word of God, but science! They have determined to know what the 'higher critics' have to say about our God

* The translation of the whole Bible was completed a brief period before Pandita Ramabai's decease. See the final chapter of this volume.

and His Word. Everything that the world has to teach us they think we must know. Now the question is, Why must they do this and preach Christ as well? Can they not be out and out for the world and deny Christ if they wish our faith should stand in science and not in demonstration of the Spirit and of power? If we as Christians are to witness for Christ, why must we do everything as the world would have us do? Is there no power in our God which can deliver us from the bondage of the world?"

The Editor of *The Indian Christian*, commenting on Ramabai's New Testament, said: "Many in Western India will feel deeply indebted to Pandita Ramabai for her simple, yet beautiful, translation of the New Testament. Our Lord's discourses were ever of the simplest, and it is most noticeable how the English translators of His sayings have chosen so large a number of words of one syllable and such simple language to convey the sense of the original (*e.g.*, 'The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully,' etc., Luke 12. 16). Some would render this much as follows: 'The estate of a certain opulent agriculturalist was profusely fertile, and meditating within himself, he ejaculated, The spaciousness of my granary being inadequate for the storage of my produce, I am perplexed as to my future procedure.'"

This lends another point to the contention of Mr. Fuller, that the purity of the English language is largely due to the influence upon literature of the Authorised Version of the Bible.

* * * * *

The vision of the evangelisation of India by her own people was an ever expanding one to Ramabai. Such work as that of the Gospel Bands sent out from Mukti during the revival now became a permanent

feature of the work. With this new force of four hundred women ready for service, filled with the Holy Spirit, available to help publish the good news of salvation among the heathen, Ramabai realised the need of further help from well-qualified Christian women as leaders in this evangelistic work.

In answer to prayer the Lord sent such helpers from time to time. Some ladies from the Poona and India Village Mission undertook to lead out Gospel bands from Mukti in 1907. They were led to go to a very idolatrous city called Pandharpur, where large numbers of pilgrims congregate at several different seasons of the year. The Lord clearly indicated the place to Miss Parsons, the leader of the party. She said: "I had great travail for souls, and found myself in an agony during which the Lord brought before my spiritual vision a picture of the idolatrous city. I had never visited it and had no idea of its size, but when the Lord brought its needs before me in prayer I could see it as plainly as though I had lived in it for years.

"I saw, as it were, four roads leading into the city just thronged with pilgrims coming from different parts of India. I saw these pilgrims flock to the temple of their god, fall at his feet, then leave, turning to the left till they came to an immense precipice, of which they were not aware until they had fallen down, lost for ever." When I arrived at Pandharpur I saw the city laid out just as it had been presented to my spiritual vision, the four good Government roads leading into the city thronged with pilgrims. I saw them fall to the ground in sight of the temple which had been portrayed so clearly. I saw—I almost hesitate to write it—I saw the corpses of scores and scores of these pilgrims carried off by cholera; cartloads piled up one upon

another. I saw fathers carrying corpses of loved sons, brothers carrying corpses of brothers, young men carrying corpses of parents, till my heart was sick, and I realised that God had prepared me for these awful sights by the pictures brought before my spiritual vision only a few days before. Hundreds and hundreds heard the truth during that pilgrimage, of whom hundreds and hundreds passed into eternity also during that time.

“Weeks passed, during which time the city was being saturated with the truths of the Gospel. Our band increased and heralds of the Cross went north, south, east, and west of the city proclaiming Jesus as the Way (and ‘no other way but Jesus—salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus, and through His blood alone’). The Lord gives us sometimes the privilege of seeing those who listen to the Gospel so convicted that they seem just bound to the spot where they stand. We pray that a spirit of repentance may fall upon them.”

It was not long before Satan found an instrument ready to his hand to raise an opposition band to the praying women from Mukti. The leader was a daring young fellow, who gathered a mob to follow the preaching band from place to place. The band gave him the name of “Saul,” and prayed that he might be converted and become a second Paul. They succeeded for some time in making the work difficult. Stonings, hootings, vile language, driving away the people, preaching the same things as the band preached, but using the name of Vithoba instead of Jesus, were some of the methods employed and organised by the society for the propagation of Hinduism. But the girls were most brave in standing a shower of stones and other missiles. An opposition of noise only they could sing down.

The second season there were eighty-seven girls in the band. The missionary leaders bore testimony that though they all lived together in one long room, which served as dormitory, dining-room, and general sitting-room, they had not heard of any disagreements among them during the whole year. This time they worked around the villages near Pandharpur, as well as in the city itself.

In describing the village work, one wrote: "Yesterday over a hundred people gathered in the principal street and listened quietly; in the afternoon we had a really powerful time when from five to seven hundred heard the story of the Cross. We have had five really good meetings in the principal streets of this village, and in eight other near by villages we have been able to tell forth the glad tidings with varied experiences. The Name of Jesus has sounded very sweet in these dark places, where it has not been heard before. To-day in two places we had real Pandharpur opposition; we had said the night before that it seemed as if we had left the stones behind us at Pandharpur, so this came to assure us such was not the case."

As soon as the band reached the next camping place some one met them, and said: "Oh, I know you; you are the Jesus people." The police warned the people against disturbing them, saying that people had been punished for interfering with them in other places. Much encouraged, one of the workers wrote: "Truly the villages are ready for the Gospel; it is only for us to go forward. I am asking the Lord to prepare enough girls for itinerating bands as well as resident bands in the city, so that after the rains we might change the bands every month so that all would have their turn at enduring hardships in the villages, as well as get experiences in city work."

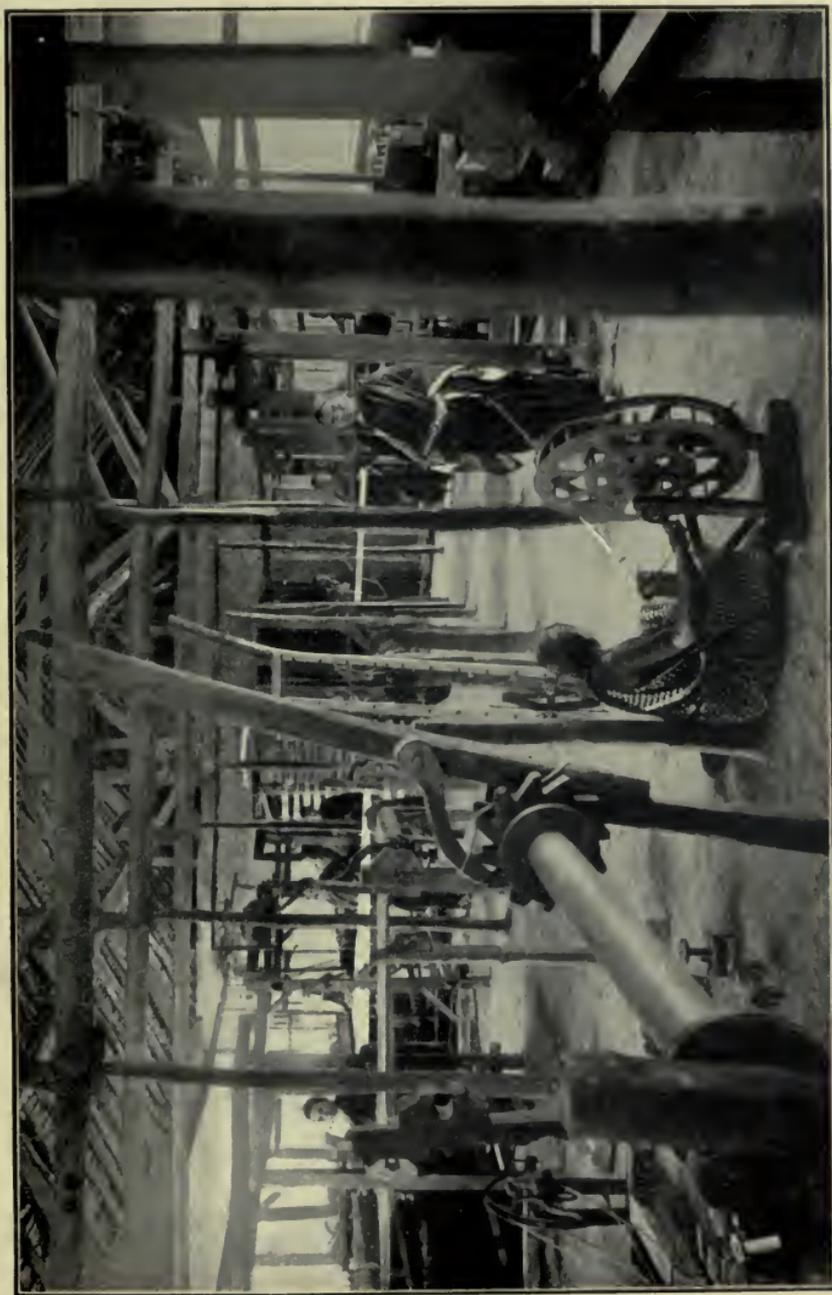
Concerning one afternoon's work in the city, the leader wrote: "People in the carriages, in stores, idol temples, from housetops everywhere were listening. Outside a certain temple a little man, utterly wicked looking, ran hither and thither like a dried leaf flying about, trying to chase the people away; he held up both his arms and screamed with all his might; all the multitude followed his example. Then he sent an ugly old fellow to beat a drum right in front of us. We sang on just the same, with unspeakable joy and glorying in the Lord Jesus and His power. It worked out for good; he gathered a big crowd. But now, what happened? A policeman came out and stopped the noise; the little man flew like a cat into his corner, and we got a lovely chance to speak to the amazed crowd. Oh! such power from God came on the girls, and the Lord triumphed gloriously. Singing, we passed on to another place, and there, too, the power of the Holy Ghost was present . . .

