The British Protestant Missionaries of Madagascar, 1861-1895

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The missionary invasion of Madagascar set in motion by the Rev. William Ellis and the London Missionary Society in 1861 was not a phenomenon peculiar to that island nor even to the African continent; rather, it was a part of the nineteenth century outpouring of Christian men, money, and ideas to the four corners of the world for the purpose of converting and saving the "benighted heathen." Four societies sent missionaries to the island between 1861 and 1895: the London Missionary Society, the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the Church Missionary Society. The greatest contribution in terms of money and manpower was made by the L.M.S. which, in theory, was open to members of all faiths, and which did in fact have in its ranks some Presbyterians, Free Church of Scotland members, and Anglicans, though in practice it received most of its support from Congregational churches in England and Wales.

The evidence available indicates that the ordained ministers and lay members arriving in Madagascar under the sponsorship of the L.M.S. were mainly lower middle class. In contrast to the first half of the century most were not skilled mechanics,[1] nor were they necessarily "unlearned" men; on the contrary, as the nineteenth century progressed the L.M.S. was able to recruit more qualified men than at any time in the past, a ministry trained not only in the Mechanics' Institutes as before, but also by the various tract and school societies that had developed during and after the Napoleonic Wars, such as the British and Foreign School Society, founded in 1812, and later the Home and Colonial School Society, established in 1836. This access to education meant that the ranks of the Society were no longer staffed almost exclusively by tradesmen and skilled or semi-skilled mechanics; rather, the Directors could now choose candidates for the ministry, and ultimately for the mission field, from amongst former students, clerks, office workers, school teachers, and members of the lesser professions such as pharmacy, as well as the field of engineering.

In the first half of the century these London missionaries had come from the more established and mercantile Congregational families of England, families with roots in the larger urban centres of London, Manches-

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[1] See Neil GUNSON, *Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860* (Australian National University: Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, 1959), p. 34; Max WARREN, "The Church Militant Abroad: Victorian Missionaries," in Anthony SYMONDSON (Ed.), *The Victorian Crisis of Faith* (London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1970), p. 261.

ter, Birmingham, Hull, and Cardiff, in Wales, but by the 1860's this pattern was changing and missionaries from all over Great Britain were being sent abroad. The tendency to recruit accredited ministers mainly from the London area also had changed and pastors were now being drawn from thoughout southern England and the Midlands.[2] Those men selected for mission work abroad came as well from Wales, northern Ireland, and Scotland. Very few male missionaries were connected with clerical or missionary families, though several of the female missionaries who took up work in Madagascar had been born there and had spent part of their childhood in a mission environment and had on occasion taught in mission schools.

Unlike the Congregationalists, the Quakers did not have any tradesmen or mechanics in their ranks, and the occupational composition of the mission as a whole reflected the Quaker habit of pursuing a career in such field as business, banking, and education. While few of the male missionaries came from "well connected" Quaker families, neither had any of them experienced poverty or occupational instability.[3] Like the Congregationalists, the Quakers had their share of clerks, office workers, and teachers, but on the whole these men had had the benefit of a practical Quaker education, or in the case of those Quakers who were converts, a grammar designed to equip them to meet the needs of business or education. Some of the former office workers, like Joseph S. Sewell, who had worked for the Quaker banking firm of Sharples and Tuke in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, had moved in Quaker business circles before going to Madagascar. A number of the former school teachers had taught exclusively in Quaker schools. The women missionaries were either former teachers or governesses and almost all came from well-known, established Quaker families.

The occupation of most of the Quaker missionaries thus qualified them for a position in the lower middle class, with the possible exception of Henry E. Clark, who occupied what might be considered an upper middle class position in British society by virtue of his position in commerce and his wealth. Clark had been apprenticed to a member of the Tuke family at Bradfort after leaving school, and at the end of his apprenticeship he had established his own business as a tea merchant. Drawn to the prospect of a mission overseas he sold his successful business and went with the F.F.M.A. to Madagascar where he served thirty-two years as a "minister" of the gospel, a printer, and a school teacher.

[2] For the first half of the century see GUNSON, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 30.

[3] Professor Owen Chadwick has said of the Friends that:

> Quakerism was not a religion of the poor. A few paupers attended. But in the high proportion of members it contained men wealthy in the ways of business, banker, coal-owner, wholesale grocer, railway director, cotton-spinning magnate, corn factor, farmer, Norfolk Gurney and Barclay of Brixton, Rowntree of York, Pearse of Durham, Richardson of Cleaveland, Ashworth of Bolton and Bright of Rochdale.

