

Journeys and Encounters
Religion, Society and the Basel Mission
in Northern Karnataka
1837-1852

Section Three: [1841–] 1842

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27th Basel Mission Annual Report [1841–] 1842¹

1. Annual Report, Dharwar [p.88]

Missionaries: J.C.Lehner, Mrs Lehner, J.Layer, J.C.Essig

[The three missionaries have each written a report. The first is almost certainly by Lehner, though this is not stated. Parts are in the 3rd person – written by Lehner himself, or by the Editor?]

The soil here is so dry and hard that we can hardly find any flowers to make a bouquet for the annual report.

The preaching of the Gospel in Kannada and English has proceeded regularly. Brother Lehner was often prevented from going out among the people by suffering at home, and by other work, but he went as often as he could. People do not appear to have any objection to listening to missionaries, but we often feel as though we have been threshing empty straw. Nothing really seems to take root. The listeners agree to a lot of what we say, but then they return to their empty chatter and their 'grandfathers' fables', and to the ridiculous excuse that Paramatma (the highest God) gave them Basappa or Hanumanta as their *Gauda* (chief), just as he gave us Jesus Christ, and everything will come out well so long as everyone follows the ways of their fathers. We have often had the impression that traces of the truth have remained in the hearts of some of our hearers – but because we have sometimes been betrayed, we are inclined to be mistrustful rather than hopeful.

Koppana Gauda, about whom we have reported in the past (see Annual Report 1840-1841) seems to intend to link himself to us again. I had hoped to be able to baptise the husband of our servant, Martha, at Easter, together with his mother, his brother and his sisters, but it seems to me now that apart from the husband none of them is yet suitable to be taken into the church.

We preach every Sunday to our little congregation. Since our old cook Ludwig died, there are three men and four women. In our Girls' Home there are 13 children. Six entered in November. The best and most talented of these girls fell asleep on January 25th in joyous faith in the Lord Jesus. It pleased the Lord to lay her on a bed of sickness for seven months. She suffered patiently and without complaint, and during this time it was clearly visible that she was growing inwardly. The Word of God was her only joy, and heavenly peace shone in her face whenever she read it or heard it. She was not afraid of death, and when she died she simply seemed to be sinking into a peaceful sleep.

During the last three months we have had a lot of sickness among our children. We were afflicted with severe coughs² and measles, and some of the children are still very sick, including one little boy who was at death's door, but the Lord preserved him. The same sickness brought our own two little children to an early grave. May our faithful Lord let all this chastisement serve for our eternal salvation.

At Easter I plan to baptise six of our pupils, then all the girls will bear the name of Christ. This little institution continues in a satisfactory manner. The children's behaviour sometimes makes us sad, but we still hope that the good seed has not been scattered in vain. In the mornings they have lessons in reading and writing Kannada; Bible studies and explanations of the Holy Scriptures; arithmetic, a little geography and singing. In the afternoon they are busy with sewing and such things.

[p.92] *The section on Dharwar continues with Layer's report. He had been greatly hampered in his work in the last rainy season because he suffered from a Guinea worm infection in his leg. He could not leave the house, so he was restricted to speaking to occasional visitors to the Mission House, and*

¹ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 2nd quarterly issue, June 1842, pp. 88-113. Because the report was prepared for the Missionsfest in Basel at midsummer, we have to regard it as covering the second half of 1841 and the first half of 1842. We may assume, we think, that although the Annual Report was published in the second quarterly number in 1842 the actual publication will have been delayed till after the *Missionsfest*.

² Original "*Krampf Husten*" – convulsive coughing; whooping cough or croup?

teaching the boys of the Kannada school, who came to his room for lessons. After the monsoon he was able to go as far as the boys' school and a girls' school that had been started in September 1841, but could not stand long enough to go into town to preach. He writes about the girls' school in some detail:

Founding a girls' school had been a wish for a long time, and the offer of an intelligent lingayat from Kittur, who wanted to try it, was naturally accepted with pleasure. We hoped that such an attempt would help to reduce the prejudice against female education that stands so much in the way of the moral uplifting of the Hindu people. Because of this prejudice, we had expected great difficulties in carrying out our plan. But how pleasantly surprised we were, and how joyfully we praised the name of the Lord, when on the very first day eight nice girls gathered. They were the children of respectable people, mostly lingayats. It was a visible sign that we could expect His blessing in this aspect of our service to Him.