"At J. we had a ray of sunshine. An old Marathi man, one hundred years old, was lying in the yard, and when we spoke to him he said: 'Since Friday your God has forgiven my sins, and Jesus is my Saviour.' This came as a shock of joy after a whole afternoon of rejection. We usually go to this village on Fridays. Some one had given him the truth, and he had accepted it then and there; he was quite resting in the Lord. So also another old man that I met on my way to camp on Tuesday. The light seemed to flash into his heart at once through the verse: 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'"

After more than a year of this work the faithful leader of the band was able to report (July, 1908): "The victories the Lord is giving are beyond our

hopes and expectations. The difference between this pilgrimage and the one a year ago, as far as the attitude of the people goes, is as day and night. God has answered prayer largely for 'Saul,' and let him get work in another district, so there is no 'Saul' band. We do have people coming to drive the crowd away, but only to give place to others. No stones this week to speak of. Constant power in speaking, holy boldness and compassion manifested; we realise while we speak that chariots of fire are round about us, and that He who is for us is more than they who are against us. Of course there has to be constant claiming of the precious blood, the Cross and its power, and praising while we are speaking."

But though "Saul" was removed, the spirit of opposition to the Gospel remained beneath the surface, and the enemy made a daring attack upon the Mission premises a few weeks later. It was the weekly day of prayer, and the workers were all at home instead of being out preaching as usual. A mob of about forty men and boys came and surrounded the Mission house, carrying clubs with which they began smashing windows. Miss K. Steele ran out to ascertain what was the matter, when the mob attacked her, beating her with clubs till she fell unconscious, when they turned and fled. Miss Parsons arrived upon the scene just in time to see the men throw down their blood-marked weapons and run away. Two little boys of thirteen, who were arrested by the police with others, gave evidence as follows: "A band of men and boys were going along the road and called to us, saying, 'Come, we are going hunting.' We joined them and sat with them near a temple about ten minutes' walk from the Mission premises, where they told us their intentions. Some climbed a tree and cut down thick branches with which to



THE WEAVING ROOM, WHERE THE INDIAN WOMEN'S DRESSES (SARIES), TOWELS, ETC.,
ARE WOVEN



DISTRIBUTING NEW SERIES

beat any they saw. Then we divided into two bands, one going behind and one in front. I was with the latter. We began smashing windows, on which the *mem-sahib* ran out. At once one ran at her, beat and stunned her; when she fell unconscious the whole company at once rushed upon her and beat and stoned her till they were terrified, and then we fled!"

There were more than ninety people on the Mission compound beside Miss Steele, but no one else was injured. It seemed hardly possible at first that she could recover, but the Lord put forth His mighty hand and healed her.

Although this interrupted for a time the work of the preaching band, it was not for a long period. Within a year Miss Steele was again with them at Pandharpur, and up to the present it still goes on.

Of a subsequent occasion, Manoramabai wrote: "The great pilgrimage of Hindus to Pandharpur is just over. Our bands have been working there, and they report of great blessing. Many seem to have believed the Word preached."

Ramabai having spent so much of her own early life wandering from place to place where pilgrims gather, she has always been keen on giving the Gospel to the crowds who congregate in these so-called "holy" places. Every such place within reach from Mukti is visited by her preaching bands. On one occasion a midnight festival was held by the Hindus from a large number of villages, and thousands of men, women, and children met to worship at a temple not far from Mukti. Ramabai sent two or three bands of young people with older workers to tell the story of Jesus.

In one of these bands was one of the matrons of Mukti, a Christian young woman, and a faithful,

loving worker. She stood on the roadside with others telling as clearly as she could the story of the crucified and risen Saviour. There was not much time to think of anything but the work of the moment. Thousands of people were passing by, and this might be their only chance of hearing the Gospel. Yet as she stood there, there suddenly flashed into her mind the memory of a similar scene which she had witnessed fourteen years before.

There had been just such a midnight festival in a distant part of India. Then as now messengers of the Cross had gone forth to preach to the crowds of a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour. Far back in the crowd this young woman had stood, then a poor, sad, and lonely little widow, and there for the first time in her life she had heard the Name of Jesus. This same Jesus had heard the prayer of her heart as it went up to Him daily after that, for months crying for deliverance from the misery of Hindu widowhood. He had delivered her and led her by a way that she knew not. And now she was a Christian worker, gladly telling forth the story of Him whom she loves because He first loved her. Is it surprising that she returned to Mukti the next morning declaring that she had never known such joy since she became a Christian?

The constant going forth of these bands from Mukti has led to the planting of out-stations here and there in the surrounding villages. One of the European workers, recently on furlough in America, said: "In the cold season we have gone out in bands and camped in different places, and now we have on either side of Mukti two established stations. One village is Supa, about ten miles distant. Supa is the centre of a great many smaller villages. First of all we paid occasional visits, then we took a band

and were able to do regular preaching. Four years ago we were able to get a house in the village, fixed it up, and made it livable. Then myself and other missionaries went there to work. From there we could reach the surrounding villages. Now we have a nice little bungalow and two missionaries stationed there. Then on the other side of Mukti we have a place called Rahu. Miss Boes, one of the workers, was out tenting in the village, and one day a young man came up and said: "I want you to come and settle down in our village and open a school." He offered a place for a school. Further conversation showed it was not merely the school he wanted; he was really seeking the Lord. He came and saw Ramabai, and finally she took the shed he offered and turned it into a school. There are several other inquirers in that village, in which a mud hut has been erected sufficient for one missionary and several Indians to live there.

CHAPTER XIV.

Gospel Printing at Mukti.

BEFORE we left India in 1899 Pandita Ramabai told us of her concern to have a printing press attached to her Mukti work, and said she would be glad if, when we were rested, the Lord should send us out to take charge of it for her. That, however, was not the Lord's plan for us. My husband suffered with malarial fever for some years after leaving India, and the Lord found other ways in which we could help India without returning there.

About two years later Ramabai acquired a small treadle printing press, and from this small beginning there has grown a very important branch of the work; how important and how fruitful the Great Day will reveal! Only one man was required in the beginning. He did the type-setting and printing and sent out the literature. The first *Prayer Bell* was printed on this press, also many tracts and leaflets.

Little by little the money came in for this department, and it was expanded till, in 1910, in addition to the little treadle press, there were four large machines, a twelve horse-power engine, and a stereotyping plant—an important addition.

Some years ago all the work was done by men and boys. Pandita Ramabai thought it would be a great advantage if the girls could learn and set the young men free for heavier outdoor work, so she asked some of her helpers to first learn and then teach this industry. Miss Brazier, from Canada, applied herself to this task.

At first only a few girls were taken to learn the

work. Finding the experiment successful, the numbers were gradually increased till, in two years, the printing (including the management of the engine) came almost entirely into the hands of women. They are able to take the engine to pieces and put it together again after cleaning, and to care for all the machinery in the press-room. There were at that time sixty-seven young women in the printing department, and the only difference between their work and that of the young men is that it took two young women to do some of the heavy lifting which could be done by one man.

However difficult or tedious, the girls perform these duties gladly, feeling that this is the part which God has given to them in spreading the Gospel in India. God has not bestowed upon all the ability to engage in the active work of preaching or teaching, but as the printed page will often find its way where the spoken message is forbidden, the message from the press is surely as important as the other.

Visitors to Mukti are always attracted by the printing work. One says: "To see the ingenuity and skill of the Indian girl when taught you need to pay a visit to the printing department. In the type-setting room rows and rows of girls are before you, picking, sorting, and placing the tiny letters which are in many languages, including Marathi, Hindi, Greek, Hebrew, and English. Each one knows her place, and the work goes on silently and rapidly. A European worker and an Indian matron are in charge of this department under Pandita Ramabai. One cannot help rejoicing while looking on to see the printing machines rapidly turning out sheet after sheet, knowing that every sheet bears tidings of the Good News soon to be spread far and wide among the people of India."

Some may query why Greek and Hebrew should be used in an Indian printing office. This is for the important translation work begun by Pandita Ramabai in 1904, with the preparation of a Concordance in Marathi, with Greek and Hebrew meanings, as a basis for the translation of the Bible into Marathi.

As soon as Ramabai had completed her translation as far as the Psalms, she sent for an Indian musician to set them to music, so that they could be sung, arranging at the same time for singing lessons to be given to all at Mukti so as to make practical use of the work, both in the Church and the outside Gospel preaching.

In one of her later circular letters Manoramabai says: "Yesterday I passed the room where the children were having their singing lesson. They were singing the 37th Psalm. 'In the days of famine they shall be satisfied' rang out with great assurance. The people on famine relief work were waiting outside for their pay, and I felt they must realise that the words the little ones were singing conveyed a true promise from the living God."

But this is a digression. One of the European workers whom Ramabai enlisted to help in the printing office by prayer and "mothering" the girls who work there wrote: "When I commenced to sit near Pandita Ramabai day after day, I saw the need there was of some one to help in this department of the work, as Pandita's time is fully occupied with teaching the girls and superintending the work of the different Indian gentlemen who write manuscripts for the press at her direction. All the work has to pass through her hands.

"At 7 a.m., when the Pandita leaves her room for the office work several girls may be seen going with

her carrying a large wooden tray made for the purpose full of books, papers, etc. We call this tray Pandita's Ark. Though twelve hours a day are spent by her in the office at the Bible work, still she works in her room as well.

"It is no small task to train about one hundred and twenty girls to do this difficult work, but it is wonderful to see Pandita Ramabai taking one group of girls after another and to see the pains she takes to teach them, and the look of pleasure on their countenances. When we remember that the one who a few years ago taught these girls their letters is now teaching them this difficult work, we can say from our hearts, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy Name!'"

