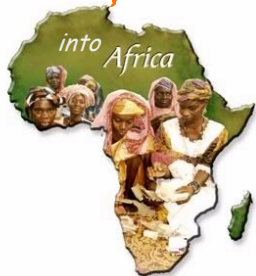
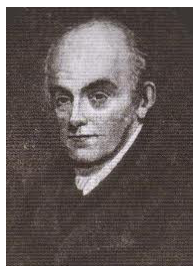
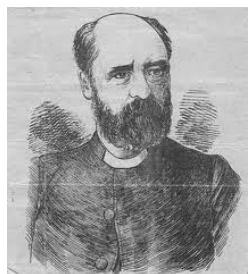
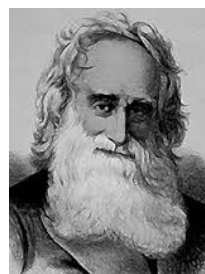


Footprints



## CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

### THE STORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA UP TO 1900



By: Bishop Warwick Cole-Edwardes

## PREFACE

Nigerian theologian YUSUFU TURAKI writes of Africa:

***“Christian missions have done more to bring about social, religious, and human development and change than any other human agent in Africa south of the Sahara ...they made substantial contributions to nation-state building and to modernizing African societies ...”***

John Piper wrote:

***“the passion of a missionary – as distinct from that of an evangelist – is to plant a worshipping community of Christians in a people group who had no access to the Gospel because of language or cultural barriers”.***

This survey of the work of missions is the story of unbelievable people who left their comforts and their homes to come to our magnificent country and preach the Gospel. I admire them and long to follow in their footsteps of *being sold out for missions to Africa*. Also, please remember this story is only up until 1900 ... enjoy reading it and remember what David Livingstone wrote:

***“Lord, send me anywhere ... only go with me  
Lord, lay any burden on me ... only sustain me  
Lord, sever any ties ... except those ties that bind me to you.”***

**THE STORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS**  
**IN SOUTH AFRICA UP TO 1900**

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## THE STORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

### 1. THE FIRST CONTACTS

The first contacts of the colonists were with the nomadic Hottentots on the one hand and the slaves on the other. Of the first named catechist Willem Wylant, who made bold efforts to teach them to read and write says: “They were so accustomed to run wild, that they cannot place themselves in subjection to us, so that there seems little hope for the people .... In the meantime I shall consider it my bounden duty to employ means to deliver them out of the hands and bonds of Satan” From the colonists little support was forthcoming. For thirteen years they lived without the regular ministrations of a dominee.

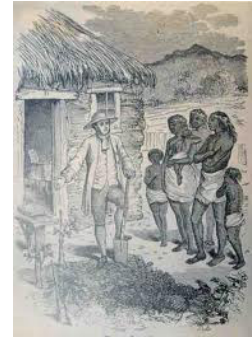
A certain Hottentot woman, Eva, who had been taken into the service of the Commander, was the first to be admitted as a member of the Church, after she had acquired knowledge of the Dutch language, and had learned to read and to repeat the answers of the Heidelberg Catechism. Unfortunately, she became a victim of strong drink, the first of an innumerable and hapless throng, and had to be secluded out of temptations way on Robben Island, where her children were placed under the guardianship of the church. Another group of the community for whom spiritual provision was made in those earliest days, were slaves. The first batch came from West Africa and in subsequent years from the East Indies and elsewhere. Some hundreds belonged to the Company, while the rest were allocated to the farmers on the express condition that they should be instructed in the truths of Christianity. For the younger generation of slaves the first school was started, and to induce them to come to school, and learn the Christian prayers, they were promised a glass of brandy and some tobacco!

The doors of the church, too, were opened to the slaves and, as Christian baptism meant freedom from slavery; it stands to reason that the privilege of baptism was abused by many. In 1703, the Rev Petrus Kalden of the other church reported that he had baptized one hundred “heathen”, by which slaves are meant. In spite of those well-meant efforts in the first days of the settlement at the Cape, the condition of the natives remained deplorable. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Danish and German missionaries, who occasionally passed the Cape on their way to the East, sent urgent messages to Europe asking missionaries to be sent to the Hottentots. One of them was Ziegenbolg who added his personal testimony to the written S.C.S. and also the Count Nicolas Ludwig von Zinzendorf, the founder of the Moravian Society. It was this Society that sent the first regular missionary to South Africa in the person of George Schmidt, who arrived on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 1737.

## 2. A LONELY PIONEER



When Schmidt arrived at the Cape there was as yet no thought on the part of the authorities of undertaking missions on any general scale. Only at Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Paarl regular pastors were ministering to the spiritual needs of the scattered communities. The view was still generally held that he who owns land is responsible for its Church and the spread of its religion. To the Dutch Reformed leaders this virtually meant that the Moravian was an intruder. Unfortunately, too, the missionary came here without being ordained and only after some years of patient toil was his Act of Ordination sent to him through the post by the godly Zinzendorf. Immediately, on its receipt at Cape Town, Schmidt returned to his station in the Calendon district, and on his way home baptized his first convert, Willem, in a running stream, probably the Steenbras River, giving him the name of Joshua.



*✍ His Letter to Zinzendorf*

*As the Lord has hitherto helped me and protected me under the wings of his majesty, I take the freedom to write briefly to my Lords to express my deep gratitude for the gracious help I have received from my Lords. May the Lord crown your work with mercy.*

*I arrived at the Cape on July 9 and waited until September 4, when I obtained an opportunity to go into the interior. I traveled to the Sonderend River. There, with God's help, I built a hut, and began cultivating some vegetables for food. On October 27, I made a beginning with the Hottentots, to teach them to read. I am teaching 4 men, 2 women, and 4 children, who come daily, sometimes twice daily. On Sundays I teach them about the Saviour. So far has the Lord helped me. To him be praise and honour. Amen*

*May your favour remain with me, most noble and honourable Lords as I live in humble respect under the banner of the Crucified.*

*27 November 1737*

*George Schmidt*

Added to this was the fact that the Moravian theology was at the time under suspicion of being unbalanced. More than one historian pointed out its undue stress on the feelings and an exaggerated blood-and-wounds doctrine of the second Person of the Trinity. This accounts for the measure of opposition encountered by the pioneer on his withdrawal after seven years of faithful service. During Schmidt's stay at Hernhut, the settlement of the Moravians not far from Dresden in

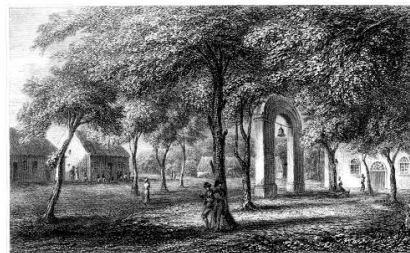
Germany, he was fulfilling the functions of cook for the happy family of 25 young men preparing themselves for the mission field. The urgent message that a missionary was required for the degraded Hottentots at the Cape reached Hernhut by way of Holland. On the 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1736, the entry occurs in asking for a missionary for the Cape. The request was acceded to and the choice fell on George Schmidt, then a young man of twenty-six. He proceeded to Amsterdam for further preparation and with a letter of recommendation from the Directors of the East India Company set sail for Table Bay on the 4<sup>th</sup> March.