I was delighted to see that some of the girls mastered the alphabet within the first few days. When I expressed my pleasure over this in the presence of a large number of inquisitive onlookers, I had to laugh at the remark our schoolmaster made in my support. He produced a *sloka* (a Sanskrit verse) from one of their *shastras*, which teaches that the understanding of women is four times greater than that of men. 'What convenient *shastras*!' I thought – you can use them to prove anything and everything.

The number of girls in the school fluctuates a lot, because their parents are not much concerned with the moral and intellectual advancement of their children. The little gifts that are distributed now and then are not a sufficient incentive for them to send the children to school when they can be otherwise profitably employed. There are twelve girls enrolled, and five of them have already learned a Christian catechism off by heart and understand its contents. They are taught reading, writing and arithmetic.

I enjoy the responsibility for the Kannada boys' school, which has 50-60 pupils. I spend 1 – 1.5 hours there every day. The boys are open-minded, and quick to understand, so that the great truths – preparing the ground for which is our main objective – can be laid on their hearts much earlier than is the case in English [= English-medium?] schools.

In December I was able to return to going out every evening, to make the invitation to the Supper of the Lamb echo through the streets. My task was especially to concern myself with people of the lower castes, who are always more willing to accept the Gospel. [p.92] However, all our work has had no visible success as yet. With the exception of one young man, not one soul in Dharwar has come closer to us.

One of the leaders of the *Kalagnana* people, who had been in contact with us, has shown himself in the course of the last year to be a real hypocrite – to our great pain. We had to break off contact with him. He no longer believes in the Hindu religion. His belly is his God. The ways of God in this matter of the *Kalagnanas* are mysterious. The man I mentioned, the *Gauda*, was the main person who brought these people into contact with us. So we have him to thank for the hopeful settlements in Malasamudra and Betgeri. He was, therefore, a tool in the hand of God for the salvation of others. But he himself has no share in the blessings of the Gospel.

Layer closes with a few sentences about how important it is, when visible success is so rare, to remember the words, "Your work in the Lord is not in vain".

[p. 92] *The next writer is Essig. He begins with a short overview of a journey he made with Johannes Müller from Nov. 18th 1841 to January 10th 1842, where they preached not only in big towns but also in the small villages, where they were generally heard without opposition. The main places visited were Bankipur, Hungul, Adur, Koand, Haligarry, Harihar, Kannabednora, Gadag, Bandikoppa, Hirriadhathi, Dhamal, Betgeri and Malasamudra. They distributed 1,800 Bible portions and other*

*Christian writings in Kannada and Mahratta, and a few books in Hindi.*³*This journey is described in detail in Appendix E of the Annual Report published in 1842.*⁴

We can say that everywhere the people are inclined to listen to our message about the true God, and about Jesus Christ, whom he sent to us – but there is no willingness to leave the old ways. Here and there, we met people who are more attentive because of tracts they have obtained in Dharwar, or from travelling missionaries.

Where there are a lot of brahmins, as for example in Hungul, one cannot preach peacefully. One is forced to engage in disputations. If it were not for that, it would be easy to preach to brahmins, because they grasp things quickly and precisely – whereas it is almost impossible to make the poor farmers, who have so little education, understand....

... You often come across traces of a knowledge of the one God as creator and supporter of the world. But this thinking about God is too high for the people, and too spiritual. If you ask a farmer, ‘Who is it who gives the rain and the fruitful season? Who is it who fills your heart with nourishment [sic: *Speise* i.e. food] and joy?’ he points upwards and says ‘It is God in heaven’. But because the ox ploughs his fields he prays to the image of an ox, and it needs a long and complicated proof to persuade the poor man that that his ox is less than he is himself, although he also feels shame when I say to him ‘An ox knows his master, and the ass his master’s crib, but my people do not know me.’