If an account could be compiled of the many thousands of tracts and Gospels which have been distributed from Mukti, says one of the workers, a most interesting book would result.

"It is quite a usual thing for those among the people who are termed 'learned' (that is, able to read) to read aloud for the benefit of all who may be within sound. At one of the big *jatras* (*i.e.*, religious fairs) a *guru* grotesquely decorated was reading a tract, just given to him, called 'God is Love,' to a group around him. He stopped a moment to say 'this is good news,' and then went on reading. In one place a Brahmin boy asked for a hymn-book. Ramabai has had thousands of a little hymn-book printed which is much sought after. After getting one, this lad sat down on a log of wood and read it aloud to a number of other boys.

"Very frequently in a home where no one can read, a tract or Gospel is gladly accepted, and treasured up till some one who can read comes to visit them, when it will be read aloud to the household. In one

village the schoolmaster took a quantity of literature to distribute to his scholars.

“One day three young men selling fruit came to where I was sitting on the veranda. I asked if they could read. Two could, so I gave them copies of the Gospel, hymn-book, and tracts. A few days after, one of them, whom I call Andrew, because he brings so many of his fellows to get Gospel literature, arrived with two others who both wanted books. Both could read. A few days more passed, then Andrew arrived with another, a bright boy of fifteen, who in his turn brought various others. Time has gone on, and many have been the ones and twos he has brought. Another day an intelligent young man who could read well came with him. When I spoke to him of Jesus Christ, he said, ‘Who is Jesus Christ?’ He had never heard of Him! How glad I was to give him copies of the Gospel! . . .

“Ganput, a Hindu servant, took his books when he went to his country and gave them all away, coming for more on his return. Since reading these books I have heard him tell the Gospel story in his own words with much feeling. He says it is so very good and wonderful.*

“One day, when giving out literature in a village, a nice-looking Brahmin boy of twelve or thirteen asked for an English Testament. We had none with us, but promised to send one by post if he would give his name and address. So he wrote his name and address in good English, adding ‘Esq.’ at the end. No doubt he was very proud to receive the book by post. Sometimes when a passer-by is addressed in Marathi we are taken aback to hear a reply in good English. One evening, returning from a village by

* When a servant in India takes leave of absence to visit his distant home he always says, “going to his country.”

Tonga, we saw two men in the distance running to overtake us. We wondered what was the matter. When they reached the Tonga, nearly out of breath, one of them gasped, in a broad Irish accent, 'good morning,' though it was nearly dark! They wanted books to read. I have found that a large majority of those who can read or who have friends who can read to them are very pleased to receive Gospel literature if freely offered."

In 1918 Ramabai printed 23,000 copies of a "Life of Christ" in Marathi for free distribution. She had also in hand a Reference Bible, in Marathi, a boon to Indian Christians who have none of the helps to which we are accustomed. Besides all this important work she compiled a Marathi cookery book, with simple recipes for every day use in Indian homes, with a Gospel portion printed on the back of each recipe.

CHAPTER XV.

**Further Famine Rescue Work and
Missionary Bereavements.**

THE most serious visitation of famine after that of 1900 came to the United Provinces, India, in 1907-8. Hoping to find open doors for saving widows and fatherless girls left helpless by this famine, Ramabai and her daughter went into the Allahabad district in the early part of 1908. But there was much opposition and many difficulties, and owing to great need of their presence at Mukti they had to return after about two weeks. There were at that time some 70,000 people on Government famine relief in the Allahabad district. Ramabai's visit did good and helped forward the relief work in different ways. Mr. Norton followed them a month or two later, and when he found the worst district was that at Bahraich he wrote to Ramabai, and under her auspices a work was begun there by one of her helpers, Miss Mary Macdonald, from Dover, who had been co-operating with Ramabai since 1901. Miss Parsons, of the Poona and India Village Mission, joined Miss Macdonald. Buildings were put up with famine labour, and as children were not permitted by Government to be taken out of the district, boys' and girls' orphanages were opened, children and widows were sheltered and cared for. Other missionaries relieved Miss Parsons, and later Miss Macdonald, when her health also failed. An Australian brother and his wife took charge later on, and all were helped from time to time by Mr. Albert Norton, of Dhond.

When the famine ended seventy or eighty children

and widows were left for maintenance, and the work was eventually handed over to Mr. Norton, and it has since been carried on by himself or his sons, latterly in the care of Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Norton. In writing of the way the Lord led in opening the new station, Mr. Norton, Senior, said:

“The way in which the Lord Jesus has provided money for carrying on this beneficent work of saving the fatherless and the widows and feeding the starving is not more wonderful than the way in which He has sent His servants here to carry on the work. Among the Heaven-sent workers here are eight of our beloved sisters who were rescued out of the famine in 1897 by Pandita Ramabai and sent here to care for the poor famine children and widows. Most faithfully and self-denyingly have they toiled day and night in caring for the poor wrecks from the famine. They have not only washed and fed and clothed the sufferers, but they have been much given to prayer, and by their believing importunate supplications have brought the power of the Holy Spirit into the camp, so that the greater things which have been done for the famine people have not been their being fed and clothed, but rather their souls having been reached by the power of Christ. Thank God for such noble servants of the Lord Jesus! None of these workers, whether European or Indian, have had any salary. They have toiled in a malarious climate, exposed to famine diseases like cholera without the conveniences (or even what many would consider the necessities) of civilised life. They have done it as unto the Lord Jesus, and in His Name. Some day the greatness of the reward, which they will receive at the Lord’s hands, will be a surprise to multitudes. To our blessed Lord and only Saviour be all the glory!”

The matrons on one occasion having gone to the *bazar* (public market) for food were accompanied by one little boy, a famine waif. When they arrived home their party had increased by one. This little boy had seen a child begging in the road and could not resist telling her that he knew where to get plenty to eat, and to be loved and cared for. What a picture! The little girl was evidently recovering from small-pox; her skin was peeling, filthy rags and claw-like fingers told their own tale. These children were fed and cared for. They imbibed the truths of the Gospel, and were "born again." Both are now engaged in telling the good news to others still in darkness.

The story of Sakhodabai, the chief matron among the Indian workers mentioned by Mr. Norton, is one of much interest. She was already head matron of the hospital at Mukti when the call to Bahraich came. Sakhodabai belonged to a well-to-do family who had not suffered from famine, and as she was the mother of three sons she was considered a very fortunate and happy woman. Cholera broke out, however, in her village, and in one month carried off forty of her relatives, among whom were her three little boys, her parents, her husband and his parents, leaving Sakhodabai and one little widow alone in the house.

Her two brothers, who lived in a distant village, took them home to live with them, but the sisters-in-law, who thought Sakhodabai must be a cursed woman, treated her cruelly, accused her of having caused the death of forty people, and warned her not to bring any curse upon their family. Life under such circumstances became unbearable; Sakhodabai was obliged to leave and seek refuge at a famine camp, where she met Pandita Ramabai.

When she arrived at Mukti and saw the happy, educated workers, hope revived in her heart, and she began to take an interest in her work. One of the first to accept Christ, she joined the volunteer band of Christian workers, and was soon able to go out with the Gospel in the surrounding villages. Sakhodabai has always been a woman of much power in prayer, and faithful in whatever she was called upon to do.

She still remains in charge of the women's department of the work in Bahraich, and is much valued by Mr. and Mrs. Norton.

Some of the workers from Mukti being in need of change and rest, a party came to England in 1908, Manoramabai, Miss Abrams, and Miss Macdonald included. They looked forward to a considerable programme of meetings in England, but Manoramabai having contracted illness on the steamer, owing doubtless in part to her being in a run-down condition of bodily health, their expectations were disappointed. Although nursed devotedly by Miss Abrams and cared for by various friends with whom they sojourned, they were two or three months here before the fever broke, and Manoramabai was still in a weak condition when her mother suggested her return. But on the return journey the Lord put forth His healing hand, and she shortly recovered. Needless to say much prayer had ascended for her.

Miss Abrams also was suffering in various ways, and felt the need of a prolonged rest. As Manoramabai sailed for India, she sailed for the United States, where she remained for two years, speaking on behalf of the work at Mukti as opportunity offered. Gradually a vision came to her to enlist the sympathy of her American friends on behalf of a large district in North India, near the borders of Nepaul, very

destitute of missionary effort. The opening that had been made at Bahraich just previously was an example of the need of the people of that district and of the possibilities of work among them.

Thus it came to pass that when Miss Abrams did return to India in 1910 she was accompanied by a party of six Christian women, two for Ramabai's work, and the others to open a new work in the Basti district, the needy part of North India alluded to.

After spending a few days at Mukti Miss Abrams went on to prospect and open the way for the new missionaries. She had a presentiment that her time was short, and that she would not live to see more than the beginning of her work. Two mission stations were started and manned with the new workers, when Miss Abrams, in returning from a trip to the hills, was taken with blackwater fever, through which, after some months of suffering, she was removed to the heavenly Home and received the reward of her labours.

Ramabai felt her loss keenly, and the whole of Mukti mourned the loss of one where it was said there was probably not a soul who had not been helped by her. The Bible school at Mukti is a monument to her zeal. Writing in the *Mukti Prayer Bell* after her decease, Pastor W. W. Bruere said of her:

"As a Christian, Miss Abrams was true to her Master, ever trying to walk worthy of her high calling and seeking to know the deep things of God. As a worker she endured hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; she fared simply, spent much time in Bible study and prayer; she wrote, planned, travelled, preached, taught and dealt with individuals. She was an attractive and instructive speaker. The demands made upon her were many, but she had time for all. Although often suffering

physically, she was in labours abundant, and often went beyond her strength. The Indian Church has lost in her a true friend."

