

Chapter V

METHODIST CHURCH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The first efforts of the missionaries were directed to evangelization. But how to reach out to the alien people was the biggest question for them. To win their confidence could only through concrete social work. So, they included educational and medical services in their evangelistic work.¹ The missionaries became aware that by giving education and medical help they could attract people towards them. Educational work turned out to be one of the most important aspects of mission activity. The critics have regarded it as an example of the unfair methods resorted to by missionaries in order to make conversions. In this case the unfairness consisted in the inclusion of Christian religious instruction along with secular education and thereby influencing the young minds. It sounds true that the establishment of works of charity and social beneficence were used for the express purpose of bringing pressure on the uneducated and the poor toward conversion.² It is worth looking into the details of these instruments of attraction.

(A) EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Among the many remarkable developments of the nineteenth century none are more distinguishable than the general interest in the extension of educational privileges to 'all' classes of society and the

¹ Robert Jeffrey, *Our Mission in Gujarat*, Belfast, 1890, p. 16.

² Jerome, D'Silva, *Sardar Panikkar and Christian Missions*, Trichinopoly, 1957, p. 64, Henry Robinson, *History of Christian Mission*, Edinburg 1915, p. 27.

continuous effect made in teaching and training children. The introduction of education for all was a revolutionary concept.

The missionaries proved to be the pioneers in the modern educational system of India.³ The European officials of the education department came upon the scene much later in 1855, and demented the whole educational field until independence. Christian missionaries had been active in the work of education almost since their first arrival in India. A number of the early missionaries gave considerable time and effort to the task of education, believing that thereby they could teach Christian ideals and principles most effectively. ⁴ A large number of church related organizations came to extend the church's educational influence. In some, education was incidental to other objects. Others were sharply focused on education with the aim to influence both church members and non-members.⁵

The officers of the East India Company realized that if they wished to consolidate their power in India, they should refrain from disturbing the religious sentiments of the people who valued their religion above everything else in life. So the company did not permit missionaries to intensify the work in its territories and put all possible obstacles in the way of those who lived outside its territories and tried to work within them. Therefore, the missionaries and their friends began an agitation in England intended to show that the anti-missionary policy of the company was opposed to the teaching of Christ and that its neglect of education of the Indian people was absolutely unjustifiable. Their agitation obtained

³ B. Boman and Behram, *Educational Controversies in India*, Bombay, 1980, p. 68. Henry Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 23

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 17

considerable support and led to the educational changes of the Charter Act of 1813.⁶

The contribution of the missionaries was generally acknowledged by the great Dispatch of 1854. In the wider field of education Lord Macaulay's dispatch of 1855 confirmed the broad outlines of government policy laid down in the dispatch of 1854. Grant-in-aid rules were drawn up by the newly started Education Department by which aid was to be given to the schools started by the private agencies which fulfilled the following conditions for (i) satisfying the Government about their ability of management, (ii) declaring themselves ready to accept government in section; (iii) accepting such other conditions concerning curriculum, qualifications of teachers etc. as might from time to time be laid down by the education department; and (iv) imparting a good secular education.⁷ The first three rules were easily acceptable to the missionary societies which were at this time almost the only private agencies sponsoring want the dispatch called the "institutions for education of a higher order", in the form of either English or Anglo vernacular school. "The higher English schools", the Dispatch reported, "are for the most part maintained in connection with missionary bodies as these are few private schools in India at which a liberal English education is afforded".⁸

A few residential schools on the model of British public schools were founded by Christian missionaries of all the denominations. Some of the missionaries were full of appreciation for the richness of the India

⁶ Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Student's History of Education In India, 1800-1947*, Bombay, 1949, p. 41.

⁷ Ibid., p. 121; K. S. Vakil and S. Natarjan, *Education in India*, Calcutta 1954, p. 144, Boman Behram *op. cit.*, p 86.

⁸ K. S. Vakil and Natarajan, *op. cit.*, p. 146, Boman and Behram, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

cultural heritage and made scholarly contributions of their own towards a better understanding of it and dissemination of this knowledge. William Carey produced a Sanskrit grammar and an English translation of the Ramayana. His colleague William Ward could write as a result of his researches.⁹

The Irish Presbyterian Mission was the pioneer in opening schools for the backward classes in Gujarat. The first aim of the missionaries was to bring people to a personal experience of forgiveness and new life in Christ. They were also very concerned of human suffering and it seemed obvious to them that much of the suffering was due to ignorance and could be banished by education.¹⁰ In the early decades of the nineteenth century school education did not exist for the vast majority of Indian children and many people felt that it was not necessary. But missionaries, education served as an instrument for their primary purpose of evangelization. A.D. Glasgow does not hide the prime motive when he says "We feel that in the pupils we find the most helpful subjects for Christian instruction; and we are confident that though parental authority may for a time prevent them for making open profession of their belief of the doctrine of Christianity the word of truth will not be forgotten but working silently and surely within their will finally lead to an open acknowledgement of a Glorious redeemer".¹¹

The second aim of the missionaries was the enlightenment. Missionaries thought that through education they would be able to enlighten people and thereby fight poverty, superstition, idol worship and illiteracy. Their third aim was to promote the general welfare of the people. Education

⁹ William Clarkson, *Missionary Encouragements in Western India*, London 1850 (9th ed. Surat 1950), p. 45; Nurullah and Naik, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁰ R. H. S. Boyd. *The prevailing world*, Belfast, 1953, p. 15

¹¹ James Glasgow, *Introduction to Edalji's Dictionary*, 1864, p. 6

would increase the possibilities of raising the standard of living especially hygiene and general health standards. The funds for education were mainly raised abroad and even teacher volunteers sought from Europe.¹²

The Methodist mission Schools

The first missionary came to Baroda, then a princely state, was Rev. C. E. Delamator. He was appointed in 1888 but his health failed and in 1889 Rev. E.E. Frease was appointed in his place.¹³ Rev. E. F. Frease seems to have been a man of vision as in 1889 itself he opened two schools, one for boys and another for girls. While Delamator opened a small school in 1889, Miss Thomson started a small girls' school in her bungalow. Today these schools are known as Hill Memorial High School and Web Memorial High School respectively. These were both boarding and day schools combined. In the beginning the girls were three in number. The famine of 1900-1901 filled both the boys' and girls' schools.¹⁴

By the end of the nineteenth century these were many schools run by Christian missionaries in and around Anand, Borsad, Cambay and Ahmedabad. These schools contributed greatly for the improvement of the condition of the local people specially the low caste people. Through education the missionaries slowly won the confidence of some sections of the people in their endeavor to fight poverty, superstition' idol worship and illiteracy.

