Weary to the point of exhaustion, we finally reached our hotel, and it seemed no time at all until Hubert Mitchell was pounding on our door to give us a hearty welcome to India. He bore a great sheaf of letters from home and from missionaries all over India, urging us to visit their stations. Since we were to have only two days in Calcutta, we were glad to get an early start. Filling out five yard-long documents for the police took a good hour, and then we went out to see the sights of that metropolis of seven million souls.

We were intrigued with the sight of sacred cattle walking at liberty in the midst of the traffic, entering shops at will and helping themselves. Imagine that happening on a street in Los Angeles! But it is only a part of the Hindu teaching that all life is sacred. They believe that if one can grasp the tail of a sacred cow as he is leaving this world, his soul will be carried safely into heaven! Consequently, there are homes for aged cattle, but none for old people!

**A Blaze of Light in the Darkness**

Our first view of India, as our plane came in for a landing at 3 o’clock in the morning, was a blaze of light which was the city of Calcutta. In the moonlight, the great Ganges River cut across the middle of the city like an immense golden ribbon. However, the romantic aspect of our arrival faded slightly after two and a half hours’ gruelling by the customs officers in the dead of night.

*November issue, “I Talked to General MacArthur.”

**December issue, “I Saw the Wild Men of Borneo.”*
We witnessed a Mohammedan parade which was a good example of another kind of fanaticism. The young men in a frenzy stripped to their waists and beat their breasts until the blood flowed down to show their devotion to Mohammed.

It was a great pleasure to visit the oldest Protestant church in India with which Henry Martyn was associated, and also the church in which William Carey preached and baptized. As I stood in the pulpit where the great “father of modern missions” had delivered his gospel messages, I felt that I was indeed on holy ground. I saw a letter in Carey’s own hand and his translations of the Word of God into forty languages and dialects. What a foundation he laid for the missionary enterprise!

It was in this same William Carey Church that about two hundred missionaries and Christian workers gathered that evening to greet us. The address of welcome was delivered by Mrs. Griffith who attended Biola during Dr. Torrey’s days; she has a fine school in Calcutta.

The next night about one thousand young people assembled for a Youth for Christ open air meeting. I preached on First Timothy 1:15, and at the close of the service about thirty young people made decisions for Christ, among whom were some Hindus. The night before a prayer meeting had been held until midnight which explained the victory we experienced.

Benares, the Sacred City

Next day we flew to Benares, the most sacred of all the cities of India. What a sight met our eyes! This city has a population of 400,000, all Hindus of the most fanatical sect, but since we arrived on a holy day, the city was teeming with many more thousands of pilgrims. A Hindu attempts at least once in his lifetime to make a pilgrimage to a sacred river to wash away his own sins and to cast therein the ashes of his dead. The Hindus worship everything: trees, and rivers, and snakes, and all living things. Buddhism has also been incorporated to some extent, since they hold similar beliefs.

It happened that while we were there, a celebration was taking place on the occasion of the arrival of several of the bones of Buddha. So tens of thousands were gathered in the temple grounds for this great event. We saw governors, prime ministers and the maharajah himself in a great procession. The sacred relics, encased in a gold container, were borne on an elephant’s back. Buddhists even from far-distant Tibet were present.

But it was the sight of the multitudes at the sacred Ganges River that I shall never forget. We hired a little boat to get a good view of everything. It surpasses description. Imagine thousands of people bedecked with flowers which had been dedicated to the gods, turning their eyes to the sun in sort of a trance as they entered the filthy waters in an attempt to wash away their sins and to find peace of heart! We saw the bodies of the dead carried to the burning ghats, clad in white cloth, immersed in the river, and then placed on the wooden pyres, and burned. Then the ashes, together with charred parts of the bodies, were tossed right into the water where the living went on with their futile ablutions.

We beheld holy men of all varieties. We noted one in particular who was rolling along the road toward the river. He had made his way in this manner for many miles, but when we photographed him, he was in a state of exhaustion. But after a little rest, he continued his quest for peace of heart. How we longed to be able to tell him of One who said, “Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest!”

Everywhere we encountered the untouchables, the outcasts, the lowest caste from which no one can rise to a higher plane. These people who do all the menial tasks of India are the lowest caste from which no one can rise to a higher caste. There’s not much Christian work among them.

But it was the sight of the wretched pilgrims at Benares so tugged at my heartstrings that I felt I could bear no more, what must be done to relieve their pain?” “Oh, yes,” he explained, “they are doing all sorts of things. The strain on the missionaries like the Jantzens, the Claassens, the Duerksens, the Majors, and others, who spend years ministering to them? These noble workers are all former students of Biola.

All of these lepers have the gospel preached to them, and some are very bright Christians. I believe the most touching sight I saw was that of lepers putting their stumps of hands together and singing, “Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul.” We have so many blessings for which we never thank God, or scarcely ever give a thought, but these saved lepers are grateful to Him.

In addition to the work among the lepers, there is a church and a school at Champa where it was my joy to preach. How I enjoyed fellowship with all the missionaries there and every other place! I wish that time permitted me...
to go into a full description of all their magnificent labors for the Lord. Our Biolans on the mission fields are men and women of whom we are truly proud, and for whom we give God thanks. May their numbers increase in all parts of the world! I am dedicating myself anew to the task of trying to enlist more and more young men and women for the regions beyond. The needs there are a thousand-fold greater than any in this land.

From Champa we took a "Pullman" for Poona. This is merely a rack along the side of the train on which you can sleep if you have spent a lifetime accommodating yourself to it! Even with the blankets the missionaries furnished us, the two nights and a day it took to cross the country seemed endless. What a great pleasure it was to be met by Don Hillis! But immediately he announced, "I hope you fellows have a little strength left, for we have planned a great Youth for Christ meeting tonight in the heart of the city." We agreed to put ourselves in his hands. "But first," I demanded, "lead me to a bathtub where I can remove the first layer of this real estate!" I had about concluded that the grime had become a permanent part of my frame.