Another prominent figure at Mukti was taken Home a few weeks before Miss Abrams. This was Mr. D. B. Gadre. For many years he had been devoted to the interests of the work, and was much loved and respected by all at Mukti, to whom he was known as "Dada" (*i.e.*, grandfather). He was much interested in all who were seeking after the truth, whom he welcomed with open arms whether of high or low caste.

CHAPTER XVI.

Developments and New Departures.

AN interesting feature of Mukti is the little homes springing up all around, peopled by the families of the married pupils, who are employed in the work in various capacities; Christian homes affording great interest and pleasure to Ramabai. They are for the most planted in a section of Mukti, called "Bethel." The children, of course, attend school at Mukti, where the kindergarten department is constantly increasing.

Miss L. Couch, who has the oversight of the boys' department, says that these young people appreciate their home life. The boys make good husbands and fathers. She says it is very touching to see how tenderly they care for their little ones and help the mothers to nurse them. Many have come into real spiritual blessing, and take their turn at Gospel preaching. Prayer is continually made at Mukti that God will call many of these young men and send them forth anointed to preach the Gospel.

The young women make good, thoughtful wives. None of them are idle. They do their own cooking and washing, take care of their babies, and, in addition, each has some duties at Mukti which employ them several hours daily.

Many of the girls from Mukti have married Christian men and have gone to live in distant parts of India, where they are testifying to the heathen around them of the Saviour's love. Good testimonies come to hand of the godly lives of some of these who are working as Bible-women in other missions. In



GIRLS AT NEEDLEWORK AT MUKTI



BLIND GIRLS AT WORK. MISS HASTIE, IN CHARGE, SITTING AT RAISED TABLE IN CENTRE

fact, you can go to almost any part of India and find women trained by Ramabai.

A missionary, writing concerning one who had worked as Bible-woman in a village mission in North India, and was leaving to be married to a preacher in another place, said: "This young Bible-woman's one desire during these years of preaching has been to give a helping hand to her brothers and sisters still in darkness. To this end she has worked and prayed early and late. I have known her to rise in the small hours of the night while others have slept in order that, prior to cooking her food, she might spend an hour or two laying hold of God for the day's work in the villages."

Occasionally it has been found that some of the girls and young women rescued during famine times have been married in their heathen days, and the husbands or some relative has come to claim them. One of these, a peculiarly fine girl, thoroughly converted and on fire for souls, was claimed by her husband from Gujerat. After ascertaining that his claim was genuine they were permitted to meet, when the young woman consented to go with him on his promise to allow her to remain a Christian. She wrote afterwards thanking Ramabai for what had been done for her, and telling of her endeavours to spread the Gospel message in the place where she was.

Several others have boldly declined to go back into heathen homes where they would not be allowed to confess their faith in Christ. It was a joy to Ramabai to stand by one and another of these as they testified boldly to their people.

As will be seen elsewhere, Christmas at Mukti is always a time of great joy, and friends in many lands send parcels and gifts to help make it a time to be looked forward to. But it is not always spent in the

same way. On one occasion the boxes for Christmas did not arrive at the expected time. Prayer was earnestly made that the Christmas joy might not be diminished on this account. And the Lord answered prayer abundantly. There was not a murmur, but abounding happiness prevailed. Then some weeks after, when school was again in full swing and Christmas a thing of the past, the missing boxes arrived and every one received their gifts.

On another occasion one of the workers proposed that as the Mukti family had for years known the joy of receiving gifts from God through loving friends, it would be well for them to learn the joy of giving to the Lord. It was suggested that the Christmas morning service should take the form of a thanksgiving service, and those who were led to give would then have an opportunity of bringing what they wished towards the spread of the Gospel in India.

Knowing that many had not any money to give, Ramabai arranged for an early distribution of presents, so those who wished to do so could bring some of their gifts as offerings to the Lord at the morning service.

By 10 a.m. the steps of the Church platform presented a beautiful sight. Dolls, toys, books, clothing, and many other articles had been brought willingly as offerings to the Lord, and happy faces could be seen in all parts of the Church which told of the real joy which filled hearts to overflowing and then burst forth in hymns of praise. One worker noticed a touching little incident. A little child brought her doll, which she wished to give to the Lord. It was an offering that cost her something, and as she turned away to take her place in Church she felt drawn back to take one last loving look at the dollie. She took it up and kissed it, and then laid

it down again that some other child might hear of Jesus.

In the evening there was a Christmas tree, to which non-Christian assistants and servants were invited with the Christian families and some four hundred villagers to hear the Gospel and to receive some of the gifts the children had given up. Some of the dolls went on a journey to Mr. Albert Norton's Boys' Home at Dhond. A box of presents was made up for the boys and a number of dolls put in. As many of the boys were too old to care for dolls, the dolls were returned to be used elsewhere, but they did not come home empty handed. Around each doll's neck was tied an envelope with a few copper coins in each, contributed by the orphan boys toward the work of preaching the Gospel. Thus the doll's missionary trip was quite successful.

During the hot weather holidays the pupils at Mukti enjoy some picnics, a favourite resort being the dry bed of a river overhung with shady trees. "Mukti out for the day" is said to be a very delightful occasion. Those who work hard appreciate the release from tension such an opportunity affords. Under the green trees, and in the shelter of the great boulders, little groups are seen everywhere. There are swings and other delights. Some little groups gather for prayer, and others lead the blind girls, of whom there are a number at Mukti.

Miss Couch is the lady who takes charge of the visitors' rooms at Mukti and attends to their comfort, helping anywhere her services may be needed. On one occasion, when Manoramabai was invited to take part in some Marathi meetings in Bombay, she invited Miss Couch and about eighteen of the higher standard girls to accompany her. They went to the museum and then to the docks to see the largest steamers.

A lady at the Y.W.C.A. took them over their nice building and showed the girls a lift and a telephone. These things were quite new to these girls, who had always lived in villages.

They also went to see the Mint. The girls have learnt from the Bible about the refining fire, and many of them as they saw the different processes through which the metal goes talked to one another about it, and seemed to understand. What impressed one most was that when the coin was not perfect it was not thrown away, but placed into the crucible to be melted down and go through all the processes again.

A Call from Gulbarga.

A call came to Pandita Ramabai in 1912 asking her to open a school for girls at Gulbarga, in the Nizam's dominions, two hundred miles from Khedgaon. The call originated in a Bible-woman of another mission creating an interest among some Brahmin ladies. Apparently there would be an opening for Gospel work. These Hindu ladies asked that Pandita Ramabai would come and give them a lecture now and then and open a school for their daughters.

Manorambai went to Gulbarga, and with the proviso that the Bible would be taught, opened a school for girls. One European lady and a staff of teachers from Mukti went there to live. Then the Brahmins of the city decided that they would not send their daughters to a Christian school. While waiting and praying for guidance, and feeling distinctly that God had brought them there, a promise of one pupil was given them. One by one they came. In April, 1914, there were twelve pupils; a year later, thirty-five. Manoramabai wrote:

"One day we were visiting a gentleman who had

strictly forbidden his wife to have anything to do with a Christian school. He evidently knew something about the power of God's Word, for he said, 'Yes, your school will prosper. You Christians are not like other people. Others soon grow discouraged and give up in despair, but you drop a seed into the ground and you wait till it grows. You do not get discouraged when you do not see the result of your work. You drop a seed and you know that it will grow, and so you persevere.' How we longed to drop a seed which would take root in that man's heart! He was an orthodox Hindu gentleman of the old type, a very learned man of the highest caste, and in his own estimation far above us."

A promising zenana work was soon started. But the people who had promised to pay the expenses of the school did not fulfil their promise because the Word of God was made the basis of all the teaching. The difficulties were numerous from the first. The opposition was renewed from time to time. There was difficulty in getting premises, and then an outbreak of plague stopped the work, and when it was safe for the workers to return from Mukti to take it up again the number of pupils had decreased from fifty-five to twenty-three. It was most difficult to rent premises. Then an opportunity occurred to purchase a plot. Little by little a fund had been accumulating, starting with gifts from two poor widows. A suitable plot of land was purchased. It was negotiated for in Manoramabai's absence by a friend. She wrote: "When I went to look at the plot I found it was a beautiful piece of land which I had noticed during my first visit to Gulbarga four and a half years before. We had been out for a walk, and as we passed this beautiful stretch of open country I had said to my companions, 'Would it not be

splendid to have a school just here?' It had been just a passing thought, hardly framed into a desire, but the loving Father had taken note of it, and now when we ourselves had quite forgotten He had remembered and granted the fulfilment of the passing wish. 'He shall give thee the desires of thine heart,' were the words that came first into our minds as we held our first prayer meeting on our own land in the moonlight. And then followed the verse which had been our stay all through the eight months of waiting and opposition, 'They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them, but Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them.'

"An idol was standing in the middle of the plot which had been worshipped by the cultivators of the soil for years at the beginning of each rainy season. This we pulled down, and standing on the very spot where the shrine of the idol had been we dedicated the land to the living God, and we prayed that very soon the people of Gulbarga might learn to know and worship Him, who alone can satisfy every longing of their hearts. This wonderful gift of land, coming as it seemed straight from the hand of God, was all the more remarkable, because it came just at a time when the whole city was in a ferment of opposition against us. Several of our pupils who had learned to believe in the Lord Jesus as their Saviour had been confessing Christ each in their own homes."

This caused an uproar again, and the school was reduced from seventy pupils to two. One girl died through her earnest effort to win her father for Jesus. "Such cases," said Manoramabai, "give us courage to go on, and now there are nearly forty pupils. Very slowly but surely we are recovering from the

great blow which was intended to altogether uproot the Lord's work at the Shanti Sadan."

This work at Gulbarga is quite separate as to finances from the Mukti work, and Manoramabai had the entire responsibility, spending a few days there each month. The means were supplied in answer to prayer. The work on the new school building, when in progress of erection in 1919, proved a great boon to the poor people during the famine, which was specially severe in the Nizam's dominions in that year.