[p.94] Concerning my schools I only have the following comments to make. The English school has 45 boys, mostly the sons of Indian soldiers and Anglo-Indians. Apart from them, there are 4-5 poor brahmins, 2 or 3 Rajputs and a few other Hindus. The upper-class Hindu families do not send their children to our school. The regular attenders advance rapidly. The Bishop of Bombay came to the school a while ago, and he was satisfied with the knowledge of the first two classes in English grammar, astronomy, geography and Bible studies.

Up to the time of harvest – which is not yet over – the Kannada school had 50 pupils every day. In this school, too, the boys are instructed in the basics of astronomy and geography and are enabled to taste the Water of Life from its source, the Bible. A lot of parents would prefer it if the thirsty souls of their children were just fed with dry arithmetic. About a third of the boys are now well acquainted with the book of Genesis, and we shall soon move on to the Gospels. Our school is still tolerated in the little Basappa Temple.

This is the end of the quotation from Essig's report. Brother Layer also undertook a journey in the neighbourhood of Dharwar in April 1841, which is described in the Evangelische Heidenbote, 1841, nos 9-10.) He did not want to go too far from Dharwar, partly because he wanted to protect his injured eyes⁵ from exposure to too much light, and partly because he wanted to visit all the villages around systematically, and preach the Gospel in each. He writes:

The fact that these villages are so isolated from big towns gives the character of their inhabitants a simplicity that is very advantageous for their acceptance of the Word – but, on the other hand, the darkness of superstition and their slavish respect for their gods sets up a rampart against the Word which only the Lord Himself can destroy.

The Annual Report continues:

[p.95] We can add more details about the schools from information sent us by our Brothers.

³ Orig. "*hindustanische Bücher*"

⁴ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd quarterly issue, pp.170-201 here pp. 3.13-25

⁵ For Layer's accident with the smelling salts; see above p. 2.11, fn.24.

Essig, June 12th 1841

As we have already reported, the various castes – brahmins, lingayats, sudras, moslems, catholic and protestant christians, are all united in our schoolhouse. This is evidence for what the Hindu *shastras* say, "When knowledge comes, the caste system must give way."

Recently I was present at the examinations in the Government's Kannada and Marathi schools. They did arithmetic without stopping, and were also asked a few questions on geography – but one thing that could have given some warmth to the proceedings was missing, namely the Bible. The Company⁶ does not introduce it in its schools for Indians. Praise God, we can do what we like in this respect, [but] we do not have any special protection from the Government, which would perhaps be desirable to broaden our influence over the young people. However, we have a lot of freedom in our work amongst the children, and I believe that a lot of these lambs would follow us if the older people did not warn them against it. This is especially the case among the brahmins.

Layer, November 22nd 1841

The founding of a school for girls was an unheard-of idea, and naturally caused quite a sensation. At the beginning, crowds of people stood in front of the school when I was there, to see what was happening in this novel institution. The unfortunate girls themselves had a good deal to overcome. Firstly, it seemed to them very strange to sit in school and do things that neither their mothers nor their older sisters had ever done. And secondly, even those far away can imagine that being stared at by so many people must have been most uncomfortable for them. I tell the children a little story now and then, but some of them are too easily distracted [*Flatterhaft*], and some are too embarrassed, to grasp even tales like these.

There is a slightly more detailed report on the school in Appendix G, here p. 3.35.

A comment of Lehner's is quoted: he compares the situation of India to that of the Israelites in the desert, where the older people, who had experienced Egypt's worship of idols, and sometimes participated, had to die out before the younger generation could move into the Promised Land. Work among young Hindus is more promising than among their elders.

The report continues with more information about work among adults.

From Essig's diary, June 12th 1841 [p. 96]

In the Bazaar he talked to a variety of people, and handed out books to people from the surrounding villages.

