

MISSIONARY STUDIES

FOR THE

SUNDAY-SCHOOL

First Series

Edited by

GEORGE HARVEY TRULL

Assistant Minister Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church,
New York City

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GEORGE HARVEY TRULL

William Carey

1763-1834

Type of the Missionary as an Educator

Pioneer to India

"A man who unites the most profound and varied attainments; the fervor of an evangelist, the piety of a saint and the simplicity of a child."—ROBERT HALL.

Carey's Argument for Missions the same as Paul's.

See Romans x: 12-15.

CAREY'S MOTTO: *Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.*

WHY CAREY BECAME A MISSIONARY.

A little over a hundred years ago a Danish vessel dropped anchor on the eastern coast of North India, not far from Calcutta, and a five-months' journey was ended. On board the vessel was a man unlikely to attract particular attention; small of stature, but with a mighty purpose. Many Englishmen had preceded William Carey to India, but they had come with far different motives, seeking gain and trade. He had come not to get, but to give, and the story of his life

shows how truly he gave himself and all that he had to India.

What led him, you may ask, to travel thousands of miles from England to far away India? Briefly, a burning zeal to give the gospel to those in heathen darkness. But what led to this zeal when the mass of Protestant Christians in England were so utterly indifferent, and regarded his ideas with scorn and ridicule? So much so that even the ministers were opposed, and one rebuked his zeal by saying: "Young man, sit down; when the Lord wants to convert the heathen He will do it without your help or mine." The study of two books accounted for his zeal: one, "The Voyages of Captain Cook," describing visits to strange countries and peoples and telling of their degradation and need; the other, his Bible, in which he found the plain command to take the gospel to meet the world's need; to preach it to every creature. Without sympathy or help from any at first, Carey prayed much over these two books and his resulting duty because of them. He was only a humble shoemaker, but, like Hiram Golf, "a shoemaker by the grace of God." Let us visit him in his shop.

THE SHOE SHOP IN HACKELTON.

We turn down a narrow street in the little village of Hackelton, England, and we see a sign: "Second-hand boots and shoes bought and sold." We enter the shop and on the wall we see a map of the world, and on it figures and notes which tell the conditions in heathen lands. We also see a globe made of the leather scraps from the shoes, and near by are the two books of which we spoke. At his bench is William

Carey, the cobbler and the minister, for while "his business is to serve the Lord, he cobbles shoes to pay expenses." We soon find that that little shop is a sacred spot, where the man before us talks often with God, and as we converse with him we understand the secret of his missionary zeal.

Following his rebuke by the minister referred to above, Carey prepared a pamphlet which was an inquiry into the Church's duty to send the gospel to the heathen. This has since become famous, and in it he meets the objections urged then and now against missionary effort. It prepared the way for a sermon which he preached at Northampton in 1792 before a meeting of ministers six years after the first meeting. His text was Isaiah 54:2-3, and his divisions: Expect great things from God: Attempt great things for God. A deep impression was made, and Carey, seizing the arm of Andrew Fuller afterward, said: "And are you, after all, going again to do nothing?" Something was done, for four months later in the humble little home of a widow in Kettering, twelve village ministers met and organized the "Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen," and about \$65.00 was subscribed for the work. Thus was established the first English Society for Foreign Missions. Carey's name does not appear on the list of the subscribers. Probably he had no money to give. But he gave far more—he gave himself.

At a meeting of the Society in January, 1793, Dr. Thomas, who had been a surgeon in India in the employ of the East India Company, was present and told of India's need. At this meeting Mr. Fuller said:

"There is a gold mine in India, but it seems almost as deep as the center of the earth. Who will venture to explore it?" "I will go down," said Carey, "but remember that you must hold the ropes."

DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING PASSAGE TO INDIA.

Plans were made to go as soon as possible, and an unsuccessful effort was made to secure transportation on one of the ships of the East India Company. Dr. Thomas, who knew the captain of one of their vessels, the "Oxford," finally persuaded him to take the missionaries for £250. But at the last moment, word having been sent to the captain that should he do so a complaint would be lodged against him, he refused to let them stay on board. This was a crushing disappointment to Carey and Dr. Thomas, and yet God's hand was in it. Returning to London it was learned that passage could be obtained on a Danish vessel soon to leave for Bengal. When Carey first expressed his purpose to go abroad as a missionary his wife was unwilling to go with him, his son Felix alone being ready to do so. But on their return home from the "Oxford" the whole matter of going to India was again discussed and Mrs. Carey said she would go if her sister would accompany her. This the latter consented to do, and final arrangements were made for the departure on June 13, 1793. On November 9 of the same year the missionaries arrived in India.