But let us return to Mukti. To the glory of God it must be recorded that over and over again, during years in which the bubonic plague raged in India, it rarely even touched Mukti, although thousands were carried off in the villages around.

The burden and trial of the late Great War was felt heavily in India. Prices of almost every necessity of life doubled, and sometimes trebled, yet at Mukti all needs were supplied. And not only so, but after the war, while the necessaries of life remained high, and famine again raged in Western India, Ramabai had the joy of being enabled to feed about eight hundred starving people daily. Before the war it was computed that to keep Mukti in food alone the sum of £100 weekly was needed.

At the famine period above referred to, Mr. Wm. C. Irvine, Editor of *The Indian Christian*, visited Mukti and held a series of special Gospel services. From his experience and observation he subsequently described Ramabai's famine work as "splendid from the spiritual point of view." A circular letter, issued later from Mukti, speaks of Mr. Irvine's visit as a time of great blessing among the girls, and says: "On Sunday morning he gave a very clear and interesting Gospel address to the

famine people. For more than two months over five hundred of them have been joining us in our Sunday morning services. We did not ask them to come to Church, but they asked to be allowed to come and worship with us rather than to be gathered into a different hall for separate Scripture teaching. The word which came to Ramabai when this request was made known to her was, 'My house shall be called the House of Prayer for all nations,' and so it was arranged that they should come inside. These people seem much interested, and behave reverently in Church. One day when these famine cases were waiting around for their pay, one man was heard to remark, 'If Bai did not pay so much money to these people she could build a very big bungalow.' 'Ah,' said the other, 'Bai is building bungalows in Heaven.'"

The circular letter also says that "people who were so opposed to Christianity a few years ago that they would on no account enter our employ are now pleading to be taken on to the work. Poor widows who belong to what were once wealthy families are now suffering from hunger and starvation. We are so glad to be able to help these needy ones, and thus to give them an object lesson which teaches them about the love of God. At the same time our hearts are full of praise to God for the gracious way He is supplying the needs of our own family here at Mukti."

When Manoramabai was in England in 1908 she said the story of the Mukti Mission was just the story of "proving God." Ramabai always spoke of herself in the most humble manner. She never was self-assertive, but some years ago she felt that the Lord gave her Nahum 1. 14: "The Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown: . . . I will make thy grave; for thou art

vile." Thenceforth she has been careful to write and speak only of what the LORD was doing through the Mukti Mission.

When Miss Mary Macdonald, the second European missionary to join the work at Mukti, came to Ramabai in 1901, the latter said: "Now I want you to go through this institution and teach them all about the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a sweeper; that is all I am. I sweep into this compound as many as I can get; child-widows, deserted wives, and orphans of every kind, and I want you missionaries to preach to them."

No honour was ever more unlooked for or unsought than the Kaiser-i-Hind medal given to Ramabai in January, 1919. We have heard nothing from *her* concerning it.

A visitor from Australia, who spent a few months at Mukti, wrote: "One of the workers remarked to me that 'Ramabai is as a Moses to her people,' and as I went in and out among them I found this to be true. Her intensity of aim to uplift and save, the deep soul-hunger and complete self-abnegation, savoured of the things of God, too high for common wordy praise." Another visitor says: "I was not prepared for the impression I received of Pandita Ramabai herself and of her work, which transcended all my anticipations. I would say without hesitation that she represents, in her single personality, the most remarkable combination of executive, intellectual, and religious powers that I know of in recent times in either man or woman."

The foregoing opinions and testimonies concerning the personality of the subject of these pages may well be concluded by a quotation from one of her own countrywomen. Our adopted Indian daughter, Heriabai, who has worked in the Mission founded in

North India by Miss Abrams, wrote regarding her visit to Mukti: "I came here to bring one of dear Ramabai's girls, who has been a Bible-woman with us for nearly four years. Ramabai's mother-heart wished to see her daughter, so asked for her to come for a holiday." After describing the various interests and industries at Mukti, the writer went on to say: "One almost holds their breath at the magnitude of this work, going on in every department without a hitch; and then to realise that the human head of this huge enterprise is just this most wonderful woman, Ramabai. My heart rejoices as I see what God is doing through one of India's daughters."

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It has been remarkable to notice how the Lord has laid Ramabai's work for her outcast sisters in India on the HEARTS OF WOMEN in different parts of the world, who have heard His call to support her in these God-given labours.

In England, Scotland, and Ireland, in the United States, in Canada, and New Zealand, these are to be found, ranging from the leaders of Bible classes and mission meetings, who collect each their small sums annually, to several, some now deceased, who have given a large portion of their time to spreading the interest in the good work at Mukti.

But the premier place in this service must be given to Mrs. Rachel Nalder, of Windsor, Nova Scotia. As far back as 1892 she began speaking for Ramabai in her own neighbourhood, and gradually branched out into other towns in Nova Scotia and the near provinces. After four or five years of this work she, too, became a widow, and thereupon devoted her life to spreading interest over wider fields.

She came to England, her native land, and traversed the country, speaking wherever she could find

or make an opening. Then in the United States and Canada. A year was spent in California, from whence she sailed to New Zealand in March, 1914, where she also spent a year, and then went on to Australia. In all these countries Mrs. Nalder has found sympathetic friends, who have been moved to help her to further openings as soon as her mission has been fully understood.

Mrs. Nalder speaks with the thought of helping the spiritual life of her hearers, and for that alone her meetings and incessant travelling must be an acceptable offering to the Lord. Here is a specimen of her talk from one of her addresses printed in Australia:

"I do thank God that I was permitted to entertain Ramabai in my home in Nova Scotia....My husband and I felt that we had a greater honour put upon us than if we had entertained our gracious Queen Victoria. I believe Pandita Ramabai is one of God's queens,...towering far above all the white queens. I look upon that brown-faced Christian as head and shoulders above many other Christians, of whom I have seen thousands. How is it? I will tell you. It is because of her single eye to God's glory; she has but one idea, but one ideal, and that is that she may reflect the Lord Jesus Christ.

"When I was speaking at a great welcome meeting in New Zealand, I said, 'Pandita Ramabai radiates the Lord Jesus.' It is true. You could not get into her presence without knowing the direct power of the Lord Jesus. If she were here to-night she would not tell you of any of the things she has done, but would be telling you what Christ has done."

Mrs. Nalder's descriptions of the atmosphere and work at Mukti were marvellous, considering that all these years she had been at work she had never seen India until she went there from Australia in 1915.

The visit to the Colonies in 1903 of Manoramabai and Miss Abrams bore much fruit in evoking interest in Mukti. In New Zealand a praying circle, organised by Mr. and Mrs. George Mackenzie, of Queens-town, resulted in several workers going forth to Mukti, and in some very strenuous work being done. Each Christmas, boxes have been sent to India full of useful articles of every sort—clothing, toys, stationery, etc., supplying many needs of the workers as well as the pupils in the institution.

In 1908 Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie visited Mukti, and were photographed with the bands of young women and children supported by their efforts. Mr. Mackenzie passed to his reward in 1913, but the friends interested by their efforts formed a grand nucleus for Mrs. Nalder's campaign in Australasia.

Since her visit to India Mrs. Nalder has been pursuing her mission in California. What she saw at Mukti brings the atmosphere of the life there into our vision. Indeed, from each visitor we get things from a different standpoint, and reading their experiences is the next best thing to a personal visit. Writing on "MUKTI AS I FOUND IT," Mrs. Nalder says:

"All through these years there has been a deep desire to see the work for myself, especially after I saw Ramabai in my home in 1898, and Manoramabai in New York in 1900, but the Lord kept me busy fulfilling the ministry He had evidently placed in my hands of telling the story of Mukti, which resulted in a multitude of friends and much financial help for the work. I praise God for this privilege, granted by Himself, and all the joy and blessing it has brought into my own life in meeting so many thousands of His choicest saints in every part of the Christian world. If fellowship in this world be so

sweet, what will it be when we all reach our eternal home of rest?

"After a strenuous time of touring in New Zealand and Australia, one year and eight months, the Lord laid it upon the hearts of some friends to provide the money to send me to India, thus fulfilling the desire of years. Thank God! I reached Mukti on 4th December, 1915, and received a loving welcome from Pandita Ramabai and her daughter, and from the various workers. It was a joy to see them all looking so well and happy.

"Miss Couch took us all around to see the various departments. The school work specially interested me as I examined the work done in the different grades. It was most interesting to watch the bright faces of the girls and boys, and to learn the names of some of them. 'Martin Luther' particularly is always in evidence, hovering about 'Mother,' as all the large family call Pandita Ramabai. He caused quite a general laugh last Sunday as he placed her chair on his head after Church and marched out. I watched Martin during service. He was so closely reading the hymns and Scripture, then he patiently sat on the floor during the sermon, and also through a long communion service. Oh, the scores of just such precious 'little ones' here, each to be gathered into the tender Shepherd's arms.

"A sweeter sight I have never seen than this enormous family of old and young and middle-aged, each loving and looking up to the only true mother many have ever known. Whenever you happen to get a sight of either Ramabai or Manoramabai you are sure to see groups of little children, all eager for a word or a pat, and at times a little 'sweet' besides from Bai and Tai (mother and sister). I saw three very tiny babies a few weeks old, and thanked God

they were safe from the cruel fate of thousands of children in this land of darkness. What a deep joy to know that such will be saved the horrors of Hinduism!

