

**THE GOSPEL IN SOUTH INDIA;
OR, THE RELIGIOUS LIFE,
EXPERIENCE, AND CHARACTER
OF THE HINDU CHRISTIANS**

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The gospel in South India; or, the religious life, experience, and character of the Hindu Christians by Samuel Mateer

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SAMUEL MATEER

**THE GOSPEL IN SOUTH INDIA;
OR, THE RELIGIOUS LIFE,
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OF THE HINDU CHRISTIANS**



IMAGE OF ONE OF 'THE FIVE PANDIANS' IN THE FORT AT THEVANDRUM.

THE
GOSPEL IN SOUTH INDIA

OR

The Religious Life, Experience, and Character
of the Hindu Christians.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL MATEER, F.L.S.,

Missionary of the London Missionary Society.

AUTHOR OF

'THE LAND OF CHARITY,' 'NATIVE LIFE IN TRAVANGORE,' ETC.

'BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.'

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

56, PATERNOSTER ROW; 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;

AND 164, PICCADILLY.

PREFACE.

THE following work has been compiled as the conclusion and complement of two others previously published, viz., *The Land of Charity*, on the general features, superstitions, and mission history of Travancore, and *Native Life in Travancore*, on the social and political condition and ethnography of the people. To the Christian missionary everything ethnological, social, and political, is but subordinate, and leads up to the spiritual features of mission work—to the great end, the salvation of souls and the universal extension of the Church of Christ. Valuable and full reports of the Travancore Mission of the London Missionary Society, prepared by each of the missionaries from year to year, have been locally published for nearly thirty years past, and these contain a vast storehouse of facts and incidents which are in danger of being lost in this fugitive form. My purpose has been to rescue from oblivion, and place on record in a more permanent form, these authenticated and verifiable facts and phenomena of spiritual life and vital Christianity. It seems a pity not to preserve such valuable information, which will be needed a century hence. The incidents are related with but little comment, leaving to others to draw the moral, make fair and reasonable deductions, and

apply the examples to Christian conduct. Incidentally a great deal may also be learnt of the various types of character and modes of thought of the people, Eastern customs and usages, and the manner in which missionary work is now carried on. Much of the work is necessarily a compilation from these reports, and I have not thought it necessary to encumber pages intended for popular reading with marks or references for each separate quotation.

These facts being all drawn from the history of one great typical Mission in South India, and that established in a great stronghold of idolatry and chosen battle-field of Satan, the volume should be of permanent value, serving as material towards a complete history of the Mission. The same plan might with advantage be followed in the case of other missions, thus collecting and classifying facts of Christian experience for the instruction of the people of God.

We shall attempt to show in some detail, by authentic illustrations and instances taken from actual life, the working of Divine grace and Christian principle in the hearts and lives of Hindu Christians, from which it will be seen that their experience does not greatly differ in essential features from that of God's children in other lands. We lay the case before readers interested in missions, or who desire to investigate the subject, and we boldly and unhesitatingly claim for the Gospel of Jesus Christ an *infinite* superiority over all false religions, not only in its direct spiritual result, of subduing rebels to God, regenerating the soul and setting the heart right, but in furthering education, civilisation, refinement and true morality: teaching

each class its respective duties, healing by the gospel of love the caste hatreds, the vile superstitions, the vast moral evils that prevail in India, and welding opposing classes of the population ultimately into one nation, one brotherhood, animated by faith in the true God—the Father of all—and by love to one another.

Christianity alone can do this; it has begun the work, and will complete it. We hope that enough will be found in the following record to give us heart and hope for India. This beneficent influence has only to continue at work, leavening the mass, more especially now to bring in the higher classes (if they do not wilfully reject salvation, as the rich and worldly too often do), till this beautiful country becomes subject to our God and His Christ. Our Omnipotent Saviour will assuredly conquer all to Himself. He will overturn all that opposes, and break down the strongholds of sin and Satan. The idols He shall utterly abolish.

Will our readers, therefore, continue instant and importunate in prayer that that happy time of millennial glory may speedily arrive? Pray that the Holy Spirit may be outpoured upon Travancore; that those who profess and call themselves Christians may be all truly converted to God; that efficient and successful preachers may be raised up from among the children in our schools and the students in our seminary; that the princes and nobles of the land may be subdued by the all-conquering power of the love of Christ; and the door of faith thus opened still more widely to the Gentiles. 'Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give Him no rest

till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.'

May this simple record of the operations of Divine grace tend to commend the cause of Christ and of true religion to all who may read it. 'For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever!'

S. MATEER.