OPPOSITION FROM THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Missionaries were not the first people to go to India. The East India Company, to which reference

has already been made, had been organized about two hundred years before for purposes of trade. Its policy was to keep the natives in ignorance of Christianity, fearing that Christian influence might interfere with money making and trade. Carey and his associates were not welcome, therefore, to the land of India, as far as the company was concerned. Many difficulties were encountered at first, and finally he and Dr. Thomas secured positions as managers of an indigo factory. Five hundred workmen were under Carey's influence, and thus he had an excellent opportunity to learn the needs of the people. His idea was that "a missionary must be one of the companions and equals of the people to whom he is sent," and he sought to carry out this idea in all his dealings with the natives. His work at the indigo factory occupied him during the rainy season, when he could not travel about. Every Sunday he preached to several hundred hearers, many of whom came from the surrounding districts.

These were trying days for the mission. The opposition of the East India Company increased so greatly that the mission had to be removed to the Danish settlement of Serampore. There a printing press was set up, and with the help of two additional missionaries, Marshman and Ward, the work grew steadily.

FIRST CONVERT.

Carey had been seven years in India before there was a single convert to Christianity. A Hindoo carpenter by the name of Krishnu Pal had dislocated his arm. He applied to Dr. Thomas for help and seemed

more anxious about his sins than his arm. He had heard the gospel before, and, convicted of sin, was eager for salvation. On the last Sunday in the year 1800 Carey baptized him, and great was the joy of the missionaries for this the first fruit of their work. Krishnu Pal was a most earnest Christian and wrote the hymn which, translated into English, is often sung at communion seasons:

Oh, thou, my soul forget no more
The Friend, who all thy misery bore.
Let every idol be forgot
But, oh, my soul, forget Him not.

THE BIBLE TRANSLATED INTO THE NATIVE TONGUE.

Carey had not been long in India before he realized that the great need was the translation of the Scriptures into the native tongues. He worked very hard and in 1801 published the first *New Testament in Bengalee*. In 1809 the translation of the whole Bible was completed. During his life Carey made thirty-six partial or complete translations of the Scriptures, and was the means of giving the word of God to *twenty-seven millions of the human race*.

As a result of his translations into Bengalee, Carey's ability as a scholar became known, and he was made professor of that language in the Government College at Fort William, a position which he held until within four years of his death. This did not in any way interfere with his work at the mission, and all of his \$7,500 salary, with the exception of about \$200 for his family's support, he gave to the work.

HIS WORK AS A REFORMER.

India has been well called the "land of idols," for three million gods are worshiped, and there are about ten times as many idols as gods. There were two practises connected with this idolatry that were particularly revolting; one, the sacrifice of children by throwing them into the Ganges River to be drowned or devoured by sharks or alligators; the other, the burning alive of widows of Hindoos with the body of the dead husband. This latter practise was called "suttee." Carey did all in his power to have such sacrifices stopped, and in 1801 a law was passed forbidding the former, but not until 1825 was suttee abolished.

HIS WORK AS AN EDUCATOR.

Carey also saw the need of a native ministry. He realized that missionaries from abroad could never alone accomplish the evangelization of India's millions. He therefore established schools for the training of converts, and in 1821 plans developed for opening a Christian Training College at Serampore. His life in India was largely devoted to educational work. Within a year after his arrival he opened at his own expense the first primary school worthy of the name, in all the country. In every new station, as it was opened, a free school in the native tongue was carried on, and soon there were one hundred of them. His greatest work educationally was in the Government College at Fort William, and in the college for training native converts at Serampore.

At the age of seventy-one William Carey was called to the higher service of heaven. Forty-one

years of his life had been given to India. Shortly before his death he was visited by Alexander Duff, the young missionary from Scotland who was to take so important a place later in the educational and religious development of India. After Duff had prayed with him and had left the room he heard Carey feebly calling him. Upon his return Carey said: "Mr. Duff, you have been speaking about Dr. Carey, Dr. Carey; when I am gone say nothing about Dr. Carey—speak about Dr. Carey's Saviour."