The voyage lasted two days less than four months, and when finally the intrepid missionary set foot on the shores of our native land, his reception was a very mixed one. Not a few looked on his coming as, a hair-brained scheme which was bound to end in a dismal failure. The official minute of the Council, however “penned the hope that his coming might have the desired result, in order that the Hottentots may be brought to the true knowledge of God.” He was further encouraged by visits to the Dutch Reformed minister, though even the difficulty of his dispensing the Sacraments was anticipated.

In the company of Corporal Kampen, who was stationed at a military outpost on the Sonderend River in the Calendon district, and two Hottentots, Cupido and Afrika, Schmidt left Cape Town on the 4<sup>th</sup> September, to reach the outpost after eight days trek. A wattle-and-daub structure served as his temporary residence and of his work during these first days, the pioneer writes in his journal: “Every evening I visited the Hottentots, sat down among them, distributed tobacco and began to smoke with them.”

When they addressed the missionary as baas, he asked whether they knew the great Baas, who had given them all they possessed. They avowed that they knew only Tuiqua, the supreme Being who lived beyond the moon. To that moon too, they prayed, for it was he who gave them rain and fair weather. They also paid homage to the green mantis, an insect that has since been dubbed the hottentots’ god.

As the proximity of the military outpost did not in all respects prove helpful to the Pioneer’s ideals, he decided to move several miles down the river to where the first mission station on South African soil was laid out. In subsequent years, at the request of the Governor, the picturesque station was named **Genadendaal** (Valley of Grace) here the bush cleared and the virgin soil tilled.



GENADENDAAL

The difficult language was never mastered by the missionary. One of the Hottentots, who had picked a smattering of Dutch acted as interpreter.

Gradually a small circle of hearers gathered round the patient missionary. Afrika, Cupido and Willem were the first fruits. The last-named had been baptized on the way from Cape Town, the other two and two others somewhat later at

Genadendaal. Then came the crises, which had threatened for sometime. Schmidt was summoned to Cape Town by the Governor who took the view that the ordination by post was invalid and that moreover the Sacraments could only be dispensed by those who were acknowledged by the State. The result was that the lonely pioneer asked permission to return to Germany. Almost fifty years later his three successors arrived to find only ruins of Schmidt's home. A lonely pear tree reminded of his industry and a Testament, wrapped in the sheepskin, and now produced by old Lena, one of the first five converts, testified to the lasting power of the Gospel, even when human agents fail.

### **3. FORERUNNERS OF THE NEW ERA**

As at the time of the coming of the Son of God in the flesh there was a forerunner in the person of John the Baptist, so too, in our land God was preparing the new era by means of forerunners. They were heralds of a new dispensation in the Kingdom of God in South Africa.

The first representative of the new spirit, which was soon to usher in a new day, was the Rev. Dr. Helperus Ritzem van Lier. He was a man of extraordinary talents and deep devotion. Already at age eighteen he had obtained the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Holland. At that time however, the Bible was unknown to him as a devotional book and his knees had seldom been bent in prayer. The untimely death of the young lady he was engaged to marry brought him to the verge of suicide. As with Saul on the road to Damascus, the glory and power of God burst in upon his soul and he realized that only complete surrender to the Source of truth and life could save and direct his life henceforth. Just then, the call came from the Cape reached him, and he declared himself willing to follow the long arduous way. The Rev. Meent Barcherds was just about to leave for Stellenbosch and into his place at the Groote Kerk in Cape Town the talented young Dutch theologian stepped in 1786.

As he preached his inductive sermon at Cape Town on the text, "Go the whole world over and proclaim the Good News to all mankind". (Weymoth's translation of Mark 16:15). Even though van Lier's chief concern was for his own flock, whose spiritual life stood at a low ebb, the young pastor was deeply touched by the neglected spiritual condition of the Hottentots and slaves. He was especially shocked at the way many heathen slaves were falling prey to the Mohammedan Malays. Such zeal could not but enthuse those around the pastor and in 1788, after two years of devoted service, a number of Christians banded themselves together on certain days of the week for prayer and the furtherance of the Gospel among the slaves and Hottentots. Masters turned their attention to their servants to acquaint them with the Gospel and within a short time there were some sixty heads of households who were spreading the story of Life in this way. There was Mathilde Smith in the Metropolis, Martin Melck at Stellenbosch and Jo van Zulch in the Wormakersvallei near Wellington.

The first named, a widow whose maiden name has been Combrink, was a saintly and elevated convert of van Lier. She was the first to organize Sunday School for the children of the slaves, and when in subsequent years she followed the Rev. M C Vos to Tulbagh, she had her house built sufficiently large to allow large gatherings of slaves for their spiritual nurture. After only seven years of intensive toil in the name of his Master van Lier passed to his reward at the age of twenty-nine, leaving **Michiel Christiaan Vos** in the vanguard of the missionary section. Born in Cape in 1759, Vos was greatly exercised about the moral and spiritual condition of the slaves from his very childhood. After having completed his theological studies in Holland and served three congregations there, he returned to his native land and became minister of the Dutch Reformed congregation at Tulbagh. As text for his sermon, he too, took the words of Mark 16:15“Go the whole world over and proclaim the Good News to all mankind.” He told his audience that he was sent thither to proclaim the Gospel to their servants as well as to themselves, and urged his flock to send their subordinates for Biblical instruction on Wednesday and Sunday evenings. Many of them resented his request.

To assist those who acceded to his request, Vos prepared a simple catechism for the owners of the slaves and other heathens so as to lead them to the knowledge of salvation. These simple guides, which were widely used by the colonists, were sedulously written by hand as no press was available in Cape Town. With the help of Mrs. Smith and other volunteers as many as 150 to 200 slaves and others gathered in the spacious home mentioned above, and after the minister had expounded the Gospel, the voluntary workers undertook any further instruction to those who had been touched by the message. These forerunners of the missionary awakening were not without opposition, very often from their own professing church members. Some Colonists even petitioned the Governor to forbid any further instructions of the Hottentots, especially where they themselves were debarred from the regular privileges of the Gospel. It was feared that those who accepted the faith would leave the service of their masters. Though the report of an impartial Government Committee had revealed the groundlessness of these fears; the suspicion and apathy were not removed. But at length the good cause, so worthy championed by men like Lier and Vos, with their company of voluntary helpers, triumphed. The relationship between the colonists and their spiritual leaders improved in time. Shortly after Vos and “Mother Smith”, as she was lovingly called, had visited Genadendal and encouraged the missionaries, more than 100 colonists attended the Christmas service there in 1799.

#### 4. **A MOMENTOUS DECADE**

There is probably no more fruitful decade in all the history of Christian Missions than the last ten years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In England that short period saw the rise of the Baptist Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, the last-named representing the evangelical section of the Anglican Church. In our own country Francis Owen, who witnessed the slaying of the Voortrekker Piet Retief and his



company at Dingaanstat, between Babanango and Melmoth in Natal, represented the C.M.S.

It was especially the London Missionary Society, which threw its full weight into the South African field and made that last decade so extremely fruitful for our own country as well. Early in 1799 there arrived at Cape Town four missionaries of the L.M.S., two Hollanders and two Englishmen. They were respectively Dr J.T. van der Kemp and the Rev J.J. Kicherer, who in subsequent years became a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, along with John Edmond and William Edwards.