One of the people who wanted books was a lingayat priest. I offered him a Gospel – but he refused it because it was bound in leather. I pointed out to him that he was wearing leather sandals. He and the rest of the crowd laughed, and he remarked, "Hands are different from feet". I took out my knife and made as though I was going to cut his feet, which he resisted. I responded, "Your hands and your feet are the same; you feel pain in your feet just as you do in your hands." Nevertheless, he still did not want a leather-bound book, and was satisfied with a little tract.

On May 7th I went out a little before sunset. The *Mufti* of Dharwar, a proud elderly Moslem, came in his palanquin to visit me. He climbed out, and asked whether I had time to chat a little with him. I said I was happy to do so, and invited him into the house. His first remark, in response to a question from me, was that only those who walk in Abraham's footsteps are true Moslems. I agreed, and asked him a bit about Abraham. He has a fairly accurate knowledge of the story of Abraham – indeed, of all the first five Books of the Old Testament.⁷ He had already had an Arabic Bible from us. Then he wanted to ask me a few questions, for example, 'Why did God want to kill Moses when he was on the way

⁶ The East India Company, which presumably governed the area until its authority was abolished everywhere. in 1859.

⁷ The 5 "Books of Moses"; in English the Pentateuch, i.e. Genesis - Numbers

back to Egypt. To whom did Moses' wife Zipora say, "To me you are a 'husband of blood'"?⁸ Why did God beat Jacob about the hips and half paralyse him?' etc.

After I had answered the questions the discussion moved to the Holy Ghost, by whom – as the Koran acknowledges – Christ was conceived. He wanted the Holy Ghost (*Ruch Kudus*) to be identified with the Angel Gabriel, as is usual among Moslems. I tried to prove him wrong. We also talked about Christ's eternal existence. He claimed that Mohamed also existed before his birth – indeed, that the spirits of all human beings have been in existence for all eternity. I said I did not know anything about that for certain – but one thing is certain, that although the spirits of human beings come from God, they do not exist as different individualities [*Individualitäten*] until human beings are born. On the other hand, everything was created through the eternal Christ, who existed in the beginning with God as the Word of God, and the spirits of all living beings are in Him and from Him. We were not quite finished, and he asked me when it would be convenient for him to visit me again. I suggested the next Tuesday and we parted in a friendly way.

The Mufti came promptly on the agreed day, bringing several Moslems, including a Mullah. We had a discussion that started at 3 o'clock and went on into the night. As he left, the Mufti made me promise to visit him on Sunday. I went, and as I said "Good-bye" after some long discussions, the Mufti said with a smile that God should make me into a Moslem [orig. *Moslimum*]. I replied – using the Arabic word in its fundamental meaning – that I was already a person who had given himself to God with life and soul. They all laughed, and presented me with a rose from the Mufti's garden. One of them accompanied me part of the way.

The sons of Ishmael may be stiffnecked, but when I have the chance, I do enjoy talking to Moslems, because in some respects they are closer to us than the heathen. One young Moslem visits me often, and seems to be eagerly searching after truth. Reading St John's Gospel he came upon the words that Jesus spoke to the Jews about His own godliness⁹. He asked me first of all what the passage meant. Then he said critically, "If you see it this way, Moses, David and all the others who followed the Word of God were sons of God – what made Jesus Messiah different?" I replied, "You are partly right, but you must know that Christ is the Word of God itself, [Christ Himself is the word of God?]¹⁰ – as the Koran also admits. He is the firstborn among the Sons of God. He understood this and seemed satisfied."

Lehner, July 9th 1841 [p. 99]

Among Hindus, dependence on the traditions of their fathers is very deeply rooted. We can – and do – disprove the arguments they take from the antiquity of their religion, but that does not mean that the religion disappears from their hearts. Some of them do become more free, and one might believe that they are not far away from the Kingdom of God, but fear of their fellows and their love of what is worldly hold them back.