Owen CHADWICK, *The Victorian Church* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1966), Part I, p. 424.

The S.P.G. sponsored a mission that sent out a total of twenty-seven ordained missionaries and lay workers between 1864 and 1895, but not quite as much is known of their class backgrounds and previous occupations. Like the Quakers, their ranks seem to have been quite free of the "mechanic" element, and for the period after 1882 all but a few of those who left Great Britain were either teachers from Anglican schools, private tutors, or ordained priests or deacons already serving in English parishes. The remainder were "in business", while one, the Rev. Arnold Hewlett, was able to boast that he had a private annual income of £150.[4]

Of their Anglican counterparts in the C.M.S. somewhat more is known: the Rev. Thomas Campbell had been a carpenter, while the Rev. Herbert Maundrell and the Rev. Walter Dening were the sons of "gentlemen farmers."[5]

The formal education possessed by the British Protestant missionaries varied greatly and among the eighty-eight ordained clergy and Quaker "ministers" who went out to Madagascar there were only thirteen university graduates, of whom nine were members of the S.P.G. The famine of knowledge was felt most sharply by the London missionaries and the three representatives of the the C.M.S. Some of the London men had not been able to progress beyond the elementary level before it became necessary for them to go to work at a trade and to support a family. The Rev. Philip G. Peake, in reply to the question concerning his educational background, could only write: "Of educational advantage I have had few.", while the Rev. David G. Green described his education simply as "Miscellaneous."[6] The Rev. Robert Toy, a former school teacher, confessed that he had had small chance at any form of education until he entered the British and Foreign Bible Society School for eight months during his teenage years.[7]

These men, though lacking in formal education, made attempts to improve themselves. The Rev. John A. Houlder had been forced to end his schooling at the age of twelve and to take up employment as a clerk, but he assured the Directors of the L.M.S. that he had been working diligently at night and in his spare time to improve his reading, writing, arithmetic, and grammar, a technique pursued by others like James Taylor and Thomas T. Matthews. The latter, a former apprentice iron-moulder from Glasgow and a member of the Free Church of Scotland, described his early education as "neglected", but said that he was determined to improve it:

> In my youth my education was very much neglected but for years having been impressed with the usefulness of knowledge, I have embraced every opportunity to improve my mind, though I have not made the progress which I wished, in account of having so little spare time-having to work ten hours a day at my

[4] S.P.G.: The Rev. Arnold HEWLETT, *Testimonial Papers* (hereinafter *T.P.)*.

[5] C.M.S.: *Register of Missionnaries: 1859-1873* (hereinafter *R.M.*).

[6] L.M.S.: The Rev. Philip G. PEAKE and the Rev. David S. GREEN, *Candidate's Papers* (hereinafter *C.P.*).

[7] L.M.S.: The Rev. Robert Toy, *C.P.*

business. Years ago I read such novels as the Mechanics Library in town could supply.[8]

Somewhat more typical than these men were the missionaries who had received what they themselves termed variously" a good general education" or "a common English education." Some, such as the Welsh missionary the Rev. Thomas Rowlands, had spent no more than eight months in a grammar school where he managed to acquire some English and Welsh grammar, and some arithmetic.[9] Others had passed several years in a grammar school where they managed to learn some Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, or perhaps even a little French. This meagre education was reflected in their reading interests, the range of which, when they read at all, was very restricted. When they were asked by the L.M.S. to provide a list of books they had read most they could cite only standard theological works of a very uncontroversial nature, missionary histories, and popular books on African exploration, such as *How I Found Livingstone*. Once in the field their reading might extend to such periodicals as *The Illustrated London News* and *The Literary World*, but usually it centred around evangelical publications like *Sunday At Home* or *The Sunday Magazine*.[10] The Rev. John Flockhart, a Scotsman and an avid reader of works by Swift, Fenimore Cooper, Goldsmith, and Samuel Smiles, had benefited from the Scottish veneration of education and in addition to his classical education had been exposed to the study of electricity and "the sciences" before taking up a missionary career.[11] Very few of the London men appear to have finished their grammar school education and fewer still managed to obtain university degrees before entering the mission field.[12]

For the majority of the London missionaries the high point of their education was their presence at one of the many Congregational colleges that trained the ministry for service at home as well as overseas. The bulk of the missionaries who eventually went to Madagascar were trained at Hackney, Lancashire, Cheshunt, Western, Bala Bangor, and New Colleges, while a host of smaller colleges contributed several missionaries each. At first, in the 1850s, when men such as the Rev. Benjamin Briggs and the Rev. Richard G. Hartley were undergoing theological training, the programme of instruction usually centred around a few Congregational ministers and the student body might consist of no more than six to twelve dedicated young aspirants. By the 1880's and the 1890's, however, this pattern had changed and the three leading colleges, Cheshunt, Hackney, and Lancashire, appear to have been offering candidates for the ministry a three year arts course followed by two years of theology.