“The children of the married couples are here in numbers. One of the matrons showed me her adopted daughter, whom she took when three weeks old, now a girl of seven years old. What a sweet channel for motherhood love to these who have felt the pang of orphanhood in childhood days! I am often deeply stirred as I watch the outflowing of this womanly instinct. As the cripples come crawling along like crabs, many of them having no use of their limbs, there will soon be some one to lift them and carry them to a wheel-chair or wherever they wish to go. The blind, too, are guided, the deaf and dumb are cared for, the tender compassion of the Lord Jesus is everywhere manifested.

“Last Saturday was ‘Durbar Day.’ Every year since the King visited India, 12th December has been kept as a holiday to commemorate that event. Pandita Ramabai is an originator, so in Mukti she has a ‘tea party’ for the cattle. Every animal belonging to Mukti Mission is invited. The road is filled with buffaloes, bullocks, etc. One, a fine, large, kindly-looking animal appeared to feel the importance of being present. The girls had tubs of grain oilcake for the goats, sheep, dogs, cats, and squirrels. Ramabai said as she laughed, ‘They must have a tea party. We could never get on in Mukti without the bullocks to draw our water, bring us building materials, carry away the refuse, take the workers to the villages, etc.’ She is most kind to all animals.

“The smallest children were gathered in a place inside the fence, and each one was marched past

Ramabai, who gave to each in turn a bowl of parched rice—most delicious—and two sweetmeat cakes. Then the ones able to leave the hospital came; so many weak ones! The mornings have been cold the past month, so the poor things have suffered. As I have watched the crowd coming over to the prayer meeting at seven in the morning, muffled up in anything they could wrap around them, I have thought how acceptable warm shawls would be to them if sent in Christmas boxes.

“It was a rare privilege to be present at the communion service on 6th December. The large Church looked almost full. Rev. M. B. Fuller preached in Marathi. Everything in Mukti is in Marathi. Alas, for those who only know English! I feel we miss so much in every service. I long to know what these girls are praying for when I see them in such intensity of prayer. I wish, too, that a similar spirit might manifest itself in the Churches in Christian lands. The reverent spirit of the whole service struck me as most touching. Every one carried Bible and hymn-book, and closed their eyes and knelt or prostrated themselves during prayer. Pandita Ramabai knelt in prayer during the greater part of the service, and I realised that this is the secret of all this marvellous work for the gathering in of those jewels for the crown of Jesus. Truly here is an object lesson of the truth, ‘Prayer changes things.’ Yes, lives most of all.

“There are so many sides to this institution, and all of equal importance. I just praise God for the various workers who seem to fit in so nicely. The doctor and her helpers are busy in caring for the sick and feeble. The number in the hospital varies, but it is a large piece of work to minister to so many sufferers and to seek to lead them to the Great

Physician. The Rescue Home, tended by another faithful helper, needs 'white-heated love' to Christ that will endure many hard testings. The printing rooms seem to me a most important factor in giving the Gospel to the Marathi people here. A Beni-Israelite gentleman and two Christian lady helpers have charge of this department. Thousands of books and tracts are pouring forth from the press on their God-given mission, and much prayer goes with the parcels sent out. It is a great sight to see large numbers of girls setting up type in English, Marathi, Greek, and Hebrew. Oh, the patience necessary to have taught them to do it so carefully! The same is true of the weaving, and the needlework, and everything else. The excellency of the work done in the large needlework classes filled me with surprise, and I feel that the dear sisters who have taught these girls to do such beautiful work will receive a rich reward for the loving patience required to produce such fine results. The work done in the higher standards in the school arrested my attention. The head mistress has received all her education here.

"The village preaching is also most important. Bands go out with the message of life and salvation. If there were more European ladies here who knew Marathi well, much more could be accomplished. Two lady missionaries have it as their special work to care for the spiritual welfare of this large community, and to direct the work of the Gospel bands.

"To see Pandita Ramabai always busy here and there with her guiding hand upon every detail, and to realise that she is giving every spare minute to the translation of the Scriptures, makes one admire the love of God in her which leads her to seek first the salvation of her people by any and every means. Her daughter, too, is a most capable coadjutor in



MUKTI BABIES



THE KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL AT MUKTI

every department, seeking to carry out the ideals of her mother.

“Of all these beloved sisters it may truly be said, ‘She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed.’”

CHAPTER XVII.

Domestic Economy at Mukti.

By MANORAMABAI.

OUR book-keeping class is so small, and its work so different from that of the Gospel bands, that few realise what an important place it takes in the affairs of the Mukti Mission. Yet the silver and the gold are His, and those who handle it may glorify God in their work as truly as those who preach the Word on the streets or visit in the homes of the people; and, as in the days of old, God chose men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, and gave them a special commission to serve tables, so we believe that those whom God has chosen among us for what may seem trivial duties need much wisdom and power from above, and we crave the prayers of God's people for this special department.

We include in this class those who work under the special direction of my mother and myself, who help in many duties to which we are not free to devote all our time since more important matters call. As we follow some of these girls through their day's work we shall learn how we may pray for them.

First, we take a peep into a little passageway which is at present "Ramabai's office." My mother moves her office to any place in Mukti where she feels she is needed most. At one time she may be in the printing office for five or six months, at another time her office is in the weaving-room. Perhaps she wishes to watch the masons and carpenters at work, and then her office for a time will be out of doors, where she is sheltered from the sun by a little shed, or we may find her on the veranda outside the kitchen, watching

the food being served, seeing that each girl gets her right portion, and that the food is cooked properly, etc. In this way the mother of our family moves about from one department to another, and wherever her office is, there people from every part of Mukti come and consult her about their work.

Early in the morning my mother meets the head carpenter, the head mason, the head matron, the head of the weaving department, the chief typesetter, and the leaders of other departments, and gives them their orders for the day. It is the work of the girl who helps my mother, to put her paper and pencils ready for her on the table, and to place ready to hand the various notebooks and registers, dictionaries, concordances, rubber, scissors, and anything else she is likely to need. As one by one the helpers come and talk over their business, this girl stands ready at any moment to open any cupboard, take down from any shelf anything called for, to run any errand, look up any record, and help in any way she can.

When this part of the day's work is over, perhaps the next thing on the programme is proof-reading. Every Marathi tract or portion of Scripture goes through Pandita Ramabai's hands. Sometimes my mother gets Hindu Pandits or other gentlemen to do a little work under her direction in the way of proof-reading or preparing manuscript for the press. These helpers are usually paid for the number of pages they have done, and so it is the duty of the girls who help my mother to keep a faithful record of the work of each person, to put away and keep in order all manuscript of this kind, and to reckon and record the amount of money due to each.

Later in the day Pandita Ramabai may turn her attention to the weavers. Perhaps five or six girls

may come with pieces of cloth or *saris* which they have woven. Their work is received by one of our book-keepers. She examines each piece carefully and weighs it. Then she submits it to Pandita Ramabai for inspection, and turning up various notebooks gives a correct estimate of the amount of material, yarn, dye, etc., that has been put into it, and states the exact time it has taken for the girl to weave it. Pandita Ramabai takes these details into consideration and gives the price accordingly. This is marked by the young accountant on the goods and entered into a notebook with the sum to be paid to the girl for her work.

But here comes a merchant. He has brought various samples of grain—wheat, rice, jwari, etc. He names his price, but does not mean what he says, for this is the country where the shopkeeper asks a much higher price than he expects to get, and waits for his customer to beat him down to what happens to be the market price. When my mother has done this part of the business, and stated how many sacks of grain she has decided to buy, one of our book-keepers comes forward and undertakes to measure the grain. She spreads a large piece of sacking on the ground, and after emptying his grain upon it the merchant proceeds to fill his measure and to count aloud measure after measure as he empties it into some sack brought for the purpose.

An Indian merchant never begins by counting one, as that would bring ill-luck, and he might get only one rupee, so he begins by saying, "profit," and then goes on to count two, three, four, etc. The girl watches him closely, as he is likely to cheat if he can. Then she puts down in the grain book the exact number of measures and reckons the money due. A similar record is kept by the girls to whom this

service is appointed of the number of quarts of milk purchased, the pounds of meat, the amount of wood and fuel, the kerosine oil, the sugar, the materials bought for every industry at Mukti.

In the needlework classes the European helpers keep a record of each girl's work and send in their reports to us. The book-keeping girls copy these reports and record the amount due to each girl. Every now and then we have a pay day, and then the book-keepers are very busy. While my mother and I do the actual paying of the money, the girls help to get it changed and counted, and keep the books straight. This is no easy matter when there are hundreds to pay, and much of it in small change.

Once a month my mother asks one of the village merchants to bring his shop to Mukti. He brings grain, curry powder, spices, sugar, and other groceries, and spreads them out for sale. It is not easy in a large family like this to arrange for the girls to have much choice of food, or to consider all their likes and dislikes, so some of the elder girls have the privilege of buying their own food and cooking for themselves. But they have little experience of the world, and if they went to the bazar the Hindu merchants would cheat them; so when the merchant's shop comes once a month one of the matrons helps them in the choice of what they want, and the book-keepers keep a record of what each one buys, and the merchant is paid in a lump sum for what he sells. Nearly all those who cook separately are engaged in some work of responsibility and are paid a fixed sum every month, when what they have bought of the merchant is deducted, and they have the rest of the money for clothes and any little extras they may want. This system involves a lot of book-keeping, but we find it satisfactory.

Once a week we have a market day, when the village people gather at the market-place near Khedgaon Station to sell their goods. This bazar is a boon to the poor people, as it fixes the market price of goods. As we can only buy vegetables once a week we need a large quantity, and on bazar days the people are glad to bring their goods to our doors, and we spend a considerable time in buying small quantities from poor people who have grown them themselves, from one halfpennyworth upward, from fifty to eighty poor people. This involves much work for the book-keepers, and many payments in copper coins; and while they are busy with the books and money one or two girls from the Bible school are going in and out among the poor people and talking to them of Jesus. Here also we have a small shop of our own, where other members of the book-keeping class do their best to sell articles made in the Mukti Industrial School. Every day all the petty accounts are gathered up and entered in one large cash book.