People like this often ask, "Why do our rulers [*die Obrigkeit*, i.e. the British] not simply give orders that we should all become Christians? Then we would no longer refuse." Such an order would immediately make them safe from all the things that they are afraid of if they convert. If the Government favoured Christianity more, this could indeed contribute to its dissemination in India, but for various reasons it is not desirable.

We experience most opposition from the better-off, and from those who consider themselves somewhat enlightened or learned. However, it does seem to me sometimes that the foundations of idol-worship are being loosened, like the stones in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, without human

⁸ Exodus c.4 vv.24-26. This passage involves the Lord threatening to kill Moses, and his wife Zipporah saving him after circumcising one of their sons and casting the foreskin at Moses' feet. She then said, 'Surely you are a husband of blood to me!' So God let him go. Various commentaries say this is an extremely obscure passage!

⁹ Apparently a discussion about John c.10

¹⁰ Reading ambiguous; orig. "*dass Christus das Wort Gottes selbst ist*".

intervention¹¹. A while ago I was talking to a group of people about the foolishness and sinfulness of their worship, and they could not think of any more counter-arguments, they brought one of their priests so that he could disgrace me. But in spite of all the challenges to defend his religion he remained doggedly in the pose of a hermit on a pillar. He said not a word, and just turned his head from side to side. Some of the people standing around began to taunt him, and said, "You see, he is a fool!" I was very impressed indeed to hear this being said by lingayats, because in general the priest is everything to them, and is seen as the countenance of God – indeed, he seems to be even greater than God, because God forgives this insult to himself as a gift to the Guru.¹²

Layer [p. 100]

Concerning the Kappana Gauda (the chief of the *Kalagnana* people) Brother Layer reports: This time we have only sad things to report about this man, who had made us so hopeful. We have discovered that he has betrayed us, and for two months we have broken off contact with him. He had lied to us without compunction for the sake of gaining material advantages¹³ for himself, and we were able to prove it and take him to task about it. This alone made us very sceptical about him. But worse quickly followed. One evening I visited a friend, and met a promising youth who is well known to us. This young man told me that the Catholic priest had asked him to tell me that Gauda had been very critical of us in speaking to him, and was obviously a 'servant of the belly' [*Bauchdiener*].

The Catholic priest behaves in a very friendly way to us, and as I know him well, I went to him the next day to learn about this directly from him. He told me that the Gauda tells him bad things about us, and is saying that he doesn't want to know anything about us and our Christianity. The Catholic Church is the true and original church, and ours was only founded later. He will never accept baptism from us, only from the Catholics, and he will persuade all the *Kalagnanas* to do the same.

The priest told me that he has often asked him to decide, and either to accept baptism from himself or, if he does not want that, from us. He should stop going from one to the other with empty words. But the Gauda has made it clear to him that he can only accept baptism when he has been given a good position by the Government. The Catholic priest lives with one of the leading officials here. The Gauda also told the priest lies about the many books he has copied for us, and the fine wages he has been given for this. He has visited the Catholic chapel [sic] several times and spent hours kneeling prayerfully in front of the pictures.

After this news there was no doubt about what we should do. We summoned the Gauda and spoke earnestly with him about his dishonest behaviour towards God and towards us. He admitted the truth of some of our accusations but lied about others – in any case, he showed no trace of penitence or of humility in his heart. So we declared that there was no truth in him – he was just coming to us for the sake of his belly, and from now on we could have nothing more to do with him until he shows by penitence and a change of heart and conduct that there is some good in him.