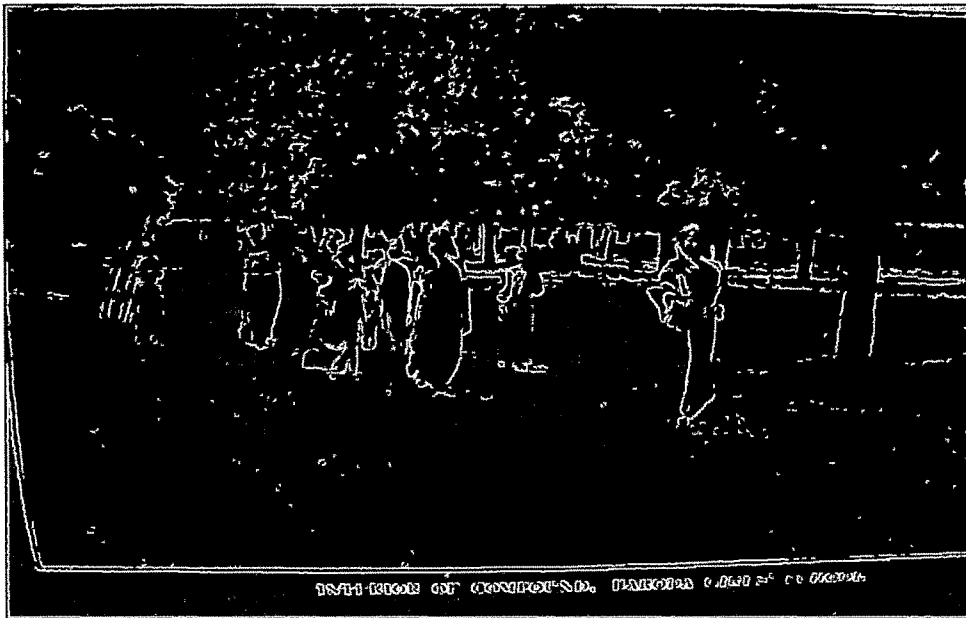
¹² GJUST Archives, Ahmedabad, *The Mission Report* 1866, R. H.S. Boyd, *op. cit.* p. 91

¹³ B. T. Badlely, *Visions and Victories in Hindustan*, Vol. I, London, p. 714

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.714; Israel, *op.cit.*, p. 43

(1) Web memorial girls' school

Web memorial girls' school opened in Baroda in 1889 the school had only 3 girls. The hostel for the girls was built in the famine years of 1899-1900. The present building of the school was erected, in 1917-18. Mrs. B.E. Cellibury and her sister of the U.S. donated money for the construction of his building. The school was named after their aunty 'Web who was concerned for social service.¹⁵



An important official letter written by Rev. E. F. Frease to the 'Agent to the Governor General' of 1902 regarding a new building for the Girl's school which was established by Women Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baroda Camp about nine years ago stated that it was now unable to secure suitable accommodation for the girls

¹⁵ *Web Memorial Girls School Souvenir 1889-1989, 1970, Vadodara* (Page numbers are not written in this souvenir)

because of girls gradually increased to one hundred by 1899 and since then largely owing to the famine to approximately 275. Frease also informed the Agent that since His Highness the Gaekwad was an enlightened and progressive ruler greatly interested in education especially of women was highly in favor to sanction and grant the permission for land and building construction for girls.¹⁶

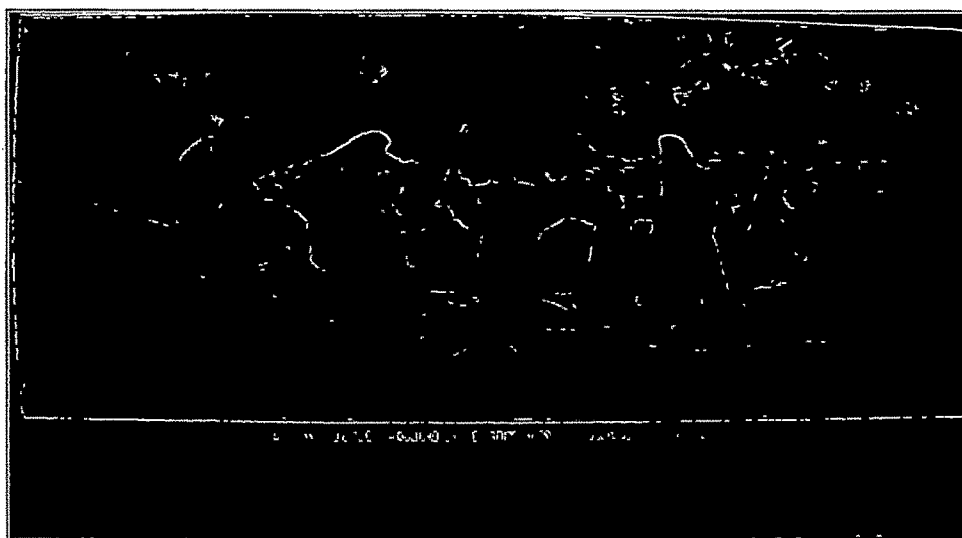
Accordingly the Gaekwar Government accepted the request regarding the land for girls' boarding school by following terms and conditions through Dewan Vasudev Bhandarkar addressing to Captain H.G. Carnegie, Officiating Resident at Baroda. The terms were as following:

- (a) That the missionaries not being European British subjects, they will be amenable to the jurisdiction of His Highness Government in every respect and that the local laws will be respected by them.
- (b) That if the missionaries want to convert the land to any use other than what is now specified by them or want to part with it to another they can only do so after obtaining the permission of His Highness Government.
- (c) That the missionaries when they purchase the land and build upon it will have to pay the bagayat full rates according to the rules and regulations prevailing in the state from time to time .
- (d) That jurisdiction over the land thus purchased by them from the present occupants will remain with His Highness Government and they will have to correspond with the several officers of the state in connection with any points regarding their property just like other subjects of the state.¹⁷

¹⁶ Huzur English Office, Letter dated 20.3.02, No. 5516 of 1902, Vadodara Archives.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, Letter dated 1st July 1902 from Dewan to the Officiate Resident Baroda.

Frease conveyed his heart-full thanks to the Dewan for Maharaja's generosity in sanctioning the new buildings for girls' orphanage in Nizampura.¹⁸



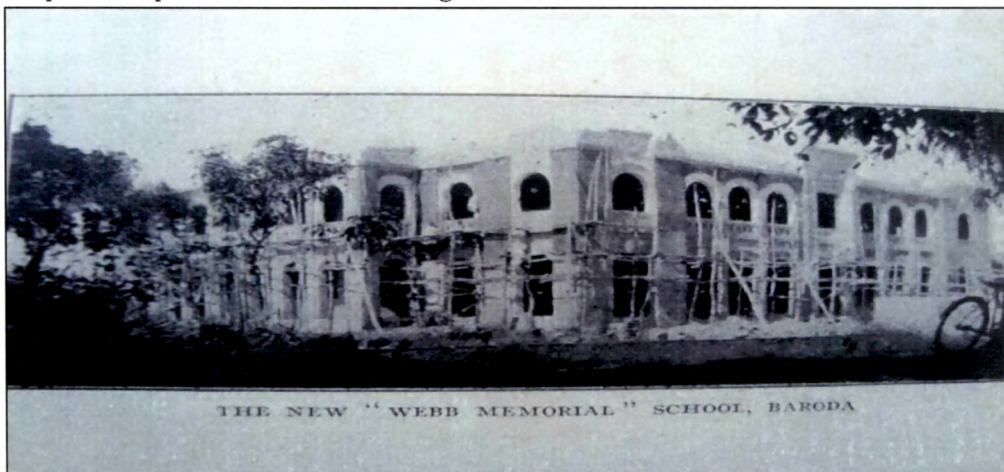
In 1917-1918, the Web Memorial School was built. A fine example how the Missionaries would engross themselves in the service of people in need is found in situations of crises. In July 1927, a terrible flood visited Baroda. The hostel and missionaries bungalow were under water. The students and the missionaries went to the Webb Memorial School building and lived on the upper floor for seven days. Soon after they reached the building news was brought of the collapse of the mud houses which made up the village of Pensionpura (now part of Baroda city) at the back of the hostel. The people came bringing their earthly possessions including chickens, goats, pet birds and buffaloes. For five days the Webb Memorial Girls School provided a home for 443 flood refugees.¹⁹

¹⁸ *Ibid.* letter dated Nov. 12, 1903 from Rev. Frease to the Dewan of Baroda state.