[8] L.M.S.: The Rev. Thomas T. Matthews, *C.P.*

[9] L.M.S.: The Rev. Thomas Rowlands, *C.P.*

[10] Public Record Office, Rev. James Sibree to Consul Thomas C. Pakenham, 30.3.73, Foreign Office series 48/27 (hereinafter P.R.O. and F.O.).

[11] L.M.S.: The Rev. John Flockhart, *C.P.*

[12] Those who did attend university before going to Madagascar went to the universities of London, Leeds, or University College Bala, in Wales, despite the fact that they were now legally able to attend Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham.

The whole programme at the colleges was directed towards the cultivation of the all-important art of preaching, and no time was spent on foreign language training, with the result that the first year in Madagascar was usually an ineffective one for the fledgling missionary as he attempted to master Malagasy. It was not really a part of the college curriculum to broaden the mental horizons of the students, and consequently few took any new or advanced ideas with them when they went overseas to their stations. While attending these colleges all but a few of the students were unable to finance a full five years. It was not unusual for a student to present himself before the L.M.S. Board of Directors for service overseas, to be accepted and ordained, to be married, and to leave his place of learning after only a years' instruction, or perhaps even less. A shortage of funds, a student body that fluctuated considerably, and in many cases a deep distrust of academic education plagued these Independent colleges in the years before about 1870, with the result that a competent staff was difficult to obtain, and consequently the training given to a candidate for the ministry could often be of questionable value.[13] The quality of the education offered to these men improved only gradually, though by the 1890's one college in particular, New College, London, was offering classes in psychology, French, German, classics, and history, as well as theology.[14]

The Evangelical Anglicans had similar educational backgrounds to those above mentioned. The Rev. Thomas Campbell of the C.M.S. had received "an ordinary English education", while the Rev. Herbert Maundrell had been educated at a "middle school", one of the schools for the middle classes intermediate between primary school and the public schools. The Rev. Walter Dening had spent four years under tuition at the home of an Anglican minister.[15]

Following in the steps of the Congregational candidates, the Evangelical Anglicans entered a missionary college before taking up a mission overseas, in this instance the Church Missionary College at Islington. The training at Islington was similar to that offered at the Congregational colleges, with an emphasis on Latin, Greek, divinity, logic, and mathematics. Depending on the ultimate destination of the candidate, a language might be taught, usually Hebrew, Arabic, Bengali, or Sanskrit.[16]

The rather sketchy education possessed by the men of the L.M.S. and C.M.S. stood in sharp contrast to the education of the Quaker missionaries. With the exception of a few non-Quakers employed in medical work, the Quaker missionaries, both male and female, were the products

[13] R. Tudur JONES, *Congregationalism in England, 1662-1962* (Wales: Independent Press, 1962), p. 235.

[14] *Congregational Year Book-1898* (London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1898), p. 88.

[15] C.M.S.: *Committee Minutes, 1859-1860*, Vol. 33, G/C 1, pp. 303-416; C.M.S.: *Committee Minutes*, 1866-1868, Vol. 37, G/C 1, p. 128 (hereinafter *Comm. Mins.*):

[16] Eugene STOCK, *The History of the Church Missionary Society* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899), Vol. 1, p. 266.

either of a private education or a progressive school system developed by the sect during the nineteenth century. By the 1850's the Quaker schools were well on the way to becoming rivals of the endowed grammar schools. Latin, Greek, French, mathematics, agriculture, chemistry, physiology of plants, natural history and geology were all taught.[17] Art and music also became established subjects in the leading Quaker schools at Ackworth, and Bootham, in Yorkshire, and The Mount in York,[18] and when Quaker teachers and missionaries went to Madagascar they invariably introduced these same subjects to their Malagasy students at the senior levels.[19] For those who chose school teaching as a career there existed the Quaker teacher training school, the Flounders' Institute, financed originally by a prominent Quaker, Benjamin Flounders, who wanted to see more qualified teachers instructing Quaker children.