We were first taken to the home of a converted Hindu, Mr. Singh, and then to the Youth meeting attended by 600 young people, among them many Hindus. After Dr. Bauman gave his testimony, I preached a gospel message, at the close of which twenty-five young people made decisions for the Lord. These youth meetings in India appeal to me greatly for they combine a happy informality with real dignity and reverence. Leaving Dr. Bauman in Poona for Lord's Day services, I went to Kedgaon to visit the Mission there, about thirty miles beyond the city limits of Poona.

**Ramabai Mukti Mission**

I was deeply impressed with the work of the Ramabai Mukti Mission, which was founded sixty years ago by one of the first women scholars of India, Pandita Ramabai, now listed among the world's ten greatest women of all time. Led to Christ through reading the Word of God given her by a missionary, she was responsible not only for revolutionary changes in the national attitude toward women, but under God she built a unique rescue mission for child widows, illegitimate, abandoned and blind girls. Since her death in 1922, the Lord has raised up other leaders who have faithfully carried out her policies. The family now numbers 700, in addition to a staff of 16 women, among them three of our Biola graduates, Carol Terry, Virginia Nickerson and Elizabeth Stone. Another Biola graduate, Lillian Duerksen, is under appointment and will join the staff next year.

I was introduced to the family as they were gathered on the grass of the compound for a Bible lesson from their teachers. It was hard to believe that each of those charming, clean, well-cared-for, happy little Indian girls had a tragic story.

Baptismal scene at the Ramabai Mukti Mission, Kedgaon, Poona District.
The Passing Glory

What a contrast to the poverty of the villagers was the palace of the maharajah at Mysore which we went through on our return to Bangalore! In some ways, this edifice rivals the temples of Siam for beauty and magnificence. The doors and throne are of solid silver, the knives and forks of solid gold. The howdah, or canopied chair in which the maharajah rides on his elephant on state occasions, is also of gold; and there are Oriental rugs 400 feet long, all woven in one piece. The jewels on display were gorgeous but they only represented a small portion of those in vaults. The entire palace is illuminated at night so that it can be seen for miles around. What an illustration of the transient glory of this world! "Only what's done for Christ will last." The souls brought to Christ out of the darkness of heathenism are the real trophies and the glory that will shine throughout the ages of eternity.

I could not resist a ride on one of the maharajah's elephants, but when he rose after I mounted him, I ignominiously tumbled off, to the amusement of the missionaries. I'm sure the elephant thought so too!

The Top of the World

At Darjeeling, where we visited Mr. and Mrs. Paul Miller, we saw the most magnificent scenery we have ever beheld. Just seventy miles away from their place, snow-capped Mt. Everest rises to 29,000 ft., and alongside of it are four other great peaks nearly as high, with a lower range of peaks averaging 12,000 feet. Our Mt. Whitney, Baldy and Shasta would be but foothills there. The sunrise and sunset turn those mountains into a breath-taking panorama of colors impossible to describe. But here, as elsewhere, the natural beauty only shows up more vividly the vileness and corruption of men without God.

The Seeking Sikh

Back in Calcutta, Dr. Bauman and I again preached for Youth for Christ, but there were not as many decisions as before due to the fact that many of the unsaved were frightened away by the threats of the communists, who were holding a rally across the street. We were told to be prepared for tear bombs, or anything, but the Lord gave us a peaceful time, although there was considerable tension.

After the meeting we had a very interesting interview with a young Sikh, a disciple of Sikhism, who is a Hindu sect founded by Guru Nanak about 1500 A.D. in the Punjab. They believe in one god, prohibit idolatry, refuse caste, and deny the Brahmanical supremacy. This young fellow was of impressive appearance with his magnificent physique, typical of his class; he wore a spotless light blue turban with just a bit of scarlet showing in the center of his forehead, and his beard was neatly trimmed. Because they are such fine physical specimens, the Sikhs are chosen for soldiers, police, guards, etc.

This young Sikh reminded me of the rich young ruler or Nicodemus. He seemed very earnest in his inquiries. He of course believed that Guru Nanak was sinless, but Dr. Bauman pointed out to him that Nanak himself had confessed his imperfections. Then he was told that Jesus not only claimed to be holy, but proved His claims by His life. The Sikh stated that he saw no reason why there should not be many saviours, and could not understand why we insisted that there should be but One. Dr. Bauman quoted from John 7:17: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God," and he asked the young seeker if he were willing to accept Christ as the way, the truth, and the life, if Christ were to reveal Himself to him as such. He said, "Yes," and so Dr. Bauman, Mr. Mitchell, the Sikh and I knelt in prayer. I was moved with his evident sincerity. Pray for his salvation. There are thousands of intellectuals like him in India, ever seeking, but seldom coming to the knowledge of the truth.

A MISSIONARY CRY

A hundred thousand souls a day,
Are passing one by one away,
In Christless guilt and gloom,
Without one ray of hope or light,
With future dark as endless night,
They're passing to their doom.
They're passing to their doom.

O Holy Ghost, Thy people move,
Baptize their hearts with faith and love,
And consecrate their gold.
At Jesus' feet their millions pour,
And all their ranks unite once more,
As in the days of old.
As in the days of old.

The Master's coming draweth near,
The Son of Man will soon appear,
His Kingdom is at hand.
But ere that glorious day can be,
This Gospel of the Kingdom, we
Must preach in ev'ry land.
Must preach in ev'ry land.

—A. B. Simpson