¹⁹ B. T. Badley, *op. cit.*, p. 715.



Miss Virginia Solanki stood first in the school in the Matriculation examination. In 1920 after which she did her BA. B.Ed. and joined the same school as a teacher to eventually become the first Indian woman principal. Other women principals of the school were Miss Estherben M. Desai, Miss Rachel M Macwan and Mrs. Umediniben Bhagat. Like Virginia Solanki, Estherben Desai also had been student of the school to becoming the head mistress of the primary school. Many of the girls of this school succeeded in becoming career women such as doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers, telephone Operators, clerks, sales girls, air hostesses etc.²⁰



²⁰ *Web memorial Girls School Souvenir.*

Web Memorial Girls High School gradually became a full fledged high school in 1970. Soon the enrollment in this school reached an encouraging height when the Gujarat Government made special efforts to provide free education to girls.²¹

Along with such of the Webb Hostel was begun with two rooms in the mission bungalow in 1889 and that also only with two girls. With tireless efforts of the Missionary women the foundation of the hostel was laid in 1903 resulting in a well organized residential building coming into existence. Within a decade the famine of 1900-01 filled the girl's school as well as hostel with children rendered orphans. Since then until 1950, the occupancy of girls in the hostel remained very high ranging from 250 to 300 staying there.²²

The establishment of Girls' Hostel in Baroda proved to be a great help to the village Christian families in the battle against custom of the child marriage. It was almost impossible for the families to resist the tremendous pressure of relatives and neighbors to marry a young girl and the boarding school seems to be the only door of deliverance. Under the administration of the missionaries there was an unconscious uplift which students and teachers alike derived from the cultured surroundings of the Baroda city.²³

Students came from distances as extensive as Karachi to Bombay, Kathiawar to Dahod and from various missions. There were five girls whose

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Web Memorial Girls Hostel Souvenir*. (Page number are not written in this souvenir)

²³ *G.A.C.R.*, 1923, p. 135.

parents were in Africa and the Hostel also accommodated two Muslim girls, the daughters of a sub-judge in Umreth in 1930s.²⁴

In the year 1945, the management of the hostel was in the hands of Miss E. M. Chillson who was one of the oldest, most experienced and veteran missionaries of Gujarat. She spared no pains in developing the physical, moral and spiritual health of the girls. Credit goes to her for she maintained 189 girls in the hostel in spite of rationing and exorbitant prices of food stuff due to War conditions.²⁵

In the year 1963, girl's Hostel was in the able hands of Miss G.N. Christian and Miss Shantaben Patel who were like mothers to the girls. In addition to meeting their physical needs they were very particular about their moral and mental growth special attention was paid to the study period of the girls. The SSC student receives lot of encouragement and help in their studies.²⁶

From June 1980 the world vision had taken twenty seven more girls under their sponsorships. There were then sixty one sponsored children in the hostel.²⁷

The construction of the hostel building that was completed in 1910 was so good to stand the vagaries of seasons for the next 75 years but with the passage of time it required changes and improvement in the hostel

²⁴ *G.A.C.R.* 1935, p. 193.

²⁵ *G.A.C. & G.W.C.R.*, 1945, p. 64

²⁶ *G.A.C.R.*, 1963, p. 32.

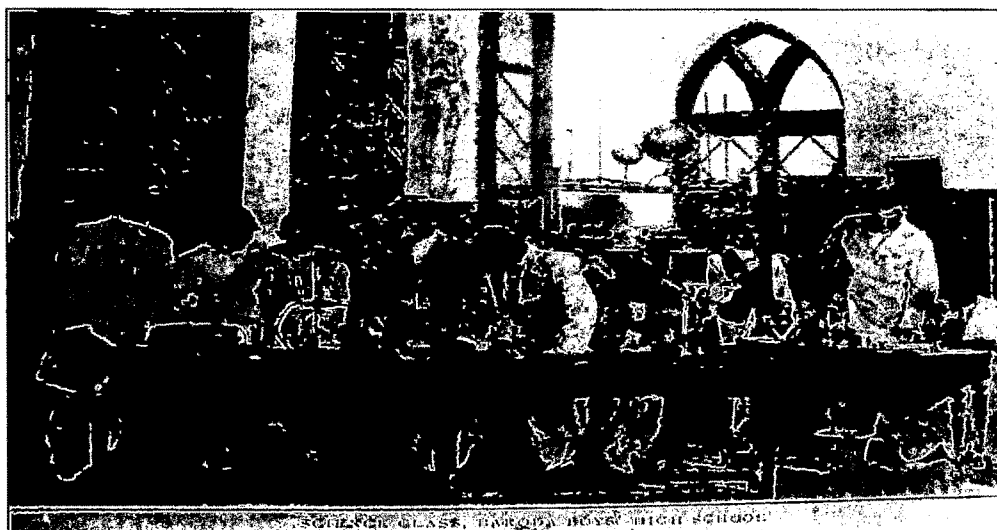
²⁷ *G.A.C. & G.W.C.R.*, 1980, Bharuch, 1980, p. 46

building. The essential repairs and renovation work on the building was undertaken in 1993.²⁸

(2) Hill Memorial High School

In 1889 Methodist Boys School was opened by rev. E. F. Frease. The church provided a school room for the boys for many years'. There were two schools for the higher education of the boys in the Gujarat conference. The Baroda Boys Middle School and High school prepared students for their final and matriculation examinations while the Industrial Institute at Nadiad trained the educated boys in various vocational fields. The students of Baroda school were to be visible in the public sphere by 1920s. In 1922; one of them was in his last year at Miraj Medical College while another had finished his third year in Teacher Training College.