Van der Kemp especially was destined to play a leading role in the missionary drama. Born at Rotterdam in 1748, he was a man of fifty when he happened upon a prospectus of the L.M.S. which contains a call for volunteers from the Continent to cope with the need at the Cape, as this had been pictured by the Tulbagh minister M.C. Vos, van der Kemp offered his services and he was accepted.

The early years of this extraordinary man was one of “shame and godlessness” to use his own words. After a number of years in the army, he proceeded to Edinburgh where he obtained the degree of Medical Doctor. Whilst practicing medicine in the Dutch town of Middleburg, leading a life of complete irreligiousness, he saw his wife and daughter drowning before his eyes, when the boat in which they were crossing the River Meus, was capsized. It was God’s way of bringing this freethinking, free-living man to his knees. Within a week after this terrible disaster he was a changed man. He devoted himself assiduously to the study and practice of religion and started off by writing a commentary on Romans. Shortly after came the offer of the L.M.S. and his departure to London for further preparation. After a short while in his native land where he was instrumental in founding the Netherlands Missionary Society, he and his three colleagues departed for the Cape. They were warmly welcomed at Cape Town by General Dundas and the saintly Vos, who yearned for something in South Africa to correspond to the new Societies overseas and this desire was now to become reality. The coming of van der Kemp and his fellow workers, and especially a letter brought from the Director in London, hastened the desired event. The message delivered to van der Kemp closed with these words “Rise up, brethren, we adjure you! Unite yourselves towards the aims of our Society. The heathen, who surround you, are loudly calling, come over and help us!”

The Cape Town ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Rev. Vos at Tulbagh read this message from their pulpits and while some yet hesitated, van der Kemp urged the immediate formation of Society. The new Society came into being on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1799, turning this year into a red-letter year for our own land as well.

Of the sixteen articles of the Constitution of the new Society the very first laid down that it would be free to operate both within and without the boundaries of the Colony. In after years Commissioner de Mist with his liberal tendencies having heard of the proposed opening of the first church of the Society, called down fire from heaven to consume the building. The building, however, still stands. Rather branches were inaugurated in a number of towns, funds were provided for workers and a number were prepared and sent out.

In 1817, it began work at the Station Zoar beyond Ladysmith and in 1824 amongst the Malays at Cape Town through the Rev W. Elliott.

It was at Tulbagh where van der Kemp and Edmond went eastward to Gaika's kraal on the Chumie River, while Kitchener and Edwards made their way to the Bushmen on the Zak River, in the Calvinia district.

The mission to the people of Gaika met with no success. Edmond's heart soon misgave him and he sailed for India. Van der Kemp could not obtain permission to instruct Gaika's people and turned his attention to a number of Hottentots who were dragging out a miserable existence in Gaika's territory. After 12 months, he withdrew to Graaff-Reinet, where James Read joined him. After a brief spell of service there, the Government found it desirable to establish a settlement for vagrant Hottentots near Port Elizabeth and van der Kemp was invited to assume the control of what was subsequently named Betheldorp. This site was, however, badly chosen, whilst the Hottentots were devoid of ambition. The whole project must be written down as a failure. This was due to the unpractical methods of van der Kemp. He was more of a visionary than missionary. He believed in becoming a "Hottentot to the Hottentots", assuming their dress, habits of life, and finally allying himself in marriage with the daughter of a Madagascar slave woman. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt of his ripe learning, deep humility, and unfeigned piety, nor of his single-minded devotion to the cause of the Christian Missions.

## **5. THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW ERA**

We now pass onto the 19<sup>th</sup> century in our brief history of Christian Mission in the sub-continent. At the turn of the century the settlement had extended its inland boundaries somewhat beyond Graaff-Reinet in the East and the little town of Williston on the North. For the first time the Frontier colonists were beginning to contact the tribes moving in the southerly direction. Then, too, the Cape came into the hands of the British in 1795, remained for eight years, then passed into the hands of the Batavian (Dutch) Republic for three years and once more became a British Colony in 1806. Naturally, these conditions led to a large measure of uncertainty and instability. New missionaries arriving from overseas got little guidance from the authorities as to possible spheres of labour. In the second quarter of the century, this state of things was aggravated by the series of clashes known as the Kaffir Wars, on the Eastern frontier, as well as by the migration known as the Great Trek.

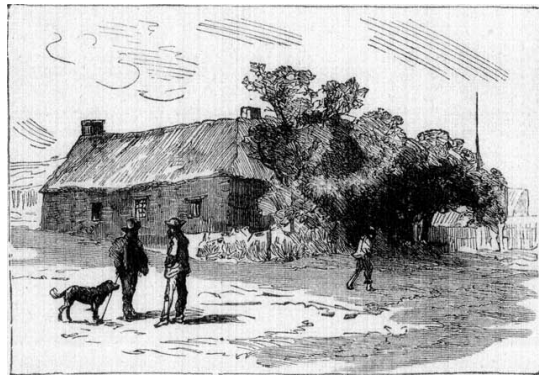
The occupation of the South African field was in consequence largely haphazard.

Certain societies differed in their policies of occupation, whereas others followed no fixed policy. The result is that mission fields in the world suffer so much from overlapping and lack of co-ordination as does the South African.

By far the most important factor in the blazing of the trail at the beginning of the new era was the London Missionary Society. In fact, that Society had already thirteen stations, when the pioneer of Methodism arrived at the Cape in 1816.

Unfortunately the directors of the L.M.S. in London took the view that after a few months of provision and equipment the missionary ought to support himself. The local language, consisting largely of clicks unpronounceable by the European tongue, prove to be a stumbling block. The result was that the work in the Zak River done by Kitchener and Edwards who christened the spot at Happy Prospect Fountain was soon deserted. But the missionaries were not dismayed already Edwards had proceeded to the Great (Orange) River to contact the Koranna (Hottentot) tribe.

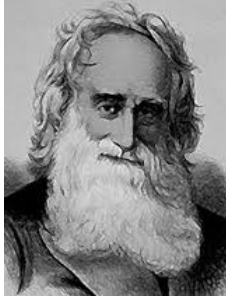
Kitchener now followed him and a new station was opened at Klaarwater (Griquatown). Edwards went even further to make contact with the Bechuanas on the Kuruman River, where a work was initiated which in later years proved to be the most successful undertaking of the L.M.S. But the L.M.S. entered yet another field in those pioneer days. This was Namaqualand, where the brothers C.



and A. Albrecht and Johannes Siedenfaden, Germans by birth, made their way, until they reached a point on the Orange River, not far from the Dutch Reformed Church Labour Colony where Kakamas is situated. They even pressed on to the point Warm Bath, some thirty miles north of the river, where a promising work was started.

Early, however, in its history this venture met with disaster. In those days, the region on either side of the Orange River was the scene of much lawlessness and violence. Jager Afrikaner, the self-appointed leader of the marauding Hottentot clan had murdered his master, Field-Cornet Pienaar, near Porterville and had sought refuge in the island fortresses of the Orange River. From here, he harried the whole country around and in one of his raids laid the Warm Bath station in ruins. Just about that time the elder Albrecht died, the younger lost his wife, and Siedenfaden left the disastrous scene to take up work, at Zuurbraak near Swellendam.