Missionary training for the Quaker volunteers was non-existent before 1893 when John Horniman, the Croydon tea merchant, gave the F.F.M.A. £20,000 and "Chester House," in Hackney, London, as a residences for missionaries proceeding overseas. With the opening of Chester House systematic training of missionaries began.

The monopoly of university education was to be found, not surprisingly, among the members of the Established Church who came to Madagascar under the sponsorship of the S.P.G. Not all of the Anglican missionaries had obtained a university degree, however, nor did all attend university. Until the early 1880's priests and deacons were often men who had not gone beyond grammar school, though all but a handful attended university and gained degrees after they left Madagascar. Unlike their university-trained brethren, who were usually sent directly to the field to take up missionary work, these less learned men were sent to one of a number of approved colleges, usually St. Augustine's, Canterbury, St. Boniface, Warminster, St. Paul's, Burg, or Cuddeson College, where they were given a three year course which stressed theology and which gave some training in psychology, sociology, and "The Art of Education". Unlike the C.M.S., the S.P.G. did not attempt to commence any language training in England.[20] Fees, though not inordinately high at these colleges, often proved too much of a burden for some of the missionaries, and like their Congregational counterparts they sometimes found it necessary to leave the college and to proceed overseas before their training had been completed. Thus, completion of training of a fixed term of training was not even a minimum requirement for a mission to Madagascar, either for the Congregationalists or the Anglicans.

[17] L. John STROUD, *The History of Quaker Education in England, 1647-1903* (University of Leeds: Unpublished M.A. thesis, 1944), pp. 114-117.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 118-119.

[19] Edward MILLIGAN, *The Past is Prologue, 1868-1968: 100 Years of Quaker Overseas Work* (London: Privately Published, 1968), p. 21.

[20] ANONYMOUS, *Twenty-Five Years of St. Paul's College, Burgh 1878-1902* (Privately Published, 1903), p. 7; R.J.E. BOGGIS, *A History of St. Augustine's College, Canterbury* (Canterbury: Cross and Jackman, 1907), pp. 97, 105; S.P.T. PRIDEAUX, *The Story of St. Boniface Missionary College, Warminster* (Warminster, Privately Published, 1948), p. 3.

One of the effects of the Evangelical Revival was the special emphasis placed on the experience of conversion. This experience contained two distinct phases. First, there was an awakening of the unregenerate soul, followed by the experience of spiritual "re-birth." All Evangelicals believed that mankind could only be "born again" in the "spirit" through faith in the salvation of the soul through the atonement of Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and mankind. The gift of faith resulted from an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In order to be converted, a man must believe that Christ, by vicarious sacrifices, died on the cross to save sinners.

While a very large proportion of the Congregational ministers had experienced "quiet" conversions, these men had almost all been raised in churches and homes already steeped in Evangelical thought, and it was therefore less difficult for them to adjust themselves to the religious doctrines which they had already accepted. It was not unusual for children in Evangelical homes to be "won by Christ" at the very tender age of ten or twelve, sometimes as a result of Evangelical campaigns, but more often than not simply as a result of parental influences.

By the late 1850s and early 1860s, when the first wave of Congregational missionaries was preparing to take up missionary work overseas, dramatic conversions to Christ were beginning to disappear. Gone were the days when men like the Rev. William Ellis would openly confess to the Directors of the L.M.S. of such "sins" as profaning the Sabbath by passing time away at the ale-house in the company of his friends.[21] Few "sins" were being confessed anymore by 1861, when the Madagascar mission was re-opened, though the Rev. Thomas T. Matthews had a conversion which took place through the fear and presence of death.

> The first providence that the Lord effectively used to rouse me from the sleep of spiritual death was the death of a fellow workman... in.. June, 1861. From that time I began to realise my state as a sinner: but it was not until the following August that I was enabled to close with Jesus as my Saviour... I was led to an open air meeting which was held on the Links at Aberdeen. My convictions were fearfully deepened & I could not rest that night until I was enabled to close with the Saviour.[22]

The Rev. John A. Houlder, a contemporary of Matthews, experienced conversion through attendance at an Evangelical meeting held in Paddington, London, during the summer of 1861. With a companion he attended the meeting and hear a former school friend tell of his feelings about Christianity:

> We became interested and began to speak to one another about the state of our own souls... Our gratitude to the Saviour seemed to touch us deeply... It would take too long to state in detail all the circumstances connected with my conversion- suffice... to say that after attending meetings I gradually began to feel that I had in reality given myself to Jesus...[23]