He already wanted to come to us next day and shake our hands, and so on, but we refused him this, and shut him out of our services of worship, because his taking part would be taken as a public sign of our trust in him. We meet him here and there, and behave in a friendly but distant way towards him. We cannot give him up entirely, but hope that Grace will allow the Word that he has heard to bear fruit. A result of this kind after so much effort and so much patience and so much material¹⁴ help [*äussere Hilfe*] is very painful. However, he has served our purposes by leading us to contact with the *Kalagnanas* and many other Non-Christians east of here. Even our breaking off contact with him has shown the people that only truthfulness and uprightness counts with us and in Christianity. But this new development has given us, at the same time, a new glimpse into the depth of the dishonesty of

¹¹ Book of Daniel Chapter 2

¹² *Dies von lingaiten zu hören, bei denen sonst der Priester alles gilt, wie das Angesicht Gottes betrachtet wird, ja sogar grösser erscheint als Gott, weil dieser Beleidigungen gegen ihn selbst für ein Geschenk an den Guru diesem zu Gefallen vergiebt*

¹³ The phrase, "*äussere Hilfe*" could be translated as "external help". But the missionaries probably used it in the sense of supporting the "outward man", i.e. providing material help.

¹⁴ See footnote 13

Hindus, and taught us to be careful, especially with material support."

2. Report from Hubli Missionaries J.Supper, J.Müller

This report is relatively short. Of seven people who were baptised on Feb. 7th 1841, two – Isaac and Jacob – are still in Hubli, and two – Abraham and Joseph – have been transplanted to Malasamudra. Jacob's wife Rachel died in childbed. There are two schools, one in New-Hubli and one in Old-Hubli, with around 100 boys in each. Müller has started schools in two villages, with around 40 boys. The missionaries plan to open more schools in Hubli. Something of Brother Müller's work in the villages is reported in Appendix H, pp. 3.36-38 below.

[p. 103] Reactions to the preaching of the Word vary a lot ... In general the people here are stubborn in holding on to their beliefs – which may have something to do with the fact that they are prosperous... A lot of people visit the Mission House, where they come together as they might in a trading centre, and will carry the seeds of Life into distant parts. Brother Supper carried out two missionary journeys last year, one in the neighbourhood, and one to Gadag and Betgeri, and to Isaac's home in the country of the Nizam (a Mahratta Lord). He found no difference between the Non-christians in places ruled by the British and those in the free Mahratta province.

3. Report from Betgeri [p.104] Missionaries C.Hiller, M. Hall

We [the Editor of the periodical] are now in a position to share some extracts from letters from this station with our readers. In spite of many difficult experiences – sickness, the fierce enmity of the heathen citizens, and the building of a Mission House, which demanded much of the missionaries' strength, the work has progressed with blessing. Extracts from Hiller's letters are given in the order in which they were received.

Letter of May 28th 1841

News came today that a horde of Arabs [*Araber*]¹⁵ (said to be 400 – 1200 men) had captured a fort 12 hours away from here. They came from the Nizam's lands, and plundered the safe in the English fort.

Letter of May 29th

The Arabs have plundered a fort six hours from here and are thinking of coming to Gadag.

Letter of May 30th

Soldiers from Kalatki have moved against the plunderers. When I got to Betgeri at midday I heard to my astonishment that yesterday evening there was a mob in front of my house. A poor Moslem, led astray by promises from my old enemies here, behaved as if he were possessed. He came four times, beating on my window shutters and doors, trying to force his way in, and shouting that he wanted to cut the Padre's throat and hang his head up in a tree; then the people of Betgeri would give him a new turban. If he didn't do it, he wanted to be taken to Dharwar in fetters. A crowd of people shouted to him, "Strike! Strike!", and claimed that he was prophesying through the demon. When I got back to Gadag I told the Sub-Collector, Mr Pelly who instantly gave a command to bring him to Gadag in fetters. So his prophecy was fulfilled in less than 24 hours.

The people all believed that the robber band was on its way, so they could do as they liked. [The Moslem] was condemned to six months' imprisonment. I begged earnestly that the sentence should be reduced by a few months, but without success. I have to admit that for a few weeks after this incident I was very mistrustful. I had a servant at the time who was not above taking a bribe and giving me a bit of poison occasionally, and I have already had enough evidence that there are people here who would get rid of me in this way if it suited them."

