

XIV

THE GIANT IS NOT AWAKENED

"WHEN I was musing the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue"—that was what lay behind the words that went forth from Pannai-vilai, sometimes in the form of a message to fellow-workers. One such was called *The Giant is not Awakened*. "Oh, to live near to God, and so be able to write lovingly and truly," is an entry after a note which tells of the tearing up of something written; and the prayer which prefaces a manuscript book of Bible notes might have been written on the first page of every magazine article or book of later days, for it was the constant prayer of the writer:

O Lord,
Help me to speak
In all the earnestness of faith,
In all the truthfulness of hope,
In all the tenderness of love,
In all the faithfulness of truth.

This is the message:

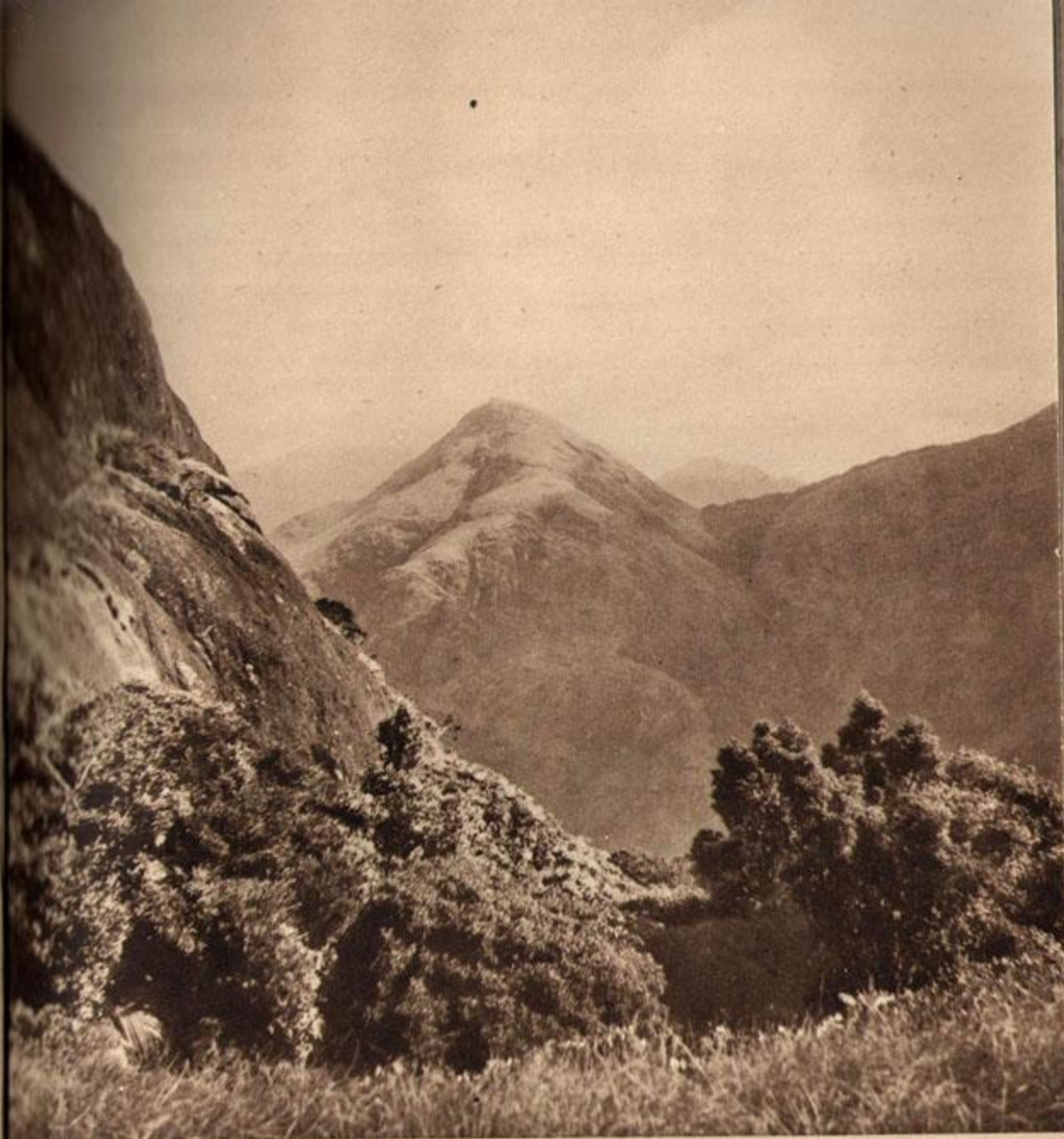
Many of us have read, in the mythological literature of this country, the famous story of the awakening of the great warrior-giant of Ceylon. He is represented as sunk in the deepest sleep. Effort after effort was made to rouse him to consciousness and life. Musical instruments were sounded in his ear, but the clang of trumpets and the clash of cymbals failed to disturb that heavy slumber. Messenger after messenger returned to the king with the unwelcome news "The giant is not awakened."