The northward extension and the final success of the L.M.S. is largely due to the enterprise and devotion of one man, **Robert Moffat**. The young Scotch gardener, who offered his services to the L.M.S. in 1815, proved to be an ideal missionary, tactful, courageous, and industrious. Moreover, he was wholly devoted to the task he had undertaken, “as ever in his great Taskmaster’s eye”. After a short while in Namaqualand, Moffat met the two Commissioners of the L.M.S., Rev John Campbell and Dr. John Philip, in Cape Town. They had been sent out by the Society to inspect and, if necessary re-organize, the South



African work. At their request, Moffat set out for Bechuanaland and for more than half a century, he saw the L.M.S. work grow from a struggling beginning to a flourishing enterprise. In more than one way, Moffat showed himself to be a true Missionary. He mastered the Sechuana language and translated the Bible into Sechuana. Through his negotiations with the Griqua chief, Waterboer and subsequently with the Matebele potentate, Moselekatse he proved himself to be a wise counsellor. Such influence gave greater security to many smaller native tribes and greater stability to mission work. More than once in our missionary history has the personal influence of men like Moffat or the concentration of a Society upon some distracted situation rallied the scattered remnants and re-peopled the land. Classic examples are the influences of the Wesleyans on the behalf of the fugitive Bardong tribe, the direction of the French Mission, to the building of the Basotho nation under Mashoeshoe and the saving of the weaker Bechuana tribes against the ravages of the powerful Matabele through the Offices of the L.M.S. .

In 1841, **David Livingstone** reached the Bechuana Mission. He remained a missionary up to 1853 and for the following 20 years became the intrepid traveler and opened up Central Africa for the Gospel. A year after his arrival at Kuruman he was married to Mary, a daughter of Robert Moffat. His first station was at Mabotsa, where a portion of the Bakgatla tribe had settled. Thereafter he spent some time building up the station of Kolobeng near the western Transvaal border. It was here that he came into unhappy relations with the Transvaal Kommando under Kommandant P.E. Scholtz, who had refused Livingstone’s request to begin work in the Transvaal, as



the missionary was suspected of having natives with guns and ammunition. Some years before breaking his connection with the L.M.S. Livingstone had explored the country round Lake N’yami as well as reaching Linyanti on the Zambezi. As a result of this advance, the L.M.S. extended its work to Linyanti, which for a time was under Livingston’s charge, and amongst the Matabele in Southern Rhodesia. More than any other man, he opened up Africa for the Gospel.

## 6. THE ARRIVAL OF METHODISM

The first arrival of the Methodist pioneers on South African soil was in 1816 and within ten years from that date flourishing missions had been planted in Namaqua the Xhosa, and the Barolong. In the following years, the Methodists pitched their tents all over the Union and beyond its borders in South West Africa, Zululand and Maputoland, Portuguese East Africa, Basutoland and Swaziland

To Barnabas Shaw belongs the honour of having introduced the Gospel through the channel of Methodism in South Africa. His memoirs of South Africa, published in 1841, is one of the classics of our missionary literature. After spending some months in Cape Town, the L.M.S. missionary J.H. Schmelen returned to Namaqualand and pleaded so fervently for the degraded Namaquas that Shaw decided to make that part of the country the scene of his future labours.

On the Kamiesbergen at Leliefontien the station was laid out, which to this very day remains one of the most picturesque, for its natural scenery as well as for its romantic history, in the whole South African field. The account of Shaw and how he providentially met the chief of the little Namaquas, some distance beyond the Olifants River, goes to show how the finger of God leads far more than we realize. "Had we commenced our day's journey half an hour sooner or theirs half an hour later, we should have continued our route towards Great Namaqualand".

From the outset, Shaw set himself to teaching the indolent Namaquas the dignity of labour. With his own hands, he cut down trees, shaped them, and built a modest home for himself and his courageous wife. Habits of industry were, however, only very gradually inculcated in the members of the community. Nevertheless, eight years after its inception, the traveller Thompson wrote of the work at Leliefontien; "The settlement appeared to me to be well selected and well conducted, highly creditable to its founders and beneficial to the people under their control .... Let those who consider missions as idle and unavailing go and visit Genadendal, Theopolis, Griquatown, Kamiesberg, etc and if they do not find all accomplished which the world has perhaps too sanguinely anticipated, let them fairly weigh the obstacles that have been encountered before they venture to pronounce an unfavourable opinion."

Another point at which the Methodists pitched their tents was in the Albany district of the Eastern Province, where William Shaw, no relative of Barnabas, settled to minister to the 1820 settlers. He had an eye for the regions beyond and initiated a chain-of-stations scheme between Grahamstown and Durban. Six stations were planted in seven years along this front. They were Wesleyville, Mount Coke, Butterworth, Morley, Clarkebury, and Buntingville. They passed through many vicissitudes during the stormy years on the eastern frontier. Butterworth was reduced to ashes three times. The names of the men and women who bore the brunt during these troubled times, deserve high rank in the annals of missionary

heroism...Some of them are, Stephen Kay, William Shepstone, Richard Haddy and W.B. Boyce, a remarkable scholar.

In 1857 came the great “Cattle killing Delusion”. By a stupendous act of sacrifice, so announced a “prophet” from the people, by slaughtering flocks and destroying grain, a mighty hurricane would follow and sweep the white man into the sea. But the ancestors took no cognizance of this preposterous piece of superstition. The day came, the day passed but nothing happened. Famine, starvation, and extinction stared the poor deluded thousands in the face. At the lowest estimate 25,000 died and the power of the Xhosa people was largely broken. But for the missionary and the Gospel the way to heathen hearts was opened more than before. Within nine years of the calamitous situation, some 6,000 were saved through the work of William Taylor, a Methodist Episcopal Bishop, and his ideal interpreter, Charles Pamla. This revival was especially fruitful in the Transkei Methodist stations.

A third centre was Barolong. Barbabas Shaw was succeeded by James Archbell. In 1824, the latter moved on to Bechuanaland to serve the Barolong along with Samuel Broadbent. With a section of this tribe, Archbell sought to open spaces of the Orange Free State at the time when the area of their former habitation became too restricted. They finally settled at Thaba-Nchu (the mountain of darkness) The Moroka Institution, scholastic and medical at Thaba-Nchu testified to the influence of Methodism in that area.

## 7. THE CONTINENTAL CONTRIBUTION

France, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway have all made their contribution to the South African mission field, strange that Holland has not done so, though it is quite natural that the Dutch Churches and Societies have ultimately followed the line of their Colonies, especially Indonesia.

### a) FRANCE



**Dr. John Philip**, who was for more than a quarter of a century Superintendent of the L.M.S. in South Africa, was an eloquent advocate of missions. Both the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society and the Flemish (German) Society owe their selection of the South African field to him.

The first French Missionaries, Bisseux, Rolland and Lemue arrived here in 1829. The first-named settled in the Wamakersvallei, near Wellington, where he replaced a devoted layman Van Zulch, who had been placed there by the local branch of the S.A. Missionary Society. In subsequent years the Dutch Reformed Church took over this work

The other two, soon to be joined by Pellissier, undertook work in the southwestern Transvaal, among the defenseless Bahurutsi. When this tribe was scattered by the tyrant Moselekatse, a remnant was collected at Motito, between Kuruman and Tigerkloof, the flourishing institution of the L.M.S. near Vryburg. After years of self-denying labour at Motito, the French brethren surrendered that work to the L.M.S.