In the year 1924-25 the High School had the largest enrolment in its history and there were then 261 boys in the English classes with 36 days in the matriculation class.²⁹



²⁸ *Web Memorial Girl's Hostel Souvenir*

²⁹ *G.A.C.R.*, 1922 pp., 34, 35 and 1924-25, p. 27

The accumulated influence of the missionaries combined with that of the Indian hostel helpers and teachers showed its results. The result of the matriculation examination for 1931 was excellent when 29 boys had appeared and 22 passed. The enrollment for the year 1931-1932 was more than 325. Graduates from the Boys' school were found in Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, Lucknow Christian College and in the Baroda College. Others were serving the Government and mission schools as teachers. A former student became a professor in the Lucknow Christian College and another professor in the Gujarat College. Many former students found jobs as clerks in government, railway and mission offices. A larger number became pastors of Methodist churches and a few in other missions in Gujarat.³⁰

In 1950 Methodist Boys High School was shifted to its new building. School had achieved success under the guidance of different principals of the schools. In the beginning, the school was limited for the boys only but during the Independence movement it was opened for co-education. During the time of Principal Solomon Immanual, the Methodist School was rechristened as "Hill Memorial High School" in the memory of Rev. C. B. Hill.³¹

During the year 1952 there were 209 students in the Methodist Boy's High school of which 153 were Christians and 56 came from non-Christian families. Most of the Christian boys come from the villages. In the beginning it was very difficult for the new comers from the village to get

³⁰ B.T. Badley, *op.cit.* p. 717-718.

³¹ *Hill Memorial High School Souvenir* (Page number are not written in this souvenir)

adjusted to the new place and circumstances and some of them would leave for their homes.³²

Dr. Domnik Israel recorded that Hill Memorial High School is an outcome of vision of missionaries to impart education to the needy children of community. It was a great joy for the church to see the 100 years of ministry service in the field of education. It's great contribution to the development of society. Hill Memorial High School is result of the finest activities of missionaries. They started as a small school and it is now one of the good institutions of Gujarat Regional Conference.

Newton Parmar, Director of Methodist Technique Institute of Baroda says that Hill Memorial High School has played an important role in the lives of the students from the rural area of Gujarat. Many of the students are now doctors, engineers and highly educated and many of them are settled abroad. The school produced some excellent community leaders such as Dr. S. K. Parmar, Bishop Nimrod Christian.

Hill Memorial High School had completed its 100 years in 1998. A number of students who studied in this school cherished the memory of their stay in the school. Rev. Sammuel S. Swastika to District Superintendent and Manager of Hill Memorial High School says that this school has produced best citizen's pastors, evangelists and believers for the country and for the Methodist Mission.³³

The Methodist Boys hostel had a small beginning in 1889 but with the increase in number of boys a need of a bigger hostel building was felt and

³² G.A.C.R. 1952, Godhra, Surat Mission Press, 1953, p. 58.

³³ *Hill Memorial High School Souvenir*, 1889-1989.

the present boys' hostel completed in 1894. During the famine of 1899 the number of students increased to 700 to 800. In the year 1905 boys' hostel got well organized. Its first house father was Rev. Gangubhai Dhanjibhai.³⁴

During the First World War, the higher classes were engaged in the church while the primary section was taught in Karkhana compound. Due to unavailability of the Christian teachers, Parsi and Hindu teachers were appointed in the school. While the senior boys washed their own clothes, the junior boys used to go to washerman. Saturday was reserved for inspection of the hostel for properly management and cleanliness.

The scarce situation during the World War can be understood in the replacement of rice and wheat as by bajri and Kodri Manubhai V. Christian remembers writes that when he was in the Mission hostel, his father was a pastor in the village and due to the cut in the salary he got only 13 rupees out of which he had to pay Rs.10, as a hostel fees for his five children.³⁵

This boys' hostel was important institution for religious teaching and values because which boys could be least interested at their happy homes. Philipbhai Fakirbhai Rathod served the mission hostel as a house father for 25 long years. In the year 1921, when he joined the hostel there were 250 students. The work to mould the lives towards spiritualism of the boys was very difficult for which every morning and evening he used to conduct a small worship service.

³⁴ Manubhai V. Christian, *Chhatralaya na Sansamarano* (Memories of Boys Hostel), pp. 46-48.

³⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 49, 50

He emphasized the value of education health discipline and obedience and the students not obeying his orders were adequately punished by him. He was also very caring to the needs of the young and sick boys in the hostel. As a compounder he would prepare the medicine and as a doctor would give injections. He did not allow the boys to drink or smoke, thus maintaining a strict discipline in the hostel.³⁶

The deterioration in the management of the Boys hostel after Independence is apparent from the decrease in the number. There were only 86 boys in 1970-71 further reduced to 62 in 1971-72. The enrolment came down to 52 boys in the hostel in year June, 1975 but some boys leaving with three months brought the actual enrollment to 39.³⁷

The boys continued to live in their old set up. During the monsoon in the rooms were leaking badly and the boys had to find some dry spots to keep their beds from getting wet.³⁸

The financial strain made the hostel management to raise of the hostel fees but many poor village students were unable to pay the increased fees. But timely help of Rev. D. B. Bauman and Mrs. F. Bauman Miss E. C. Fairbanks with their financial assistance and technical support by the MTI staff by providing necessary materials salvaged the situation.³⁹ The enrollment in Methodist Boys Hostel in 1978 hovered around 52 while next year it came down to 48. Eventually the boys were shifted to live in the new hostel building from august 1979.

³⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 51, 57, 58

³⁷ *G.A.C & G.W.C.R.*, 1972, Godhra, 1972, pp. 37-67, 1975-76, Bharuch, 1976, p. 57.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1978, pp. 98-99

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1979, p. 76.

The Missionary Service of the Hostel

The hostel service used as a missionary service historically that offered an opportunity to the poor and needy students to educate themselves was an important instrument to impart Christian education and to train them in Christian life. This instrument was used to make the church strong. The very existence of the Methodist boy's hostel was a result of the missionary service. The people converting to Christianity were largely from the villages suffering from superstitions and afflicted with many social evils. The missionaries thought that the education would help them to overcome their blind beliefs. Keeping this in mind, the schools were opened and boarding arrangements were made for the children who were poor economically. Thus, the boys' hostel came into existence. Because of the Christian education that was imparted in the hostel, many students came forward and became pastors and missionaries. The first missionary of the Methodist church (and product of this hostel) who went to Africa was Rev. Isusukh Khristmukti. Many such former students have been working as Indian missionaries. Rev. R. B. Desai gave leadership at G. U. S. T. Ahmedabad, Prof. R. J. Macwan at LTC Jabalpur, Prof. Dhanjibhai Fakirbhai at Ahmedabad and Dr. R.K. Parmar at Methodist Hospital, Nadiad, Rev. R. M. Rathod as part of MCI at regional and national level, Mr. Phillipbhai F. Rathod's role as house father was commendable as served the hostel for nearly thirty years.

As mentioned before hundreds of the boys from rural area and poor economic background utilized the facilities of staying and studying in the hostel. In the beginning the hostel was home and everything to most of them.

Many who came out of this hostel became stable economically and consequently the church got education and economically sound families. Bishop Badley mentions in his book *Visions and Victories* that many young boys and girls from the hostel got married with the help of missionaries.

Those who went back home into villages from the hostel, their local church got advantage of their education. People got Christian education from those students. The parents and relatives of those students also got information about the Christian life and Christian education in the hostel. Thus the churches in rural areas became stronger in the Christian education, faith and also in their economic life. There are witnesses to this in the rural churches.