This land of India, with its mass of heathen cults and superstitions, lies stretched before us like a sleeping giant. We stand appalled at the very vastness of the task before us. India has been drugged by the poison of subtle philosophies and by the deadly draughts of degrading superstitions, till she seems beyond the power of all our efforts to awaken and arouse. We

have covered India, or at least large portions of it, with a perfect network of Christian colleges and schools and congregations. Thank God for all that has been accomplished in the past. Praise Him for every true and earnest convert who has learnt by experience the power of Christ to save from sin. But, as we look round on whole districts where little or nothing has been done to evangelize the people; as we see large cities where, in spite of earnest effort for many years, idolatry still reigns supreme and Satan smiles at our unsuccessful efforts; as we behold, with sinking hearts, the strong fortresses of Hinduism still frowning down upon us, proudly conscious of their strength; and as we look at our Christian congregations (where, by God's mercy, they have been firmly planted) bearing often but a feeble and uncertain testimony, and lacking sadly, by their own confession, the true Fire of God, the Power of the Holy Ghost; shall we not face the truth, "*The giant is not awakened*"? What, then, is the remedy?

Is it not worth our while to call a halt and ask the question? Are we so busy with our multiform labours of philanthropy and love that we have no time to stop and think? India can show a missionary army of hard-working men and women. Go where you will throughout this land, you will find the Christian workers incessantly busy at their work. And the cry is heard from every quarter, "Over-work. Too much to do." No charge of idleness can be truly laid against us, as a whole. But how is it that so much of our busy energy appears to be expended all in vain? Holy Scripture, personal experience, the voice of conscience, all these alike suggest at least one answer—we have neglected largely the means which God Himself has ordained for true anointing from on High.

We have not given prayer its proper place in the plan of our campaign. Has not much time been spent in the school, the office, the village, or the zenana, and little, very little, in the secret chamber? Fellow missionaries, we have toiled much, but we have prayed little. The energy of the flesh, of our intellect, of our position, of our very enthusiasm, this has been allowed to usurp, to a lamentable extent, the place of the one power which can rouse immortal souls from the slumber of eternal death—the might of the living God, the energy of the Holy Ghost. How many a day passes by in hundreds of missionary bungalows in one ceaseless, busy stream of work, without any



Among the mountains near Dohnavur.



Faintly, in the distance, is seen the double head of the mountain which gives its name to the Potala of Lhasa. It is accounted one of the three sacred Potalas of the East.

time for quiet intercourse with God, except the few brief minutes snatched in the early morning before the rush begins, or the short space allowed in the late evening by exhausted nature. How many of us plead for India as Robert Murray McChesney pleaded for his Dundee congregation, never ceasing to pray for them, even when sickness drove him from them for a time, and turning the very shores of the Sea of Galilee into an oratory, till God opened the windows of heaven and poured down upon them showers of blessing? Or again, how many of us pray for souls around us in this heathen land as Robert Aitken prayed for those congregations in which he carried on his mission work, spending hours upon his knees after a day of busy preaching, beseeching God, with strong crying and tears, to save the souls of men? We all know the importance of prayer and can preach discourses on its efficacy; but do we practise what we preach ourselves? Let us recall two scenes from Scripture history which reveal to us quite clearly God's plan for the awakening of men.