Providentially they were led to the land of Moshesh, in the mountainous regions of Basutoland. For some time Missionaries occupied sites in the Free State, notably Pellissier at Bethulie and Rolland at Beersheba, near Smithfield. The Basuto Church has a membership today of about 55,000 with 15,183 catechumens. When the Seboka (Assembly of missionaries and active pastors) met for the first time in 1894, there were only three of the latter. Today there are 41 parishes, of which only six are controlled by Europeans. The printing press and Book Depot at Morija are still at work. At the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, eleven stations had been occupied in Basutoland. When a quarter of a century later an avenue of service was sought for the Basuto Christians, the Rev Stephanus Hofmeyer of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in the Soutpansberg suggested the Banyou of Mashonaland. But the door was found to be closed. During a visit to the L.M.S. work in Bechuanaland, the Christian king, Khama strongly urged the Rev Francois Coillard who was charged with the quest, to enter the Barotse country just beyond the Victoria Falls. This led to the opening of the first station at Sesheke in that marshy country in 1885

**b) GERMANY**

The coming of the Moravian Germans to Genadendal has already been noted. That work was extended amongst the coloured people in the Western Province. But a flourishing work has also been built up by the Moravians in the Transkei. The other German Societies, viz, the Flemish and the Berlin, entered the South African field early in the previous century. Like the French Mission, the Flemish was indebted to Dr. John Philip for the selection of this field of labour. In 1829, their pioneers Leipoldt, Zahn and Luckhoff arrived in the country and settled respectively at Wupperthal, in the Clanwilliam district, Tulbagh and Stellenbosch.

In the course of time, de Doorns and Carnarvon became their furthest inland spheres of labour amongst the Coloured people. Gradually their work was extended along the west coast of South-West-Africa, where at the present time the Society serves close upon 30,000 full members at 22 stations and 78 places of worship. The intervening territory of Namaqualand, which had originally been entered by the London and Methodist Societies, was almost wholly taken over by the German brethren. The easy-going Namaquas could not have passed into better hands than those of the painstaking and thoroughgoing Flemish missionaries. Excepting two stations, the work of the Flemish Society in the Cape Province has of late passed into the hands of the Dutch Reformed Church.

In South-West Africa, amongst the Heroes and the Ovambos, the names of Hugo, Rath, Kolbe and Brinker will not be forgotten. The extreme north of this territory has been manned since 1870 by the Finnish Missionary Society with singular distinction. The total Christian community has reached the 20,000 mark. The first missionaries of the Berlin Society, five in number, reached our shores in 1834. Their troubles amongst the Korannas near Philippolis were many. Their oldest station, Bethanie, some 40 miles south of Bloemfontein, was not found until three years later. The small railway station Wurasoord, named after the real founder, C.F. Wuras, serves the mission station, which lies about a mile to the west. By 1850, another station (Priel) was founded near Kimberley. It should, however, be noted that even before the founding of the Berlin Missionary Society itself, young Germans like the brothers Albrecht, Schmelen and Pacalt had offered their lives to the cause and were being used by other Societies.

After the Free State, the next field to be entered by the Berlin Mission was the Transkei. Here, too, misfortune dogged their steps, especially as a result of the frontier wars. These adverse circumstances moved Dohne, the famous Zulu scholar, and Posselt, the persevering toiler, to trek on to Natal. Both in the Transkei and in Natal the Berlin Mission, in after years had conspicuous success. The Transvaal too, attracted the Society's attention. General von Gerlach took such a liking to the Transvaal Boers, that he visited the Directorate, of which he was a member, should they decide to enter that field as well. The pioneers of this new undertaking were Grutzner and Merensky, who were settled at Gerlach's Hoop, which, however, was overrun after a short spell by Swazi Impis. The station was wrecked and the fugitives sought and found safety at Botshabelo (place of refuge), near Middleburg in the Transvaal.

The Berlin Mission was then extended to the Bapedi and the Bawenda in the Spelonken district. In the latter area, the name of Benster deserves to be mentioned, as he was primarily responsible for the Society's project across the Limpopo. Much later P.E. Schweltnus earned undying fame in that section of the work for his literary prowess and Bible translation

This Society has at the present time more than 1,700 places of worship in South Africa, serving nearly 40,000 full members.

After the middle of the last century, the Hermannsburg Mission from Germany entered the South African field. The vanguard settled in central Natal, where they called their first station, a few miles east of Greytown, Hermannsburg. Within ten years of its inception, the Mission counted eight stations. Owing to a secession of the Hanoverian Free Church from the Lutheran State Church in Hanover (Germany), a split was caused in the Hermannsburg ranks, giving rise to the Hanover Evangelical Free Church Mission, which also has a number of stations in Natal.



The Hermannsburg Mission has also entered to the Transvaal, with flourishing work in the Rustenburg and Lichtenburg areas. This was due to an invitation from the Transvaal Government at the time of the misunderstanding with Livingstone. To reach the Bakwena tribe, Schulenburg settled at Shoshong, south a Serowe. Kama, later the Christian King of the Bamangwato, was baptized here. Ultimately, this work passed into the hands of the L.M.S.

c) **NORWAY AND SWEDEN**

As a result of a spiritual revival, the Norwegian Missionary Society was founded in 1842. Two years later a young clergyman, Hans Schreuder, who had issued to his church, an appeal to do mission work, was himself sent to South Africa as his Church's first missionary. He had set his heart on reaching the paramount chief Panda with the Gospel and settled on the border of Zululand. Soon the chief summoned the missionary to prescribe for his ailments, and so, with the help of a medicine bottle, the door was opened. Progress was extremely slow at the outset, but after the defeat of Panda's son, Cetshwayo, every hindrance was removed and the Norwegian Society entered upon a period of great success. The Society now has some 14,000 full members in Zululand. Bishop Nils Astrup succeeded Bishop Schreuder and left a deep impression on the work.

The Church of Sweden Mission (Svenska Kyrkans Mission) arrived in our land in 1876. The eyes of the board were directed to Zululand, but war and disturbances prevented an entrance into that field. A farm was purchased near the Zulu frontier, to which the name Oscarsborn was given, in honour of the Swedish king. A centre of great importance sprang up soon after at Dundee, where the Swedish brethren operate among a large number of natives who flock to the local coal mines. Medical and literary work have assumed considerable proportions here. In the vicinity of Greytown and Melmoth, too, this mission has developed considerable work, as also on the Rand, to which most missions follow their members. According to the latest information the Swedish Mission has ordained men in the South African field.

d) **SWITZERLAND**

The pioneers of this mission, Ernest Creux and Pan Berthoud, arrived in 1872 and spent some time with the French brethren in Basutoland, before deciding on a sphere of activity. Had wisdom been exercised, the allocation of the various South African fields would undoubtedly have been more carefully planned. Up to the present day, the connection between the French and the Swiss missions has been very cordial and close. The Paris Evangelical Missionary Society has a branch office in Geneva and some Swiss workers have been used by the French Mission in Basutoland.