The number of American missionaries decreased substantially after 1950 as also the financial support derived up. Rev. G. T. Johnson was the last missionary hostel superintendent manager who helped build the new hostel building in 1979.⁴⁰

Methodist technical institute

The Methodist Technical Institute came into existence in 1957. The leaders strongly felt that a Christian technical institute would be a great and valuable asset for the community in the industrially fast developing city. The Rev. John Finney, then connected with the Technical Institute at Ghaziabad was invited to visit the place, make a survey and the possibility of starting a technical or vocational school. Soon he was transferred to Baroda with the

⁴⁰ *Methodist Boys Hostel Souvenir*, Hundred plus Anniversary, 1993, Vadodara.

responsibility of finding funds and starting the school, which he did very successfully and effectively.

To begin with, tailoring carpentry and fitting and turning courses were offered. In a few years it was found that tailoring and carpentry were not popular courses. Gujarati Christian boys were not attracted to those courses and soon they were closed down. During that time a (commerce) department was opened with Miss Coleen Gilmore, an American lady, but that too was closed down after sometime as no proper person was found to fill their place.⁴¹

The Methodist Technical School commenced on June 21st, 1958 was officially opened on July 14th, when Bishop Mangal Singh conducted an impressive service of dedication attended by over two hundred people. By the end of May necessary alterations had been made in the old Butler Memorial Hospital to provide workshops, class-rooms, a worship centre, staff quarters and a temporary equipment had been purchased to make a moderate beginning with the courses of tailoring, carpentry, fitting and turning. A power line had been installed to operate all the machines needed. The staff and equipments had been also met. Twenty six students were enrolled of which only 17 actually joined the school.⁴²

During the year 1960, Rev and Mrs. J. W. Finney had 29 students in the technical school and hostel. The schools graduated its very first class that year and were the trained technicians were well paid and in demand everywhere.

⁴¹ I. V. Master, (MTI FILE), p. 3.

⁴² G. A. C. R. 1959, p. 50.

This institution was supervised by a local managing board which met under the chairmanship of the Baroda District Superintendent.⁴³

J. D. Merchant ran the school well during John Finney's furlough who resumed the school in September 1958. Sixty-seven young men and women graduated from the school. Miss Colleen Gilmore joined the staff and started Commerce Department. A hostel for boys was attached to the school and special attention was paid to meet the physical mental and spiritual needs of the young men. Benjamin S. Parmar, a young graduate from the G. U. S. T. as house father.⁴⁴

In the year 1963, enrollments were as follows: Fitting and Turning 32; Commerce 11, Tailoring 1. Of the total 44 trainees 33 were Christians while 11, non Christians also availed the benefits of the School. The success of the majority of the school's graduates to find employment was very encouraging.⁴⁵

The First graduation ceremony was held in May 1960, and most of the young people who received their certificate on that day did very well in life. One of them, Mr. Yakub Mahida, became an assistant workshop instructor. There were many modern industries in Baroda geared to the mass production of textiles, precision bearings, tractors, pumps, cameras, electric, switchgears, chemicals etc. easily absorbing the graduates of the institute.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 1960, p. 36.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 1963, p. 32.

⁴⁵ *G.W.C.R.*, 1963, p. 15.

From 1963 to 1968 was a significant period of growth in the life of the institute. In 1963 Miss Colleen Gilmore joined the staff and took charge of the Commerce Department. In 1964, Ray and Breette Farneth joined the staff and Ray's skill as a tool and die maker and designer, was soon leading to higher standards of accomplishment in what was then called the two year, full time, 'Machine Shop with Dietary tool and Die course. His coming also coincided with significant financial support given by the Interchurch Aid Department of the World Council of Churches and the World Division of the Methodist Church.⁴⁶

The Institute witnessed its e highest enrollment in 1970-71 rising to 83. This was due to the opening of a new section in The Tractor Mechanic course. The Indian Government gave its approval to receive a large grant of over Rs. 500,000 from the Netherlands Government for the exposing programmer.⁴⁷

The Institute started a new course in pump mechanics from June 1972 and the total number of enrolled students touched the figure of 94. A thought was given at the annual conference to find the local support for this Institute due to change in the national policy. Accordingly an endowment fund was started to meet the strains on the foreign funding.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *G.A.C & G.W.C.R* 1968, p. 54.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1972, Godhra, p. 64.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1969, pp. 43-44.

The Institute continued to offer the following courses during the year:

- (1) A two year, fulltime machine shop/elementary tool and die making course.
- (2) A one year, full time advanced tool and die making course.
- (3) A one year full time advanced tool and die design course
- (4) A one year full time Tractor Operation and maintenance Course.
- (5) A one year full time, Pump and irrigation Operation & Maintained course.
- (6) A one day Release Course in Machine shop/Tool and die making- lasting three years.

Enrollment and Examination Result 1973-74

Sr. No.	Course & Duration	Admitted 1973	Graduated in May 1974	Admitted in June 1974
1.	Two years Machine Shop	35	14	54
2.	One year Tool & Die	12	12	10
3.	One year Tool & Die design	3	3	-----
4.	Tractor	11	6	9
5.	Pump	8	2	---
6.	Special Trainee Course	12	12	12
TOTAL		81	49	85

To help the poor students who were were not in a position to pay any fee the JOHN W. FINNEY ENDOWMENT FUND was started with an initial donation of Rs. 1,000 by Dr. Justina Singh. One Hindu Trust donated Rs.10,000 and the Sussen Textiles donated Rs. 2,000.⁴⁹

Medical services

The medical services were also seen by the missionaries as helping the poor and suffering people and hence a device to win their confidence. The pioneers of medical services in Gujarat were the women missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.⁵⁰ The Methodist Church began its service in 1889. Dr. Miss. I. Ernsberger, the first representative of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, opened the work in Baroda. In 1906 the land was brought in the campus for a hospital and William Butler Memorial Hospital for Women was opened in 1910. A Nurse Training School was affiliated with the hospital from where the first batch of nurses graduated in 1915.⁵¹

Church historians have pointed out that nineteenth century India differed from countries like China or Persia in having a government medical service, so that it was not dependent on Christian mission for the introduction of western medicine.⁵² Christian medical work which began rather late did not attempt to compete with the government service. The

⁴⁹ G.A.C. & G.W.C.R.M. 1973-74, Nadiad, 1973, pp. 54-57.

⁵⁰ *Report of Women's Association for foreign Mission (W.A.F.M.), 1873-1923*, Belfast 1923, G.U.S.T Archives, Ahmedabad, p. 63.

⁵¹ B. T. Badley *op. cit.*, p. 77; Ithiel Master, *A History of the Methodist Church in Gujarat*, p. 43.

⁵² R.H.S., Boyd, *Church History of Gujarat Madras*, 1981, p. 109, M.E. Gibbs. *The Anglican Church in India*, Delhi, 1972, p. 331



Nurses in Training, Butler Hospital

aim was rather to provide good medical facilities in areas specially villages where there were no government facilities. If the missions were not actual pioneers in providing medical service they did undoubtedly pioneer work in encouraging the Indian girls to take up the profession of nursing. For many years the great majority of nurses in India came from the Christian community since at first higher caste Hindu women were unwilling to undertake what was regarded as degraded work.⁵³ Many of the mission hospital therefore developed nurse's training schools and for years the majority of Gujarati nurses were Christians trained in these schools.

