

Hinduism & Christianity

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Personally I should have preferred the title of this paper to have been 'India's Search'. I want to put before you simply a few leading facts concerning the indigenous religion of India, & in doing so to a society of theological students I think I need make no apology at this time of day when the comparative method is being applied to the study of religion, unfortunately only beginning to be employed. welcome

It is a mark of the greater breadth of view now prevailing among students of Theology, in particular Christian theology, that they are ready to learn about God from the heathen we have too long despised. If Xty. is the universal religion we believe it to be, it must find some points of contact, to put it mildly, with the other religions of the world; it must find some truths, however dimly perceived, among the religious beliefs of non-Christians, on which it can build as a basis; ^{it must find} some faculties of the human consciousness to which it can appeal. Hence the study of other religions is not only useful, from the missionary point of view, it is ^{& much more clearly} helpful to the student of Xtian Theol. by leading him to fix the universal features of his own faith, while at the same time it strengthens his apologetic by furnishing him with a much wider field in which to gather the data, the facts & experiences which may ^{verify} ~~support~~ or ^{it may be} modify his own scheme of theology. This is especially important in view of the increasing application of scientific methods of investigation to the region of religious belief & practice, from which they have too often been rigidly excluded.

Comparative Theology is therefore a ^{implement} indispensable ~~part~~ of the scientific student of theology's mental equipment, & of all non-Xtian religions Hinduism is perhaps the best key to the study of Comparative Religion.

However I wish to anticipate a possible criticism by stating at the outset that I am taking a practical, rather than a merely academic, point of view, that is, the point of view of the Christian teacher, for I do not regard you as pursuing knowledge merely for the sake of knowledge, which is after all a selfish motive. Christianity is not a theory, though it has its theory, it is a force, a message, a person & ∴ it is aggressive. The Christian studies theology in order to teach it by living it. Hence I have ~~spent so~~ taken the missionary point of view as being characteristically Christian & have spent some little time in indicating briefly the progress of Christianity in India. I wish to take the point of view of St. Paul in Acts. xvii. 22-31.
[here quote.]

Those who profess admiration for Christian teaching & adopt parts of it into their own code of morality, are ~~very~~ very large. It is not too much to say that Xty. is 'in the air' in India & competent observers [E. & W. Jan. '06 - H. Campbell.] have ventured to prophesy that a series of great mass movements from heathenism to Christ in ^{the next} generation or two, ~~is~~ ^{are} a not very distant future.

~~In order to avoid~~ Our point of view then is that of members of Christ's Church who recognise ~~our~~ responsibility as stewards of the mysteries of grace not only to our ~~immediate~~ own particular congregations but also to those who are yet outside the fold, in whatever part of the world.

And of this worldwide field India has special claims on us, not only as ^{continuing} the greater part of our Imperial population, not only because she gives us freely of her wealth & substance, not only because we have a Gospel which India needs & calls for, but also because, even now, while yet heathen, India can teach us much about religion.

We in Xty. Eng. pride ourselves in our religiousness and respectability & yet a very large proportion of our population never even darken the door of a place of worship & live absolutely godless lives while ^{they live up to} ~~retaining~~ the ordinary standard of respectability. In India there are very widely differing standards of outward conduct, but it is ^{difficult} (almost impossible) to find any ~~Indian~~ native who does not acknowledge some religious belief & perform some recognised code of ritual. The inhabitants of India are the most religious of all people.

IV. How meet this need? - mult. workers

Concentration

Itinerant work also wanted

Large increase of forces

Prayer for Indian Church

India m. be converted thro' Indian Xts.

Sympathy from ~~foreigners~~ foreigners

Appeal of India to Gt. Britain. (see p. 282.)

Xt. the only Hope of India - p. 282.

The failure of Hinduism.

Our part to supply need.

India needs Xt.

Failure of civilisation

" " religions

" " Government

needs an Indian Xt

w. civil. & educ. pref. way -

cf. G.K. culture
& ty. (Ramsay)