A lad is lying in the prophet's chamber, still and motionless in the deep sleep of death. The servant of the man of God, in obedience to his master's bidding, runs in eager haste and lays the prophet's staff upon the face of the child, apparently expecting that the first contact of the rod would restore the dead to life again. The result is told in graphic language, pathetic in its simplicity and truth: there was neither voice nor hearing. Then came the man of God himself. But as he looked upon the scene before him, it was the still and awful scene of death. What will Elisha do? His rod has wrought no miracle. His servant's rush of haste has done absolutely nothing. Notice well the words which follow, He went in, therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. What the eager haste could not do, what the touching with his rod was unable to effect, the power of prayer could bring to pass; and therefore he got him to that inner chamber and prayed unto the Lord. His prayer was fervent, believing, and full of yearning sympathy.

We may well pause to ask whether we have not failed in getting into loving touch with those amongst whom we live and work. Let us lay stress upon the fact that the rush and the rod of office produced not even the shadow of a real change, and only ended in the sad confession, The child is not awakened. Fellow workers, we may run about our work in one long rush of busy labour,

we may take our wand of missionary office and place it in every zenana and wave it at every street corner; but if that is all we do, Satan will rejoice and we shall be ashamed before him. Lift up your eyes and look on the fields. Is it not true to-day that India is not awakened? Let us go in, therefore, and shut the door and pray unto the Lord.

Come this time to that graveside scene at Bethany. A Greater than Elisha is standing there, One who is mighty to rouse and save. One word from Him, Lazarus, come forth, and the thing will be accomplished. But before the great awakening could take place the Almighty Son of God must pray. "And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always." The will to raise the dead might be there, the stone of difficulty might be gone; but the eyes must be uplifted, the power of God must be invoked, the Father's energy must be claimed by earnest and believing prayer. The disciple is not greater than his Lord. Some of us are full of pity for the heathen round about us. We have laboured hard, following in the wake of good men gone before us, to take away the stones of prejudice and superstition, which have blocked the way for centuries to India's spiritual resurrection. *But still Lazarus is asleep.*

What lack we yet? To a large extent we have forgotten to lift up our eyes and seek the resurrecting power which God gives only in answer to earnest and believing prayer. It is the old story so familiar to us all. Why could not we cast him out? Master, why could not we awaken the sleeper? Christian workers, let us give ourselves time to ponder well over the clear and decisive answer, as it falls from the lips of our great Captain and Leader: "Because of your unbelief. This kind goeth not out but by prayer." Yes, there is no doubt about it. Here is the key to the whole position. India will never be awakened except by prayer.

Do not many of us need first of all a personal awakening? We have got into a routine of work, and can show an honourable record at the close of every day, of business accomplished, visits paid, classes taught, addresses given. But in the light of eternity are we satisfied with that? Have souls been really sought, yearned over, loved, and won? Is ours fruit that will remain? We may even persuade hundreds, especially of the

poorer classes, to accept baptism and enrol themselves as Christians; but are we sure that they are God's converts and not merely the manufactured article? Are we ourselves working with the Fire of God, and not merely using the artificial fire, the strange fire, of our own fleshly energy? Are we awake ourselves? When Zechariah was aroused as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, what did he see? He saw the golden candlestick with its pipes, through which the oil flowed from the olive trees; and he learnt in that vision the secret of spiritual power, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. Are we missionaries and Christian workers all awake to that vision and that power? If we are, and only if we are, we may hope to prosper in our work and to see India aroused. We shall never evangelize this country, in God's sense of the term, by flooding it with legions of Christian workers, but only by having living witnesses, workers who are wide awake, and who know by personal experience how to find and use the holy oil. To such the promise of a faithful God will stand: "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

Do we not need, all of us, a stronger faith in God's power and willingness to save, and a spirit of more earnest and believing prayer? Awake ourselves, by God's great mercy, we shall want to see God's arm awake and His power at work. We cannot do better, then, than get us to the dust before our Master's feet, there to importune Him and to give Him no rest till He make India a praise in the earth. To this end it is ours to pray for a great awakening in these latter days. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days! Will all readers of this appeal join us in prayer and lay hold of God's power and blessing for India in His appointed way? Better, far better, do less work, if need be, that we may pray more; because work done by the rushing torrent of human energy will not save a single soul: whereas work done in vital and unbroken contact with the living God will tell for all eternity.