In the year 1888 Dr. and Mrs. Frease were sent from Bombay to open the medical work in Baroda. About this time Dr. Ernsberger also came

⁵³ *Ibid.* , p.109

to the city, as Miss Thompson began zenana work among the high caste women. Two dispensaries were opened in the city and the patients were visited in their homes. Dr. Ernsberger was succeeded by Dr. Hodge. Dr. Hodge was succeeded by Dr. Tuttle who started a large dispensary in Baroda camp.⁵⁴

During the year 1912, the work of the hospital had steadily progressed as nurses' quarters were built and the wards beautifully equipped. Numbers of Muslim and high caste Hindu women had started coming to the hospital. Slowly the prejudices against Christian missionaries were getting up diluted. A wealthy Parsi lady who had been suffering for long and tried many physicians got cured at the Butler Hospital. After her recovery she sent gracious gifts for all the nurses and provided warm clothing for 'the Butler babies' and when reproached by the bigoted friends for seeking help in a Christian hospital retorted: "I came first because my husband wished me to! I would come again and always, from choice, because of the exceptionally excellent care I have received".

A graphic picture of the hospital in the early twentieth century is provided in a flowery language, given below:

In those days, the hospital compound was only a thorn grown jungle frequented by pariah dogs and howling jackals. Adingy room sheltered there few in-patients and out patients was seen under trees on the road-side or on the veranda. An empty oil tin served for boiling all the water used, which was carried in water vessels on the heads of women. A sauce pan did duty as a sterilizer!

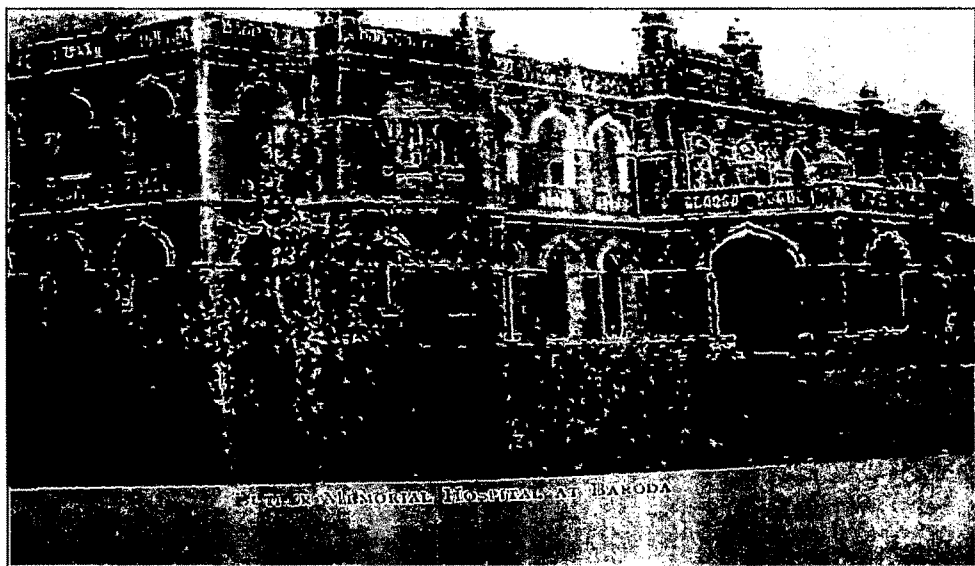
⁵⁴ B T Badley, *Beautiful Gujarat, A Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Gujarat*, p. 6



A Bunch of Brownies from Butler Hospital

Not an instrument, nor a respectable bed, nothing but empty willing hands and steady purposeful hearts. Surprising though it may seem, the same good results followed then that characterize the work now-only a few ones came then, and there was first only a doctor, then a few girls eager to try the untraded path of the nursing profession; later came those awful building operations, which even yet seem like a horrible nightmare! Then a completed building, then a trained nurse, a training class for nurses with raw material, the eldest not more than sixteen, no knowledge of the English language, indeed four languages, to contend with Marathi, Gujarati Hindustani and English, all opposed by habit and custom to touching any unclean thing; with never any thought of doing and suffering with and for others, with customs, but no manners; with an inbred conviction that cleanliness is a foreign supervision, that punctuality was meant only for the mail trains that nothing really matters except escaping from notice of the vigilant supervisor! All this and still the training school for nurses had grown apace under the skilful management of Nurse Lausson She herself, is the embodiment of the

noble ideals of her profession, one who rarely talks ideals, but lives them daily. One who steadily, patiently, gently, firmly, trustfully doggedly leads her girls up to her own exalted ideals. The success of her work is surprise to all who know it and is best appreciated by those who understand from experience what real training means, in India.⁵⁵



Mrs. Butler in whose sacred memory this hospital had been established passed away in 1914. In carrying health and joy into multitudes of poor Christian homes and in opening doors for the entrance of the gospel in the city of Baroda this hospital will remember the name of Mrs. Butler for generations Dr. Laybourne took charge of the Hospital and got affiliated to the village work.

⁵⁵ B.W.C.R., 1913, p. 39.

Dr. Laybourne assisted by Miss Haney and always found patients anxious to receive the physical relief who were practically beyond the reach of proper medical aid.⁵⁶



A Begining : Baby Fold, Butler Hospital

The medical services rendered by the Butler Memorial Hospital in the Baroda city and several villages over two decades came are gauged by the fact that during the year 1926, 4,408 dispensary patients; 4,162 out-patients, 2,137 in-patient were treated. A baby fold was a new future with its eight orphaned children. A remarkable feature of the work of the hospital was its service to the villages. On a number of occasions the nurses visited villages where they gave medicine to hundreds of patients.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1913, p. 51, 1915, Bombay, Mysore, Wesleyan Mission press, 1915, p. 57.

⁵⁷ *G.A.C.R.*, 1926, p. 187, 188.

Medical Mission with its village assistants



Medical Missions the Dreadnought for Caste Prejudice

The Nurses; Training School of the Butler Hospital celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1935. There were thirteen girls in training and six graduate nurses. In the year 1936 in spite of meager finances the Hospital established a new record for surgery in addition to the medical work. 654 in-patients of the total of 7,438 were treated with great care. A number of visits had been

made to village centres and four village dispensaries started. An important work was done for the troops stationed in the cantonment.⁵⁸

Nurse's in charge with orphans



The Maternity Ward Service



The War years created problems for the running the hospitals as many staff members were leaving for attractive salaries. But in spite of the reduced staff and illness during the year 1944 the hospital was able to carry

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 1935, p. 192 & 1936, p. 30,39.

on and accomplish some of the things planned. They continually tried to present to and keep before the young people the ideal of Christian service, rather than the financial gain but with the attractive salaries offered in government and other institutions, it was difficult to keep a full staff. Dr. Kamala was a faithful worker and had taken keen interest in the teaching side of the work.⁵⁹

After Independence, the situation for the missionary activities gradually was taking a new turn and many institutions run by them came under heavy strains. The closing of institutions became one of the most controversial issue in the life of the protestant churches in Gujarat around 1950, when the principal was accepted that the Indian church would gradually have to undertake financial and administrative responsibility for various educational, medical and other institutions which had hitherto been largely paid for and to some extent managed by the foreign personnel. The Butler Memorial Hospital of Baroda was closed in 1956 and shortly afterwards its buildings began to be used for the development of a highly successful technical Institute as we have seen in the case of Methodist Technical Institute (MTI) in the previous pages.⁶⁰

Relief Services during the Famine (Chappaniokal) 1899-1900

The shadow of famine which in 1897 had settled on the area north of Gujarat and on much of central India spread to Gujarat itself in 1899-1900. 'Gujarat, often called the garden of India' had not experienced a famine of this magnitude in living memory. By December 1899 the full force of the famine had begun to be felt. Sheer starvation was often accompanied by

⁵⁹ G.A.C. & G.W.C.R., 1944, Nadiad, Surat Mission Press, 1945, p.50.