There are several other important kinds of work that these young helpers are learning to do. With our assistance they keep a record of all money which comes in by money order, postal order, or of all the small amounts paid in. They see that the receipts are properly made out, and that no mistake has been made in reducing dollars and cents, pounds, shillings, and pence, marks and franks into Indian money. They keep records which help to remind us of the needs of the Gospel bands who are out in camp, and must have money to buy their provisions. They see that certain bills are paid by money order and others by cheque or cash, and keep a faithful record of all such proceedings. Of course every bit of their work is examined and corrected; they are just learning and

make mistakes, but they are receiving a good business training, and learning lessons of faithfulness, accuracy, and patience, which will make them really useful women.

Beside this, our girls are learning lessons in prayer and faith. God does not send us money for a whole year in advance, nor for a month, nor even for a week. If He did we might forget the One Who in His great goodness gives us all these benefits. The manna came day by day, and as our God gives His children their spiritual food morning by morning, so He also supplies our temporal needs. Our book-keepers have learned to calculate just how much is needed day by day. They are trusted not to talk about the accounts to any who are not in their class, but we sometimes hear them talking among themselves, and making such remarks as this: "What shall we do for to-morrow?" "The poor villagers will be so disappointed if we do not buy their vegetables, for they are really in need of food." "To-morrow is the day for the money to be sent to the band in S— or B— (or some other place). They will be needing it, and, look, the money bags are empty!" "Oh, we must pray. Our Father God will send the money." So we all go to our knees and tell the Heavenly Father. And in the morning, perhaps just in time, the supply comes—"all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"—and as we thank Him for His goodness we wonder how we could ever have doubted Him.

NOTE TO MANORAMABAI'S CHAPTER.

An English gentlewoman visiting Mukti lays stress on the efficiency of the departmental organisation of the institution. She says: "Pandita Ramabai knows how to choose the right woman for each work,

and then to leave as far as possible sufficient scope for individual development. This surely is the essence of good government, and is a secret of good work and success at Mutki. The girls have happy faces, they seem in right relationship to those who are over them. There is strong government and yet good fellowship. Moreover, there is that recognition of responsibility towards God in the individual which alone can make for true *esprit de corps* in the whole."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Great Bereavements and Mukti's Future.

IT falls to another hand to pen this concluding chapter. It is the hand of the biographer's partner in home-life and Christian service in England and India for more than forty-seven years.

Called from faithful discipleship to her great reward, Helen Stace Dyer's body rests in the quiet "God's acre" at Aldington, Kent, within a short distance of her birthplace and the home of her early womanhood, Sandgate. This book is the latest of many illustrations of the final words on the modest memorial stone: "She being dead, yet speaketh."

The Mukti Greatheart Falls Asleep in Jesus.

Pandita Ramabai has followed her beloved friend and biographer to "the land that is fairer than day." After a long season of weakness, during which she concluded her great work of translating the Holy Bible into the Marathi tongue, she literally "fell asleep in Jesus" in the early morn of 5th April, 1922. The end was so silent and peaceful that the watchers were not aware of the passing.

Miss M. Lissa Hastie, of the missionary staff, the Pandita's personal assistant and secretary for many years, wrote:

"What a glorious day-dawn that was for her! But words cannot express the meaning of the loss to us, to all the hundreds of girls here in Mukti, and to the hundreds all over India who call her 'mother.'

She was truly a 'mother' to India, a 'Moses' raised up by God. 'Our Greatheart has gone from us,' said one. Her life of faith in God has been a blessing to thousands all over the world."

Miss Hastie continues: "That blessed little book, 'Daily Light,' said on 5th April, 'Jesus, the Author and *Finisher* of our faith.' Yes, her faith is finished now, it is changed to sight, and while we are stricken indeed, we try to see things from the other side, the glory side, where she is. What a welcome she has had, and what a greeting with Manoramabai! Not long have they been separated. Now no more separation. . . .

"We laid the body to rest in our Mukti Cemetery, in the presence of a great concourse, old and young, Christian and Hindu, for all alike honoured and revered her."

Another member of the missionary staff, Miss Jessie Ferguson, of New Zealand, writing a few days later to her friends in that land, said:

"At 5 a.m. we were aroused by a cry, and knew without any telling what had happened. Only one word was on our lips—'Bai!' And only too true was the thought which filled our hearts with alarm, and which we hoped against hope was a mistaken one. We hurried round and found that a crowd had already gathered near Bai's door. We went into her room, and there she lay on her bed as though in a sound sleep—and such indeed it was. . . . Her face shone with glory and beauty; only one word seemed to come to every one's lips, 'Beautiful.' No earthly beauty, but the beauty and peace and joy of the soul whose home is God.

"The news flew to the various compounds, and I cannot tell you now, the grief of the children for their mother. It was the deep, heart-rending grief

of those who are orphaned, and who realise it. Their mother! Their beloved mother, she who had rescued so many of them from famine, she who had taken them into her heart and home when no one else wanted them, she who had broken her alabaster box of precious ointment over them for His dear Name's sake, she had gone from their sight and touch! The Master said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me,' and the fragrance of that broken box, that poured out life, is filling Mukti to-day. . . .

"From morning till evening a stream of village people from all the nearby villages to whom Bai had given famine relief in every year of scarcity since 1896 kept coming to pay their respects and show their love to the Great Bai, as they all call her. It was a strange incongruous gathering to see in a land where caste means so much—high castes, low castes, and out-castes, all intent on one thing—to fold their hands in reverence to the silent form of a Christian woman, from a caste and clan so high, who would in her youth have shuddered at the touch of many of those who wept about her and told brokenly of her great kindness to them. Surely never before in India had a woman who might have been worshipped far and wide, had she allowed it, for her great learning and holiness, been so strangely and beautifully honoured by the tears of those whose very touch or shadow would have been defilement if she had remained in the religion which makes human deification possible.

"One dear old Brahmin widow, bent with old age and the fastings and hardships that are the lot of Brahmin widows in orthodox families, came, and leaning over the bed, cried: 'O, Great Mother, Great Mother, whom now shall I call Mother? Who

will care for me?’ Her grief was intense. Bai had been kind to her, had kept her alive during the famine and other years of scarcity, especially three years ago, and was still her succourer. Two Brahmin widows they were, but oh, what a difference! One had found the Saviour and yielded to Him her all, and the other was still groping in fear and darkness, not daring to step out of that religion that spurned her and gave her no place because she was a widow.”

The New Zealand Council of the Mukti Mission, on hearing of the passing away of Pandita Ramabai, decided to initiate a fund of £5000 for further printing and circulation of her Marathi translation of Holy Scripture.

Manoramabai had preceded her mother by less than nine months, after a long and painful illness. The end came on Sunday morning, 24th July, 1921, at the Missionary Hospital at Maraj, where she was under the loving care of Dr. and Mrs. Wanless and their helpers. During her last days she repeated again and again, “Rest, rest in the Lord;” “Safe, safe in the arms of Jesus.” In breaking the news to a world-wide circle, Miss Hastie added: “In those blessed arms we leave her, knowing that it is only a little while, and we shall meet again.” At a later date the same pen wrote: “We still have a very vivid sense of our loss, and we seem to be finding out more every day how much Manoramabai did. Hers was a poured-out life, and yet given without attracting any attention to herself. She yet speaks to many.”

The shock to Ramabai through the loss of her daughter, her anticipated successor, was followed by the call from earth of her greatly valued friend and former associate, Soonderbai H. Powar, founder of

the Zenana Training Home and Orphanage at Poona, many of the Bible-women trained and sent out therefrom to various missions having been famine orphans similar to those received at Mukti.

Pandita Ramabai's Successor and the Mukti Staff.

In forethought of her home-call, Ramabai nominated Miss Hastie as her successor, stipulating that the work be continued on exactly the same lines. In accepting this great responsibility, Miss Hastie modestly wrote: "I hope only to hold the post until an Indian lady can come forward to fill the place."

Miss Hastie's name is familiar to a world-wide circle of supporters of the mission by her signature at the foot of the Monthly Circular Letter, and in other ways. Prayerful sympathy for her in the added responsibilities will not be lacking from hundreds of warm-hearted friends who have never seen her face, and it is hoped also from many who make her acquaintance through this volume.

A Time of Great Testing and Great Faith.

In June, 1922, Miss Hastie wrote: "Directly after Pandita left us we were face to face with a tremendous test. We discovered we could not get any of the money which came for Mukti in her name; so here we were with a thousand people to feed, to say nothing of other expenses, and no money. The lawyer said he would do his best to get probate of the will quickly, but it would probably be two or three months, as it was holiday time in the Courts! We committed it all to our God, who can work quickly and who still watches over His own. Oh, it was wonderful to just be still and watch Him work, and from day to day He has magnified His Name and sent

enough to keep us going on. I could almost hear Him say, 'Wherefore did ye doubt?' and in answer, 'Forgive us Lord; we are going on in utter dependence on Thee.' Psalm 68. 9 became such a living word during these days."

A note of appreciation is due here concerning other members of the Mukti missionary staff. There are no guaranteed salaries. It is faith work all through, except where a missionary is possessed of a private income or is supported by a Church in the homeland of which she is a member. Members of the staff, whether foreign or Indian, are a Christian sisterhood, though not such in name or organisation. Doubtless those from western lands often have an inner reminder that the most beautiful characters of Bible history, including the companions and personal friends of Jesus in the days of His humanity, were of eastern birth, as where it is written, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."