After three years of preparation the Swiss missionaries decided to enter the Northern Transvaal field, where an unevangelised tribe, the Magwamba, known to the Boers as Knopneuse (Knob noses), welcomed them. Their well-known stations here are Valdesia, Elim and Lemand, and medical and educational work is well to the fore. In 1887, a forward movement was undertaken and work commenced among the Thonga, as the Knopneuse really are, living beyond the border of Portuguese territory. Rikatla, Antioka and Delagoa Bay itself have become the main stations. The names of Paul and Henri Berhtoud, Arthur Grandjean, Henri Junod and Dr G Liengme form part of the roll of honour there.

### **FURTHER BRITISH SOCIETIES**

The London Missionary Society, the Methodists and the Church Missionary Society have been referred to in previous paragraphs. They represent the Congregational, Wesleyan, and the (Evangelical) Anglican groups. The Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican) as well as the Presbyterian group (largely Scottish) must now be mentioned.

### **ANGLICAN**

The Rev. Francis Owen, who came to Dingaanstad in 1837, has been previously alluded to as a representative of the C.M.S. Ten years after his departure the Anglican Church made a fresh attempt to evangelize the natives of South Africa. In 1848, Dr. Robert Gray, who had been consecrated as Bishop of the Cape Colony shortly before he arrived in this country. To his zeal and practical energy, the rapid extension of Anglican Missions is largely due. He prevailed upon the Government to form native locations and serve them with missionary institutions, The Governor, Sir George Grey, was keenly interested and induced the Imperial Government to vote the sum of no less than (pounds) 40,000 to endow such institutions. As a result, the four well-known institutions bearing the names of the four evangelists were opened in the Transkei. St. Matthew's, near Keiskama Hoek, is probably the best known of the four today. Before Bishop Grey's death in 1872, the single diocese over which he presided had grown to five. At the present, the Church of the Province has 2,805 places of worship with nearly a quarter of a million full communicants. Their ordained staff totals 800. In the Anglican Church no statistical distinction is made between work among Europeans and work among natives.

Among best known of the earlier generation of Anglican Leaders, mention should be made of Bishop Henry Callaway, whose work "The Religious System of the Amazulu" is one of permanent value. The name of Bishop J.W. Colenso, first Bishop of Natal awakens memories of a well-nigh forgotten controversy. In 1862, his work "The Pentateuch critically examined" poured oil on the flames of the controversy raging between him and Bishop Gray. Condemned by his Church tribunal, the Privy Council sustained his appeal, with the result that for forty years a dual bishopric of Natal was in existence, until a reunion was effected in 1901. On

the question of polygamy, there were grave differences between Colenso and the American and Wesleyan Missionaries.

The Anglican Church has always given great prominence to the training of the local people for ministry. Their total Christian community in South Africa must be close upon half a million. (The Church of the Province was also right in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid).

### **PRESBYTERIAN**

In the twenties of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Rev. John Love, who previously served as Secretary of the L.M.S., became the moving spirit of the Glasgow Missionary Society along with the Scottish Missionary Society, these two at that time repressed the non-official missionary activity of the Scottish Church.

When in 1820 the Rev Dr. George Thom, of the Dutch Reformed Church, visited Scotland to obtain a supply of ministers and teachers, the Rev William Ritchie Thomson was engaged amongst others to proceed to South Africa as a missionary. On his arrival it appeared that the Government was anxious to maintain amicable relations with Gaika and were casting round for a Government representative and missionary combined in that chief's area. The Rev. John Brownlee, until lately, missionary of the L.M.S., was prevailed upon to undertake the task and establish himself in the valley of the Chumie River, near Alice. He was joined the following year by Thomson and a lay missionary, John Bennie, and somewhat later by the Rev. John Ross. The last two, acting solely for the Glasgow Society, laid the foundations in 1824 of a station in the Chumie valley, to which they gave the name of Lovedale, in honour of the respected Secretary of their Society. From the very outset, the school and the printing press played an important part in the long and worthy history of Lovedale. Dark clouds had gathered over the new station in 1834 and at the end of the 1834-35 War Lovedale was in ruins. The site of the station was then altered to the present site, across the river from Alice.

In the long history of this Institution, the names of William Gavin James Stewart, and James Henderson stand out. To them should be added that of the Rev Tiyo Soga, who graduated from the Edinburgh United Presbyterian Hall in 1852. For spirituality and intellectual ability, he is undoubtedly one of the most eminent natives this country has ever produced.

After the union of the two sections of Scotch Presbyterianism in 1843, the Free Church of Scotland took over the Glasgow Missionary Society as an integral part of its foreign Missions program. The missionaries in South Africa decided to cast in their lot with the Free Church and pushed on with perseverance and fortitude.

What Lovedale was doing in the Ciskei, Blythswood (so named in honour of Captain Blyth, magistrate of the Transkei at the time of its founding) was to be for the Transkei. This happened in 1877.

Since 1900, the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches have been united in Scotland, and naturally the question of the mission interests in South Africa itself. The Missions of the Free Church have remained with the United Free Church of Scotland, while the missions of the United Presbyterians, including Emgwali, have been linked up with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. It was largely due to this tangle that the Bantu Presbyterian Church was formed in 1923. It was to be an independent and autonomous body, closely related to the United Free Church of Scotland, whose missionaries were to have full status in it, and federally connected with the South African Presbyterian Church. "To many this step of granting autonomy to a predominantly African Body", says Dr. R.H.W. Shepherd, "seemed premature". Time however, will have to test the wisdom of the step. The Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa with its 20,382 full members served by 32 non-European ordained men, whereas the Presbyterian Church of South Africa with its 22,325 full members is served by nine non-European and 69 European ordained men (as in 1920).

### **THE AMERICAN BOARD AND OTHERS**

In 1834 there departed from Boston six families, who were destined for the South African mission field. They were serving as heralds of the Cross, under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, usually know as the American Board. Here, too Dr. John Philip seems to have played a part, as he had laid claims of South Africa before American Christians. The Board had its headquarters in Boston and is Congregational in its Church Government.

On reaching South Africa, the company divided into equal groups. Rev. Daniel Lindley, Rev. Dr. A.E.Wilson and Rev. H.L. Venable with their families proceeded by way of Moffat's station at Kuruman, the kraal of Moselekatse and his warriors, whilst Rev Aldin Grout, Rev. G. Champion and Dr. Newton Adams found their way to Natal to devote themselves to work amongst the Zulus.

No sooner had Moselekatse ascertained what the doctrines were, while the missionaries were anxious to inculcate into the minds of his warriors, than he withdrew to a spot fifty miles away and forbade his subjects to give ear to the white man's teaching. Moreover, the party had been struck down with fever and when Captain Cornwallis Harris visited Mosega in October, 1836, he reported that Mrs. Wilson had succumbed a few days before, the first missionary life laid down beyond the Orange River. The rest of the party were dangerously ill with the fever, reported Dr Wilson, contracted from having slept in their newly built house before the floors were dry.

In this plight the Voortrekkers, who defeated the Matabele at Mosega, happened upon the unfortunate missionaries, and persuaded them to return with them to the Free State, from where they subsequently found their way to Natal to be once more one company.