⁶⁰ Robin Boyd- *A Church History of Gujarat*, p. 188.

dysentery and cholera, and many of those who survived were reduced to utter destitution. "No calamity of such proportion had occurred in living memory",

Fr. Suria writes, "called the great Famine, it hits towns, villages, hamlets, and mostly the thick forest of the tribals. Carcasses of cattle and humans lay rotting on roads and fields. Scenes of horror were seen everywhere, as a child driven away by dogs and crows from the corpse of the dead peasant, dear ones dying alone, because the family was getting extinct. The poor emigrated to government relief services or to towns lacked strength to go on and expired midway"⁶¹ Gravity of the situation is best expressed by Robin Boyd when he says:

"Leaders of the Christian Mission in Gujarat saw that their first duty for the time being must be to drop most of their other activities and concentrate in famine relief. The government had opened many relief projects where people could earn their food by digging new tanks or working on roads and railways. But hundreds of people perished on the way to the public works. In these circumstances the one thought of the missionaries was to save lives and so the mission compounds gradually began to fill up with those who had been rescued from death. These were mainly the children."⁶²

It was a difficult time for the missionary looking after the living, helping the dying, burying the dead. Stevenson Poignantly writes: "Often I find I have been sitting with the Bible open before me and can remember nothing I have read; my thoughts have been with the children anxiously fussing about them when my prayers would have done them, so much

⁶¹ Suriya, Carlos, *History of the Catholic Church in Gujarat*, p. 119.

⁶² R.H.S. Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

good.⁶³ In May 1900 an epidemic of cholera was added to famine and many who had survived the hunger succumbed to the disease. All over Gujarat orphanages were opened to deal with the influx of starving children and as a result thousands of lives were saved. But hundreds of others were found too late for survival.⁶⁴

The great Famine marked a clear stage in the history of the church in Gujarat. By the time it ended, after 1900, almost all of the churches including Methodist church in Baroda which was still in Gujarat had established their work. There was dramatic increase in the numbers of those who associated with the church. Provisions were made for their maintenance and education. Those who wished to become Christian were instructed and given the opportunity of being integrated into the life of the community. The institutional work of all the churches unexpectedly multiplied.⁶⁵

The critics of Christianity frequently level their attack at the policy of the churches during the famine and slighting remarks are still made in Gujarat about 'Chhapania' Christian. The accusation is that the missionaries took advantage of the misery of the people in order to swell the number of their converts. But Boyd clarifies that the children whose lives had been saved were taught the Christian faith. Yet in cases where guardians were able to establish their relationship with a child the child was returned to them. Young children were not baptized; the policy was to wait until they

⁶³ Lilian Stevenson, *Our Famine Legacy*, 1901, p. 73

⁶⁴ The majority of the children saved and cared were of lower caste origin as no help came to them from any other quarter. John Shildy, 'Famine Orphans' in *Christian Herald*, 1902, p. 16. Surat.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 16.

reach the age at which they could make free force choice and then to baptize them only at their own request and on their profession of faith.⁶⁶

The relief programmers organized by various missions in Gujarat during and after the famine were very varied. First, work was provided in many different forms in addition to the government schemes. Much of the land around the mission in Borsad was leveled, thousand of bricks and tiles were made, and new buildings were erected.⁶⁷

Another useful form of relief was the organization of weaving which the recipients preferred to work in their own homes. At one time in 1900 enables many looms were supplied in Borsad, Baroda and other places while some self-help training programmers were introduced by the missionaries like handicrafts, canning, weaving and laboring. They also gave seeds to the farmers for the agriculture etc. The mission made grain available at prices close to the pre famine level. In certain circumstances and cases free grain was provided. Cooked food was supplied from famine kitchens; medical supplies and clothing were also distributed.⁶⁸

This famine relief work brought change in the attitude of the people towards the missionaries. They finally recognized the missionaries as their friends and helpers in the time of great calamity. Lazarus Tejpal, one of the early Gujarat convert leaders remarks that the Hindu saw and experienced the kindness and generosity of the Christians.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Robin Boyd *op.cit.*, p. 86 & Carlos Suriya, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁶⁷ G.U.S.T Archives, *I.P. Mission Reports Borsad, 1900, & Report of Indian Famine Commission*, Calcutta 1901, p. 55.

⁶⁸ G.U.S.T. Archives, *I.P. Mission Reports.*, 1900

⁶⁹ Lazarus Tejpal, *Gujarat Ni Khristi Mandali No Uday*, Surat, 1930, p. 104.



Many complain were made by the famine stricken people against the delay in getting grains and fodder by the railways. Required quantity did not reach to the people. In this delay some casteist prejudices were seen at work as the higher caste people got relief from the government while the lower caste people relied mainly on the missionaries.⁷⁰ Bhai Kaka, the founder of Vidyanagar near Anand has written the following about the indifferent attitude of Hindus and Jains while hundreds were dying:

The basement of Swaminarayan temple at Vadtal and Ahmedabad were full of rupees. The vaishnav temples were offering their Gods plate consisting of 56 food itmes during worship. Vaishnav religious leaders were luxuriating with the color full match from Bombay. There were golden strips in Jain temple. Yet they had no time to help the scores of dying people. No religious leader had mercy and compassion in their hearts. Not even Shankaracharya came. I did not see the Aryasamajis working in Gujarat. Ramksrihna Mission may have just been established but none showed interest. But Christian missionaries of foreign origin showed mercy and compassion, and they made many people live and eventually convert. The Christians whom we see today are mostly the crop of *chhapania* famine.⁷¹

At the time of great famine Methodist church Baroda had started orphanages. These orphanages helped a lot of famine victims especially from the lower castes. After the famine and epidemic, most of the victims returned to their homes and those who had lost their parents and relatives stayed back with the missionaries and became Christian.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Indian Famine Commission Report*, 1901, No. 11021

⁷¹ Cited in Lancy Lobo, p. 25

⁷² R. H.S. Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 85, *Mission Reports* 1900.