[21] John E. Ellis, *Life of William Ellis* (London: John Murray, 1873), p. 12.
[22] L.M.S.: The Rev. Thomas T. Matthews, *C.P.*
[23] L.M.S.: The Rev. John Houlder, *C.P.*

More typical was the type of answer given by the Rev. Edwin P. Jones who said that: "I have no special experience, that I can distinctly call conversion, but I have been brought up under good home influences, which led me to exposure to Christ early in life."[24] The Rev. Thomas Rogers could only state that: "The date of my conversion is unknown..."[25]

It is very important to appreciate the intensity of the initial religious experience of some of the Congregational ministers when considering their attitudes, their actions, and their effectiveness. Evangelical thought placed a peculiar emphasis on the saving merits of faith and it is easy to see that they were not as ensnared by Satan, before their conversion, as they tended to say they were. They were not being troubled by their own egos, but by the wrath of a retributive justice of an offended God.[26]

Each Evangelical missionary underwent a second type of conversion, the conversion to a missionary vocation, as distinct from the mere desire to extend his personal experience to others. It was like a "call" to the ministry. This desire to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ was, of course, shared by the members and the directors of all the societies, or at least that was the theory. For the directors the aim was to see their missionaries save the "heathen" soul and to glorify the name of God, and in response to the usual question asking him why he wished to become a missionary the candidate very often gave precisely these answers.[27]

But there were other factors involved. The exciting thought of the mass conversions to be made abroad undoubtly played a role in the lives of those who took up the task of spreading Christianity to the non-Western world. For those already engaged in the work of the ministry in Great Britain, work that was often opposed by skeptics and non-believers, or ignored altogether, the alleged existence of "teeming thousands" overseas "thirsting" for the word of God, or so the church periodicals claimed, must have seemed to offer a more worthwhile field of Christian endeavour than England or Wales. Disenchanted with his con-

[24] L.M.S.: The Rev. Edwin P. Jones, *C.P.*

[25] L.M.S.: The Rev. Thomas Rogers, *C.P.*

[26] The conversion experience was important to those missionaries who had not experienced one themselves as well as to those who had confessed their sins and given themselves to Christ. The Congregationalists in particular were constantly looking for the appropriate experiences in the lives of their converts and those whom they were attempting to teach. The Rev. Charles Jukes had been working amongst the peoples of the Ankadibevava district for fourteen years with little results and he wrote to the Directors of the L.M.S. complaining bitterly:

> What has painfully struck me for years past in the Malagasy converts is the absence of the "exceeding sinfulness" of all sin, and an earnest desire to live above the world. They speak *about* sin against the Almighty with apparently far less concern than when referring to grevious offences against the Sovereign.

Revivals, when they finally commenced in Antananarivo and area about 1887, delighted men like the Rev. Walter S. Huckett because for the first time he had before him individuals who were experiencing an intense internal struggle, acknowledging and confessing their sins, recognising their basically sinful nature, and giving themselves over to Jesus Christ. L.M.S.: Annual Reports of the Rev. Charles Jukes (1880) and the Rev. Walter S. Huckett (1888).

[27] S.P.G.: The Rev. Llewellyn James, *T.P.;* L.M.S.: The Rev. Robert Hitch, *C.P.*

gregation and discouraged with his lack of progress after three years in a Birmingham pastorate, the Rev. John T. Wesley, one of the few L.M.S. university graduates to go out to Madagascar,[28] decided to offer himself for overseas service, stating that:

> ...of late it has appeared to me that a comparitive lack of spiritual result in my ministry, and my failure to reach outsiders are indications that it is the divine will that I should sever my connection with my church here, and this being once granted I feel that I can do nothing else than give you the opportunity of accepting or rejecting my services...[29]

But this problem was not peculiar to members of the Congregational ministry. Wesley's Anglican counterpart, tied to a rural or even an urban curacy or incumbancy, could also find clerical work unfruitful and discouraging. The 1870's saw the town labourers begin to organise themselves, and antagonisms began to spring up between the established orders and the working classes. The Anglican Church, a part of the established order, for the parson was often an educated man, and sometimes he came from the upper middle class, was caught up in this conflict.[30] Country life declined, partly as a result of the movement of the people into the towns and cities, and partly as a result of a decline in agriculture. The churches were now less full, and criticism of Christianity was becoming more common. At a time when church life was declining and people were falling away from the church, especially in the rural areas, the thousands who were said to be calling for the gospel, particularly in China and India, must have made a mission overseas seem quite attractive.