Such an atmosphere at Mukti cannot be otherwise than contagious among its dwellers, concerning which a single incident will illustrate, written in December, 1921:

"The last market day our hearts were full of aching as we saw many of the people from the villages round, with just a rag or two to cover them, and the nights and mornings are so cold now. One man was going home carrying his wife on his back; her legs were completely swollen, and she looked so miserable. We had a collection here in Mukti for them, and one and another gave a garment they could spare and a few coppers to supply their need. Tears of gratitude rained down their faces. They could not speak for a few minutes, so overcome were they. Then the man said, 'Oh, thank you; it is a year and a half since she was clothed so.'"

THE SALVATION AND POSSIBILITIES OF THE SIGHTLESS.

Many of the narratives of Holy Scripture appeal in a particular sense to the people of India because of the resemblance of the scenes depicted to the everyday occurrences of the present. Take for instance blind Bartimeus sitting by the wayside begging. Such sightless mendicants can be seen everywhere. They have no means of livelihood except to beg. The proportion of born blind in India greatly exceeds that of western lands. And what makes the case more pitiable is the number of the sightless mendicants who are women, clothed only in a few rags.

Little, comparatively, can be done for the adult beggar. But in regard to children it is different. No wonder that Ramabai's motherly heart went out in warm sympathy of a practical sort towards such sightless waifs when the Mukti Mission was founded. She gathered a goodly company to teach them an honourable handicraft and to open the eyes of their understanding to the love of Jesus.

After Ramabai's home-call Miss Hastie was not slow to follow up this sacred enterprise. In her circular letter to the friends of Mukti, sent forth in November, 1922, she wrote:

"We have been so glad to welcome back two workers from furlough and two new workers, *one of whom is blind and has come to work among the blind girls*. Don't you think she was very brave to come such a long journey! She is so bright and so independent, and just an inspiration to us all. We hope now that our blind girls will make good, and that some at least will turn out helpful to souls in India."

To this every Christian reader's heart will utter a prayerful "Amen!"

Miss Hastie cheerfully added: "One blind girl has gone out on tour with a Gospel band, and people are so astonished at her that they listen to the Gospel from her, when perhaps they otherwise would not. Please especially pray for the blind here in Mukti. Our beloved Pandita used to call them all her friends. Always those in the direst need were her special friends."

In our picture of the senior department for the blind at Mukti (reproduced from a photograph) Miss Hastie is seen sitting at the raised table. Some of the blind are engaged in cane chair and basket work, and on the left of Miss Hastie a class in reading is in progress. What a contrast to sparsely-clad wayside begging!

Among further features of the Mukti Mission, its dispensary and hospital represent a valued section of the work. For a number of years Dr. Mabel Talbot ably and nobly devoted herself to this ministry as honorary physician.

IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH.

One of the latest public actions of Ramabai's life was in impressive harmony with her determination to give an uncorrupted translation of the Holy Scriptures to the Marathi-speaking people. In her closing months she responded to an invitation to unite with a number of evangelical missionaries in issuing a call to form a Bible League for India, Burma, and Ceylon. The promoters of this League appropriately placed Ramabai's name at the head of the initial list of signatories.

Ramabai's great work of translating the Holy Bible into language understood by the masses of her people had not lessened, but enhanced her veneration for its divine character from beginning to end.



PANDITA RAMABAI, MANORAMABAI, MISS ABRAMS,
MR. GADRE, AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE STAFF



PANDITA RAMABAI, MANORAMABAI, WORKERS AND FRIENDS

Between her and the foreign missionary advocates in India of an abridged and mutilated, so-called "Shorter Bible" was a chasm as deep as the abode of Satan.*

RAMABAI AND HER BIOGRAPHER.

More than twenty years ago the authoress of this volume wrote her first biography of her Indian sister in Christ, as the result of intimate acquaintance. The book was published concurrently in London and New York.

After the British issue had gone through ten editions, without exhausting the interest of the Christian public, Mrs. Dyer began the preparation of the edition which is now in the hands of the reader, thus bringing down the record to a much later date.

During the passing years she had the pleasure of welcoming to her Kentish home as honoured guests many of the friends and fellow-workers of Ramabai referred to in previous chapters, including Miss M. F. Abrams, with Manoramabai, Miss M. Lissa Hastie, Mrs. Rachel Nalder, Soonderbai H. Powar,

* For further information regarding this foreign missionary apostasy, the reader is referred to a pamphlet of painful facts, "The Ravages of Higher Criticism in the Indian Mission Field," by Watkin R. Roberts, of Calcutta, Superintendent in India of the Scripture Gift Mission; Hon. Secretary of the Thado-Kookie Pioneer Mission; and Hon. Treasurer of the Bible League of India, Burma, and Ceylon. The "Foreword" is by Rev. Prebendary H. E. Fox, M.A., President of the Bible League of Britain. This pamphlet is published jointly by the Bible League (Rev. R. Wright Hay, Secretary), 40 Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.; The Bible Witness Union (Rev. Arthur H. Carter, Chairman) "Runnimeade," Hounslow, Middlesex; The Baptist Bible Union (Rev. James Mountain, D.D., Secretary), The Manse, Tunbridge Wells; The Wesley Bible Union (Rev. H. C. Morton, B.A., Secretary), Tankertan, Kent; and the Protestant Truth Society (Mr. J. A. Kensit, Secretary), 3 and 4 St. Paul's Churchyard, London. Sold at cost, 4d. post free.

Miss Mary Macdonald, Miss Mary Berkin, and Mrs. E. V. Baker and companions (*en route* from America), etc., etc.

Throughout this long period the hostess also had the privilege of acting as the chief Honorary Representative in Britain of Ramabai's Mission, and of being a channel for the gifts of friends thereto. Thus the qualifications for her biographical work accumulated.

Some readers will be interested to know that the service of transmitting gifts has been taken over by Mrs. Dyer's friend of many years (and intimate friend of Manoramabai), Mrs. Matthew Barratt, Carleton Avenue, Pontefract, Yorks., who is thoroughly conversant with the Mukti work.

The address of Miss M. Lissa Hastie is: Ramabai Mukti Mission, Khedgaon, Poona District, India.

While this chapter is being written, a letter to hand from Miss Hastie says:

"An Indian Government Official came to see Mukti, and he put the old question, 'Where does the money come from to carry on the work?' and 'What salary do you have?' It was very difficult to get him to understand, even though he was an educated man, that we get our supplies in answer to prayer, and that our God sends us all we need, because we depend only on Him, and that none of us have salaries.

"Another Brahmin came along and asked how it was that we had so many people here, while in another place that he was interested in they had so few—the place he mentioned was non-Christian. I told him I knew one woman who had been there and wouldn't stay. She said, 'No one read the Bible to her or talked to her.' 'Oh,' he said, 'I know what it is, they don't get sympathy, that is a great

asset you missionaries have, and money cannot buy it.' Thus we go on day by day, seeking to witness wherever we have opportunity."

This enlarged biography is sent forth in the fervent hope that it may be used, not only to maintain, but to increase, the world-wide volume of prayer for the prosperity of a work which possesses such a spirit-stirring past, and such spiritual possibilities for the future.

ALFRED S. DYER.

ALDINGTON, KENT.

An Appreciation.

BY THE EDITOR OF "THE INDIAN CHRISTIAN."

IT may be asked: What was the secret of PANDITA RAMABAI'S success? As one who has had the great privilege of visiting her at Kedgaon, off and on for twenty-five years, I would unhesitatingly say that it was *her child-like, yet profound, faith in the Bible as the Word of the living God.*

She herself acknowledged the influence the lives of GEORGE MULLER and HUDSON TAYLOR had upon her, as doubtless had the lives and writings of others, but she was pre-eminently a *woman of faith*, and her faith rested neither on Muller nor Taylor, but on God and His Word.

Hers was a live faith, as her works testify. Knowing from experience the emptiness and deadness of Hinduism, her great heart went out to the multitudes living around her. Unlike the many, she felt as keenly for those perishing for the lack of the Bread of Heaven as she did for those languishing in famine-stricken areas, whose sufferings are so much more apparent. I suppose that the work of no single individual in India approaches that of the Pandita, with respect to providing for the need of the souls of her people.

Her great work for the widows would have more than satisfied most Christians, but her passionate love for Christ constrained her to launch out in other directions. Bands of women workers were chosen, instructed, and sent forth to the villages around; countless numbers of pilgrims passing to and fro to Pandharapur were appealed to, the "Bai" herself sometimes speaking to them; passenger trains were regularly met and thousands upon thousands of Gospels and tracts, issued from the Mukti Press, were

distributed freely, that none who could read should perish for lack of knowledge.

It was her deep love for God's Book which constrained her to undertake the Herculean task of translating from the original languages the Old and New Testaments into Marathi, and that with failing health and at the age when many would prefer to take things somewhat easily. This labour of love God permitted her to complete shortly before she fell asleep; and great is the boon she has conferred upon the Marathi speaking peoples in Western India by providing a more simple translation of the Holy Scriptures.

Many are the conversations I had with her concerning the more recent trend of things in India. She was openly antagonistic to the teachings of Higher Critics, and mourned greatly the tendency towards Modernism ever increasing amongst Indian Christians.

I always found Pandita Ramabai the same. Unworried, unhurried, always abounding in the work of the Lord; generous, courteous, thoughtful for the welfare of her visitors and all at Mukti. Though broadminded and large-hearted, she was truly separated to God, living with a single eye to His glory. She was greatly loved by those who knew her, and the little children of the great Institution loved to sit quietly in her company and receive her caresses.

Though I have not been to Mukti since our sister has gone to her reward, I do not doubt that the one she has named as her successor—Miss Hastie—will, with God's help and the invaluable assistance of a band of capable European and Indian workers, carry on the work in the same spirit, building faithfully on the foundation so truly laid, with, let us trust, an ever increasing measure of blessing.

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