During the famine, children were brought into these schools weak and undernourished orphans.⁷³ In 1903, the Methodist had a total of 1190 children in the boys' and girls' hostels in Baroda, Nadiad and Godhra as against 263 in 1899.⁷⁴

Raijibhai Jethalal Masihi recalls that during this famine missionaries made people live. They started relief work in villages. They made separate camp for the orphan children. His father was one of them. He was Vaghela Raiput from Siddhpur. They provided food and shelter. Many people died on the road while other people used to cover the dead body with mud.⁷⁵

According to Rev. Prabhudas Christian, whose parents passed away in the great famine, such orphan boys and girls were brought to the Baroda Webb Memorial Girls Hostel and boy's hostel. They were 500-1000 in number. Many orphan children studied in the mission school and missionaries enabled them to get good jobs. Some of them became pastors, some got good jobs and became economically independent and many among them went abroad.⁷⁶

Mrs. Floraben Ratikumar Macwan testifies that during the chhapania famine her father and his six brothers and a sister left their village due to plague. Only her grandfather, Mr. Parmar and his young sister survived while all others died. When he reached the city his sister passed away due to sickness and hunger. When Morarbhai was left all alone, the missionaries took him to the boys' hostel. The orphanage educated them and

⁷³ B.T. Badley, *Beautiful Gujarat*, p. 6

⁷⁴ R. H.S. Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁷⁵ Interview with Raijibhai Masihi on 12.7.2006 at Vadodara

⁷⁶ Interview with Rev. Prabhudas Christian, on 15.9.2007 at Vadodara

gradually missionaries gave them jobs in the mission. Some of them accepted teaching profession. The orphanage in Baroda was later turned in to Methodist Boys' Hostel. The high caste people considered these orphans as untouchables while missionaries took them under their care and gave them new jobs. As small kids the orphans had no religion but adopted the Christian faith. Floraben's father, Mr. Morarjibhai also started working as a teacher in Nadiad and Baroda Mission School. He learnt good English during 1920s from the missionaries. Her mother, Sumitrabai, an orphan student from the Webb Memorial Girls' Hostel also worked as a teacher in the Nadiad Mission school.⁷⁷

The Graveyards in Baroda

Wherever missionaries founded the missions and churches they had a separate and certain place for the last rites of the faithful. Before the establishment of Methodist mission graveyard in Nizamppura, the Christians were buried in different CNI church graveyard near the Alembic Bridge.

The C.N.I. Church Graveyard



⁷⁷ Interview with Floraben Macwan on 10.5.2007 at Vadodara

It was open to all the Christians from different denominations. It is 200 year old graveyard having 1000 graves expanded spread over 3 acres of land. During my visit to this graveyard I found many graves of the warriors of the First World War, Second World War including the Christian missionaries. An official letter of 8th April 1884 from the local pastor of Baroda to the Bombay Government offers details about the Baroda cemetery.⁷⁸

Glimpses of the C.N.I. Church Graveyard



⁷⁸ Ecclesiastical Department, An Official letter dated 8th April, 1884.

Official correspondence between the Chaplain of Baroda, the Quarter Master General, the Agent of Baroda and Archive Deccan of Bombay concerning the charge of cemetery of Baroda in the Chaplains' absence sought the ruling of government respecting the landed property attached to the grave yard urged the Government that the Senior of the Church Committee should be placed in charge of it. Finally, the cemetery at Baroda was attached to the military Contentment. The charge of the cemetery during the absence of the Chaplain according to the ecclesiastical regulations would devolve on the officer commanding the station.⁷⁹

In the year 1945, a separate land was allotted on the lease of 99 years to the Women Foreign Missionary Society in Nizampura when the District Superintendent Rev. Plazer was looking after the whole administration. The owner of this land continues to be the government.



The Methodist Church Graveyard

⁷⁹ An Official letter dated 5th May, 1884.



The lease of ninety-nine rupees will be over in the year 2044. It was a waste land, given by the government to the Methodist Mission. According to the government records the area of this land is 5,160 square feet. According to a document of 1971, the original owner of this land was Mr. B.K. Desai and later it was declared as a waste land of the government. There is a Common Committee of government the Methodist Church of Baroda looking after the administration of this graveyard.⁸⁰

Mr. Suryakant Tulsibhai Christian after his retirement from the ABB started working for the cemetery. Earlier Mr. Ashokbhai Punjalal Christian was working for the cemetery who encouraged Suryakantbhai fought cases regarding the extra land of cemetery.

During the interview, Mr. Suryakant informed that cemetery is recognized as a religious place by the government. So the government has special provision to give fund for the burial ceremony, coffin box etc. but generally they don't try for that as there is a Samaj Seva Samiti in the

⁸⁰ Personal Interview with Mrs. Suryakantbhai Christian on 5-8-2007 at Vadodara

Methodist Church, which provide free Coffin Box and also prepare food for the forty people and send it to the bereaved family.

Mr. Suryakantbhai and Mr. Ashokbhai Christian had made important changes in cemetery compound. Within the compound they put electricity pillars on the roads and made a beautiful garden in the cemetery. Water pump is also installed in the compound. They made a compound. They made a compound wall around the cemetery in 1981-1982.



The tranquil Graves in the Cemetery

This cemetery is only for the Methodist, Salvation Army and Marthoma Christians. Members of other denominations are charged more for the burial.⁸¹

In the beginning late Mr. Ashirwadbhai Bob used to make coffin box at Karkhana compound Fatehgunj. After his death, his son Robin Bob has continued his father's occupation. Mr. Samuel Benjamin Christian has been also working as a grave digger and watchman of the cemetery for last twelve years. Before him, his father Mr. Benjamin from Modasa was doing the same work in the Cemetery as he was also working as a watchman at missionary Bungalow.⁸²

By the end of the 19th century the Methodist Missionaries introduced educational health programmes as they were also absorbed in the relief works in Baroda during the time of famine. Thus they started the social service for the people and played a pioneering role in the fields of education and health. In the process the women in general and the untouchables benefited most from these services as they also became Christians.

In 1889, Rev. Frease opened two schools, one for boys and one for girls. Today, these schools are known as Hill Memorial High School and Web memorial High School. In order to provide accommodation to student from the villages, the missionaries also started hostel facilities. Frease started a hostel for boys in 1899 while Ernesberger started a hostel for girls the same

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Interviews with Mr. Robin A. Bob on 14.2.2007 at Vadodara, and Mr. Samuel B. Christian on 3.2.2007 at Vadodara

year. The famine of 1900-1901 filled both the boys' and girls' schools. Over the years these schools contributed greatly towards the improvement of life condition of the local people of Gujarat, specially the low caste people.

In order to make people independent economically the Methodist Technical Institute was started in 1957 in Baroda. It trained the poor students in such a way that they eventually got different jobs after training.

The Methodist church began the work of medical service in 1889 with Dr. I. Ernsberger. In 1910 the William Butler Memorial Hospital for women was opened. A Nurses Training School was affiliated with the hospital. This hospital served the women and children of Baroda and the surrounding villages for many years.

During the time of famine, Methodist Missionaries started orphanages, medical services and other relief works in Baroda. As a result, a number of starving children and thousands of lives were saved. Though there were no compulsion to follow the Christian faith, people that benefited by the relief and got educated and in a way were also oriented towards the faith eventually embraced Christianity.

The Missionary activities by brining western rational thoughts tried to blow away the abominable practices harmful to human dignity and depressing to human conscience. In doing away with the child marriage and encouraging the widow remarriage was also the contribution of the Methodist missionaries. Christian converts in that sense remained at the forefront of the movement for the emancipation of women. By their social work, the missionaries succeeded in inspiring the critics and organizations

to take up reformative measures which would benefit society at large. In a way they proved to be catalysts for a social change.