In less than two years, the American missionaries had manned four stations and all promised well for the Zulu mission. The act of treachery that had led to the murder of Retief and his men, however, very nearly grew into the extermination of the whole European population then settled in Natal. The mission was completely broken up and the missionaries scattered far and wide. Only Adams, Lindley and Grout decided to return to Natal. Adams relied especially on his medical practice, while Lindley became for seven years the beloved pastor of the Voortrekker congregation of Pietermaritzburg, and ministered to their needy compatriots in the Free State and Transvaal. He then returned to his old love and worked for many years at Inanda, near the North Coast.

The Adams Institute, near Amanzimtoti and Inanda, serving boys and girls respectively, are the principal activities of the American Board in Natal. On the Rand too, it has important activities, the Jan Hofmeyer School of Social Work under Dr. Ray Phillips being closely related to the Board. Recently arrived in South Africa is the United Christian Missionary Society of the Disciples of Christ, one of the major Protestant communities of the United States. Its representative is the Rev. Basil Holt, himself a South African. This body is commencing religious and social welfare work on the Reef.

This is by no means the full story of the American contribution to Missions in South Africa. Nor has it been possible in this brief survey to tell the whole story of the British and Continental share in the undertaking. Many others have made valuable contributions in more modern times and usually on a smaller scale to the evangelization of the sub-continent. Especially have many smaller organizations followed in the wake of the larger historical Churches.

From America, the Methodist Episcopal Church sent Bishop J.C. Hartzell in 1899 to occupy a large area around Umtali in Southern Rhodesia and in Portuguese East Africa. Several of the Holiness Organizations hail from the United States, such as the Church of the Nazarene and the Pilgrims Holiness Church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church is of the American origin and serves its 13,926 full members by means of ten white and 14 non-white ordained men. The American Methodist Church has worked here on a small scale, while the African Methodist Episcopal Church (the well-known A.M.E.) reports no less than 35,000 full members, guided solely by 215 ordained non-Europeans. The Scandinavian Alliance Mission, the Hephzibah Faith Mission, Seventh Day Adventists, and Christian Catholic Church in Zion all claim their quota of work among the Bantu people.

### **NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

While most of the agencies, operating in the South African field, draw their funds and guidance in the whole or part from overseas sources, a number of activities have sprung up through the years which may be styled largely if not wholly national or indigenous.

We have already mentioned the Bantu Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church of South Africa and the Congregational Union, which has taken over all the work of the L.M.S, south of Kuruman. The Volkskerk van Afrika reports 3,000 full members among the Coloured community. In this connection certain denominational organizations should be mentioned, which in the course of time have developed their local resources to the utmost. Chief among them are the South African General Mission, with headquarters in London, but with considerable local effort, the South African Compounds and Interior Mission (founded in 1896 by the lawyer A.W. Baker) and the Sudan United Vision. Though the last-named operates in Nigeria, it has a very active branch in this country, whence workers and money are sent. The South African General Mission is largely manned by non-European laymen and has pitched its tent in the Transvaal, Natal, Zululand and Swaziland.

The Salvation Army too, has taken the fight into the territory of the adversary. Ever since about 1890 they have been in Zululand, where the "Catherine Booth Settlement" is situated, in Natal and in the Transkei. On the Rand, too, they exercise a most benevolent influence. The Baptists have been eminently successful in their effort to develop work of a national nature. As a result of the anniversary of Carey's departure for India the South African Baptist Missionary Society came into being in 1892. It operates especially in the vicinity of Queenstown and King Williams Town.

### **THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES**

By far the most extensive work of a national character, is that of the Dutch Reformed Churches. There are in South Africa three distinct Dutch Reformed Churches, of which the oldest is the Nederduits-Gereformeerde Kerk. The other two the Gereformeerde Kerk, which has begun a solid bit of mission work in the Spelonken district of the Northern Transvaal, and the Hervormde Kerk, which does some official work by means of evangelists in Natal.

The Dutch Reformed Church has its training centre, exclusively for missionaries, at Wellington. At Friedenheim, an institution of the Vroue-Sendingbond, ladies are trained who are destined for the mission field as teacher, nurses, matrons and social workers. At the Stofberg-Gedenkskool near Vereeniging native teachers, evangelists and ministers are trained. There are smaller institutions of the same nature at Decoligny near Umtata, and at Wellington for coloured workers.

The mission work of the D.R.C. may be divided into work in S.A. and work without it. With former only are we concerned in this sketch. Officially, it may be said that the D.R.C. has been engaged in mission work since 1824. That was the year of the first Synod after the link with Holland was severed at that Synod at the Cape Colony. Two years later Leopold Marquard was set aside for Hottentots living in the Clanwilliam area. Up to 1850, only four others were added, with stations as far apart as Ladysmith, Swellendam, Plettenberg Bay and Graaff-Reneit.

Under the aegis of the European D.R.C.'s in the four provinces there have grown three Mission Churches each with its own constitution. Natal alone has not organized an independent Mission Church, but is moving steadily in that direction. When the D. R. Mission Church in the Cape was founded in 1881, there were only five congregations present at the first Synod. Today that Church has 112 congregations, with a goodly number not yet formally affiliated and with a full membership of 66,823 and 192,165 baptised members. The Mission Churches of the Free State and Transvaal have a full membership respectively of 29,136 and 32,304.

In many parts of the Union there are incipient congregations being developed: Sphere of labour as they are termed. There are very distinct nuclei among the Bantu in the larger cities, especially in the Cape Peninsular and the Western Province gradually, in Namaqualand where a number of stations have been taken over from the Flemish Mission, in the North-West, round Griqualand and Kuruman and in the Transkei and Ciskei, where a young Bantu church is soon to be formed. The growing centres there are Decoligny, near Umtata, Isilimela, near Port St. Johns, and Rietvlei, north of Kokstad.

When the Cape Synod of the D.R.C. decided in 1857 to turn its eyes beyond its own boundaries as well, the work in the Rustenberg district at Saulspoort and Mabieskraal (under the guidance of Rev Henri Gonin, a Swiss), was begun, as also that at the Soutpansberg, by the Rev Alexander McKidd, a Scot. The former was spared for many years to see the work develop, while the latter was soon taken away to be succeeded by the Rev. Stephanus Hofmeyer, who worked at Kranspoort, at the foot of the mighty Soutpansberg range.

The Saulspoort work has extended westwards into the Bechuanaland Protectorate, where Mochudi and Sekoane are its main stations, whilst the Soutpansberg work has spread to Bethesta and Seleka on the western Transvaal border. All the Transvaal stations, however have been incorporated in the Transvaal Mission Church. Beyond the boundaries of S.A., the D.R.C. has extended its mission work to SW.A. and the Protectorates, the Rhodesia's, Nyasaland and the Sudan.

There are doubtless certain organizations which have not been mentioned and which have observed mention even in this brief survey, as instances there are the Swedish Holiness Mission, the Reformed Baptists of Canada and that indispensable adjunct of Christian Missions the Bible Society

Of the Roman Church and its unbridled activity in the South African missionary sphere, too, much may be said. The number of its adherents for South Africa (including Basutoland, Swaziland and Zululand) is given by the Catholic Directory (1948) as 446,325. Its educational activities at stations like Marianhill, in Natal, Lourdes in the Northern Cape, and Pax, near Pietersberg, have much to be admired. So also their well-developed industrial work and efforts towards self-help. Roma,

the institution of higher learning in Basutoland, is aiming to become the centre of university standard for all Southern Africa.