Some missionaries entered the field with purely religious motives driving them on; a desire to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But there were also those who were motivated by economic factors in their choice of a missionary vocation. Aware of this, both the B.N.S. and S.P.G. questioned their candidates concerning their occupations, their prospects for the future in their occupations, and their annual incomes. Most of the London missionaries and some of the S.P.C. men said that they were holding down good positions, and many of the former asserted that they were about to receive an increase in salary or some sort of promotion. A very few, like the Rev. George E. Cousins confessed that they were unemployed and thus unable to pay their way through a missionary college, a fate shared by his brother, William.[31] Worse off was the Rev. James Richardson who claimed that he had given up a position as a second master in a private school in Manchester that had paid him a salary of £ 130 per annum in order to enter Cheshunt College. Now, he lamented, he was: "in somewhat...reduced circumstances", and that "[he had] hardly a shirt on [his] back."[32] Occupational difficulties, and therefore one could

[28] The Congregationalists usually placed their more well-educated ministers in the towns and cities rather than in the rural areas.
Owen CHADWICK, *The Victorian Church* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1970), Part II, p. 183.

[29] L.M.S.: The Rev. John T. Wesley, *C.P.*

[30] CHADWICK, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 156.

[31] L.M.S.: The Rev. George B. Cousins and the Rev. William E. Cousins, *C.P.*

[32] L.M.S.: The Rev. James Richardson, *C.P.*

assume financial problems, were not confined to men of the L.M.S.; the Rev. George Wheately had gone from job to job; he had been first a schoolmaster, and then a printer, afterwards a publisher, and had been employed as an organist when he applied for missionary work overseas.[33] Others endeavoured to use the societies for promoting their own education and thus improving their qualifications and incomes. The Rev. John R. Bennett, an Anglican, had attempted to enter the Edimburgh Medical Missionary Society in order to obtain a medical degree, but he had lacked the necessary funds to enable him to complete his studies. He then approached the L.M.S. on the question of subsidised medical training with an eye to doing overseas medical work at some future date. The Society turned him down. He then decided upon a missionary career, was accepted, and sent out to Madagascar. He resigned after five months in Antananarivo, the capital city.[34]

Whether or not a mission in Madagascar appeared financially attractive to some of the candidates is difficult to determine. From the point of view of salaries alone a mission could prove worthwhile to those motivated by money; for married men in the service of the L.M.S. and the F.F.M.A. the annual stipend was £200, with allowances for each child, travelling, a Malagasy secretary, house rental, and a tropical outfit of clothes. The missionary's children could be left in Great Britain and educated at a Congregational school if the London man so desired. The cost was very low for this privilege. All missionaries had a paid vacation of one years' duration every eight to ten years. Unmarried men in all of the societies received an annual stipend of £140, as did the unmarried women. The S.P.G. paid a bonus for every five years of service completed, and rewarded those who passed their language examinations with an additonal bonus. The rather generous salaries, allowances, bonuses, and leave conditions, when coupled with the free medical care at the hands of an L.M.S. or Quaker doctor, paid sick leaves, and the low cost of most forms of food in Madagascar, must have appeared attractive to the tradesmen, mechanics, clerks, drapers, and teachers who were often unable to earn a comfortable living in Great Britain. Given a period of heavy unemployment or general economic distress, men out of work might be expected to seek employment as missionaries.[35] For those experiencing financial difficulties the mission abroad offered security and an alternative to emigrating to Australia, Canada, South Africa, or New Zealand.

The economic motive also may have been a factor in the recruitment of clerics already serving in England and Wales. Throughout the ni-

[33] S.P.G.: The Rev. George Wheatley, *T.P.*

[34] After Several years without a pastorate Bennett finally obtained one in Terling Essex, 1884. By February, 1885 he was reapplying for missionary work, but this time he said he wished to go to India or China. The Directors, however, were no longer interested in his services. L.M.S.: The Rev. John R. Bennett, *C.P.; The Congregational Year Book*-1885, p. 35.

[35] Max Warren, *Social History and Christian Missions* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1967), o. 143.

neteenth century there was no shortage of Congregational ministers due to the existence of the various Independent theological colleges which graduated ordained men in increasing numbers each year, as well as the tendency among congregations to elect one of their own members as a pastor, thus creating problems for those already searching for a suitable pastorate.[36] His Anglican counterpart, engaged in clerical work at home, might also look at a mission favourably because it could provide an opportunity for escaping from the poverty and insecurity of a rural living. Despite the Pluralities Act and the Benefices Act of the nineteenth century the village curate would often be paid a mere £80 to £100 a year for his services. In the larger centres with populations of 500, 750, and 1,000 persons or more the annual salary rose to £120, £135, and £150 respectively, but very few positions in these parishes were ever occupied by curates. This state of affairs did improve, and by 1900 a curate might earn as much as £120 to £150 per annum and, if he were fortunate, an independency might come his way after ten or twelve years.[37] It is not unusual to find, therefore, that fully one-quarter of the ordained clergy who were accepted for service in Madagascar had occupied curacies, almost all of which were located in rural areas.

It is doubtful whether any of the missionaries expected more arduous employment in the field than at home, but it is highly likely that many were attracted by the excitement, independence, and freedom of action which they believed would become their own. There was, and still is, a certain romantic attraction about missionary work, and a spirit of adventure fostered in reading travel accounts and the histories of earlier missionaries appear to have influenced their decisions. The whole idea of the missionary movement appealed to the Victorian mind in a unique way. It satisfied that delight in action which was so characteristic of the period and it reflected the growing interest in the world outside of Europe. In return, the missionary enterprise helped to mould the Victorian imagination. It presented an image of Chirstianity as the religion that called for courage and initiative. Compared with the drab, everyday life of the English factory worker, clerk, collier, or farmhand the life of a missionary offered untold opportunities and challenges. To the impoverished Anglican curate shouldering all of the drudgery of the parish, and treated as little better than a superior servant by the incumbent and even by some of the parishoners, the missionary movement provided a means of escaping from his dreary existence. Missionary work also appealed to the misanthropic individual, the man who found it difficult to get along with those of his own caste. The social misfit was attracted by a career in which he was able to build his own world and to be his own master. Individuals such as these were usually found in the most distant stations, often miles from other Europeans, and very frequently they did little evangelising at all, preferring instead to follow their own pursuits.[38]

[36] CHADWICK, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 183.

[37] A. Tindal HART, *The Curate's Lot* (London: John Baker, 1970), pp. 135, 178.

[38] Several missionaries in particular preferred a solitary type of existence; the Rev. James Coles wiled his time away at the port of Tamatave, gardening and visiting with the

The literature of the times influenced the missionaries who went to Madagascar; no works had more effect than the journals and books of David Livingstone in convincing some of the Evangelical missionaries to take up a missionary career. David Livingstone was almost a patron saint of these nineteenth century missionaries. His writings were re-edited, abridged, re-written, and amplified. For the Rev. Robert Roberts, Livingstone had been the decisive factor in his choice of a missionary vocation: "the desire was fully fixed in my heart, some years ago, by reading the 'Life of Dr. Livingstone,'..."[39] Other missionary heroes were William Swan, the missionary and author of *Letters on Missions*, and Robert Moffatt, himself a disciple of Livingstone, and creator of *Missionary Labour and Scenes in Southern Africa.* As the century progressed the men of the L.M.S., S.P.G., and F.F.M.A. began publishing books on their own experiences and adventures in Madagascar, thus keeping the interest in missionary work alive for generations to come.

The missionary propagandists could also make their influence felt. Silver-voiced preachers could often create a picture of missionary life which could powerfully attract the young and impressionable listeners. But the real giants of this art were some of the missionaries who were either home on furlough and engaged in deputation work preaching at churches and meetings, or those who had returned home recently and had taken up pastorates or livings in Great Britain. Missionaries of all societies testified to the influence and effectiveness of these deputations on their lives. Many of these missionary propagandists not only possessed a strength of personality, but they were also gifted with a commanding presence. Paragons of moral virtue, and occasionally of physical beauty, they appeared like angels commissioned to call the young convert to the mission field. The Rev. William Ellis, himself a missionary to Madagascar, was an effective propagandist of this sort. His influence on William Wilson, a Congregationalist who turned Quaker, was most profound; Wilson, upon hearing Ellis speak on his missionary experiences during a meeting held in the town hall, Birmingham, decided to go on a mission to Madagascar. He was only seven years old at the time.[40] The Rev. George Wilkinson, a former Jamaican missionary, spoke on missions at a meeting attended by the Rev. Charles Collins and quickly won the young man over to a missionary career then and there: "During the address I was greatly agitated by a conflict within, soon settled, however, by a still small voice whispering in my heart: will you give yourself to this work & devote your energies to preaching the Gospel of the Lord of Peace, to the heathen? My heart answered, I will if God permit me."[41]

local traders, and the Rev. Henry T. Johnson who spent forty years in quiet solitude at Fianarantsoa, Betsileo, following his own interests and ignoring the other missionaries as much as possible.