Now our story must come to an end, with two short discussions of matters inextricably intertwined with Missions in South Africa up to 1900:

## 1. SEPARATISM

1. With reference to Separatism there is much to be said. It is a sad chapter in South African Missionary history. The very names of some of the separatistic agencies which total more than 1000, would tickle one's fancy if the matter were not so sad. The total number of adherents of the sectarian bodies is given as 1089,479. The number certainly is never constant, nor even the number of the separatist bodies.

In his valuable book "Bantu Prophets in South Africa" the author Dr. Bengt Sundkler, points out how two main types of sects have gradually developed, viz, the Nationalistic, and the Zionistic or Apocalyptic type which is more religious in character, or Ethiopian type, which takes on an anti-white character. In the Ethiopian type the word African occurs repeatedly, while in the Zionistic type which names as Zion, Apostolic, Pentecostal and Faith are constantly used or found. In the Ethiopian type the idea of Kingship is paramount: Its leader must have prestige, he must impress by his very stature, must be big, bulky and brave, whereas in the other type the priestly character of the leader is emphasized: he must be saintly, mystical and ascetic, linking on the witch doctor of olden times. Both the separatistic types point to the past of the Bantu, to the king, the chief on the one hand, to the medicine man and the witch-doctor on the other. Women especially play a very prominent part in the Zionistic type.

Where Dr Sundkler says: "Under the Biblical varnish the grain of the Zulu pattern shows through very clearly", it would be clear that the separatistic tendency, which is singular pronounced in South Africa creates a very grave problem for the Churches and their Missions. The above author's conclusion is terrible; "The syncretistic sect becomes the bridge over which the African is brought back to heathenism" That is the challenge of the Separatistics to Christian Missions. On the other hand, in the words of an experienced missionary from Basutoland: "In South Africa there must be strong local Churches which are not copies of the parent-Churches with their own particular characteristics". The whole movement has undoubtedly increased a distrust between European and Native as well as between Native and Native and lowered the value of character. The Gospel in all its purity and a truly indigenous Church can rectify these sad outgrowths. Pray for all missionaries to plant churches which transcend all barriers.



## 11. CONCERTED ACTION

Not even the “Story of Christian Missions in South Africa” would be complete without some reference to co-operative and co-ordinating efforts through the years. We need to remind ourselves constantly that the *Unitas Fratrum*, the Unity of the Brethren, as the Moravians loved to call themselves, were the pioneers in our field.

During the first century after the Moravians arrived, as we have seen more than once, there was little or no concerted action, especially not in the delimitation of spheres of labour. Just before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, in 1842, a number of ministers of different churches in Cape Town realized the need of closer fellowship among the true followers of Jesus Christ, and started a weekly prayer meeting, which was held in turn in the homes of those interested. Missionaries who came to the metropolis from distant and isolated spots in the interior found this means of grace especially helpful. When in 1857 a branch of the Evangelical Alliance was formed in Cape Town, the founders could declare that actually, in all but the name, such an Alliance had existed here since 1842. When two years later, the Theological Seminary of the D.R.C. was opened at Stellenbosch, Prof. N.J. Hofmeyer declared, “That no effort had been made to bring all the Christians of our country together”. This led to the holding of a Conference of 400 delegates at Worcester. “When Reformed and Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Lutherans, Independent Wesleyans and members of the Moravian Brotherhood were present”. Dr Philip Faure read a paper on Christian Missions. This in turn led to the General and later on to Missionary Conferences throughout the country in alternate years, and these finally led in 1904 to the launching of the general Missionary Conference of South Africa. After eight sessions of the extremely fruitful organization, the Christian Council of S.A. was started in 1936, and some years later the Federal Mission of the D.R.C.

Another distinct contribution has recently been made by the establishment at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, of the Peter Ainslie Memorial Lecture on Christian Unity. The Lectureship is one foundation of the Disciples of Christ, but is in the hands of an interdenominational Committee, on which the Christian Council is represented. The inaugural lecture was delivered in 1948 by the Archbishop of Cape Town, on “Christian Unity; And Anglican View”. The lecturer this year (i.e. the year when the booklet was printed) is the Rev Sidney M. Berry, of London; General Secretary of the International Congregational Council, the lecture is published annually in booklet form. Its purpose is to promote the discussion of Christian Unity and allied themes.

There have, however, been steps towards concerted action. The closer co-ordination of the Christian forces of South Africa is a much needed ideal, with a view to more effective propagation of the Gospel. The adjustment of our intricate racial relations, too, calls for concerted action.

## **CONCLUSION**

David Livingstone expressed the feelings of so many missionaries who came to Southern Africa with the Gospel when he said:-

He then prayed one of the most beautiful prayers ever prayed.

*My Jesus, my King, my life, my all,  
I again dedicate my whole life to Thee.  
Accept me and grant, O gracious Father,  
that ere this year has gone I may finish  
my task, in Jesus name I ask it. Amen.”*

What a debt we owe to all these heroes, men and women who came to South with the Gospel and did such a magnificent work, men like Schmidt, Van der Kemp, Philip, Moffat, Livingstone and Andrew Murray to name but a few. Warren Webster, for many years a missionary in Pakistan reminded us of the phenomenal work done by missionaries in the past all over the world.

*“Christian missions have made an unprecedented impact on history and society. In addition to establishing vigorous and Christian communities, missionaries in the past played an important role in the abolition of slavery, cannibalism, infanticide and widow burning. From the beginning, Christian missionaries introduced Biblical perspective on human values, family life, and the role of women. They pioneered medical and health services in many lands as their ministries of compassion to orphans, lepers, the sick, the disadvantaged, demonstrated Christian love in action. In India alone, missionaries established over 600 hospitals. Missions have led the way in founding schools, colleges, seminaries and universities as well as promoting adult literary education. They have been leaders in translating at least some of the Bible into more than 1700 languages – spoken by more than 97% of the earth’s people. This is unquestionably  
The greatest achievement in language communication which the world has ever known”*

**What a glorious heritage ... we now take the baton  
to bring the Gospel to Africa.**

Listen to these closing quotes:

On November 19<sup>th</sup> 1878, one of the early pioneer missionaries, Alexander Mackay wrote:-

*“My heart burns for the deliverance of AFRICA, and if you can send me to any one of the regions which Livingstone and Stanley have found to be groaning under the curse of slave hunters, I shall be very glad. It is no sacrifice as some think, to come here as pioneers of Christianity. I would not give my position here for all the world. A powerful race has to be now from darkness to light, superstition and idolatry have to be overthrown, men have to be taught to love God and love their neighbours, which means the uprooting of institutions that have lasted for centuries, labour made noble, the slave set free, knowledge imparted and wisdom implanted, and above all true wisdom taught which alone can elevate men from a brute to a Son of God. Who would not willingly engage in such a noble work and consider it the highest honour on earth to be called to do it.”*

**Donald McClure, a missionary in Africa for over 50 years, before being killed wrote:**

*“I am filled with an undying ambition to do something worthwhile in the great land of AFRICA”*