[39] L.M.S.: The Rev. Robert Roberts, *C.P.*

[40] Albert J. Crosfield and Guilaume Crosfield, *A Man in Shining Armour* (London: Headley Brothers, 1911), p. 9.

[41] L.M.S.: The Rev. Charles Collins, *C.P.*

Most of the missionaries going out to Madagascar for the various British societies had had some form of home missionary experience, usually amongst the lower and lower middle classes, a factor which held them in good stead when they attempted to work amongst the Malagasy. Almost to a man the Congregationalists had had experience either teaching Sunday School, preaching, tracting, visiting the sick, or conducting open-air meetings for various organisations. Their Anglican counterparts, it they had not already served as clerics in England, may have been exposed to the public to some degree during their time at a missionary college, either in a visiting or preaching capacity.[42] Members of the C.M.S. undergoing training at the college at Islington had as their parish the "Irish Courts", near "the Angel", in London, and each Sunday the students were expected to hold Sunday School and services for the lower class, Roman Catholic, emigrant labourers, and during the week to conduct a day school for them and their children. Both harassment and physical violence at the hands of the Irish were said to be common.[43] The Quakers, on the whole, did little or no evangelising, despite their Evangelical bent, and it was only near the end of the century that they began to involve themselves in open-air meetings and to undertake the distribution of tracts.

These, then, were the men[44] who went to Madagascar to spread Christianity. Unfortunately Madagascar did not usually receive the most qualified men or women who volunteered for missionary service overseas, especially in the case of the L.M.S. and the C.M.S. In fact, Madagascar received some L.M.S. and S.P.G. missionaries who were considered unfit for service, whether at home or abroad, by those who were asked to assess their personalities and abilities. One female missionary had what her bishop termed "a drinking problem".[45] Most societies sending missionaries

[42] Boggs, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

[43] Stock, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 80-81.

[44] There is little information available on the women missionaries.

[45] The Rev. James A. Wills, a pastor at Bath, was not considered strong enough, physically nor mentally, for missionary service in Madagascar by those who knew him well. His contemporary, the Rev. Henry W. Grainge, was also considered unfit by one of his former tutors who said: "...I beg to say that Mr Grainge did not make any deep — abiding impression on my mind, with regard to his ministerial efficiency or otherwise, by his attendance on my lectures during his academic course in our college... I, by no means, feel myself in a position to recommend the Missionary Society to engage him for a position in Madagascar- nor, indeed, in any of their stations." The S.P.G. also took into its ranks men and women who were obviously unfit for life in Madagascar. The Rev. Llewellyn James, who was pronounced sickly by his sponsors, was sent out anyway. They were quite right about the frail state of his health for he was dead from fever within a year. Miss Elizabeth Graham was a confirmed alcoholic. Her bishop, Cornish, had been warned about her habits and behaviour before he left England with her in his party, but he chose to ignore her detractors. Her bizarre behaviour and drinking spells once she was in Madagascar forced him to explain her past to the Malagasy Prime Minister, Rainilaiarivony, to whom he confessed that she had frequent periods of drunkenness. He, as her bishop, could not tolerate such behaviour, he said, and therefore he was sending her back to England. Before he could place her on a ship she had defected to the L.M.S. — L.M.S.: The Rev. James Wills and the Rev. Henry W. Grainge, *C.P.;* S.P.G.: The Rev. Llewellyn James, *T.P.*; Archives de la République Malgache (Tananarive, Malagasy Republic): Cornish to Rainilaiarivony, 12.6.76, Série DD 79.

overseas firmly believed that China and India deserved the very best that Great Britain had to offer because both of these countries had sophisticated cultures and systems of religion that could only be defeated by an active, educated Western mind. Madagascar, like the rest of Africa, was believed to be a cultural wasteland, an area without any real past, and therefore it often tended to receive men who, at least in the case of the L.M.S. and C.M.S., possessed little education, and who came from working class or lower middle class backgrounds. Their horizons and attitudes thus tended to be rather more narrow than those missionaries who had had the benefit of greater educational opportunities. It was to this group of individuals possessing different backgrounds and motives for mission work that the shaping of the British Protestant sector of the Malagasy Christian community fell between the years 1861 and 1895.