¹⁵ Probably a term for Moslems generally

In our last year's report, we wrote that a group of 10-12 fathers of families had gathered around Missionary Hiller, to receive regular instruction from him. But in the middle of last year it seemed that these unfortunate people were so scared of other people's reactions that they could not be expected to make a firm decision for the Gospel. So Hiller decided to leave Betgeri – which up till then had only been occupied on visits – and go to Malasamudra to help Frey, who was ill. He left the catechist Satyanadan behind, and came to Betgeri on several evenings every week. This made the people in Betgeri who had been approaching Christianity think more deeply. The Missionary spoke to them seriously about their ambiguous relationship with the truth. They had always explained that they could not become Christians in Betgeri itself, because they would be persecuted. But they had shown no willingness to leave their homes and settle in Malasamudra.

They replied [p. 106] that Brother Hiller should have patience with them, and be confident, and continue to spread the seed and give it time to grow. He should not think that his work with them had been in vain. Hiller said, "Now tell me – what should I do?" They replied "We have called you here and you have come to us. Now stay, and go on instructing us."

- Missionary: So do you really intend to follow Christ's way and to leave all the old ways behind you?
- They: Certainly, we will never return to the old ways. Where you die, we also want to die.
- Missionary: If you become Christians, where do you want to be?
- They: Here in our houses – and you should help those who do not have a house to get one.
- Missionary: But will you ever have the courage to step out of here?
- They: We would have been ready now, but there are some matters that must be finished first. This man has two sons who have both grown almost as tall as their father, and they must have wives before [he converts]. This man has a son, and that one a younger brother. If we lose our caste they will never get wives, and they will go after bad women, and be ruined.
- Missionary: When do you think that problem will have been solved?
- They: We can't organise any weddings before February. By February we will have bought [sic] the wives.
- Missionary: All right. But I tell you firmly what I have often said to you before, which you always forget, that I cannot help you to do this with money.

They promised not to trouble him for money for this purpose, and declared that they no longer worshipped their gods and no longer offered sacrifices to them. The only sign of their caste that they would keep was the "sacred thread" they wore. Brother Hiller continued:

It had been a concern of mine for a long time to come closer to the other members of these men's families to instruct them [p. 107]. I had often urged them to tell their people at home what I had told them. I often went to one house or another – or rather, I stood in the doorway. If a stranger enters a house, it requires a significant degree of familiarity, and demands that all the members of the household lay aside their Hindu prejudices. Another problem is that as soon as I approach a house all the neighbours rush up to me, and jostle around me inquisitively, so that I am compelled to avoid saying anything that is not at a very general level. Therefore I do not really experience at all how it is in that house, and in those hearts. So, [in talking to the men] I made an effort to lead the conversation to this problem. I showed them that anyone who is concerned about the salvation of his own soul must also feel it is important to lead his own people to the true Way – and that I could do nothing for their families if they did not help me.

At first their answers to this kind of approach were evasive, and I sensed no readiness on their side to do anything about it. But now all the men assured me that their wives would willingly accept my instruction – except for Banappa, who said to me that he had a very bad wife, and nothing could be done with her. The others all declared that I could come into their houses and give their wives and children instruction. I pointed out to them in addition that the long period of eight months which was going to elapse before they left their caste formally should not be allowed to slip by without bringing some benefit to their own people.

Another point was that of their idols. I asked who was still worshipping them in their houses, and they answered, 'Nobody'. So I asked, 'Why do you hold on to them? Bring them to me and I will find a place for them.' They all agreed. One man remarked that for the last two months his son had been using his idol as a toy – so I said he should bring it to me, and give his son something else to play with. That evening – or rather, in the night – all ten heads of families came to me and brought me all their idols, thirty-something altogether. I hope to send them some time¹⁶. [p. 108] When they handed them over they begged me not to tell anyone. I promised them this – but made an exception for my brothers in Dharwar and Hubli. The thought in the back of my mind was that the brothers would probably mention it to people, and it would not be long before people here found out about it – and this would lead to a maelstrom that would force the group here to make a clear decision. After all this there was no doubt in my mind as to what I should do. I saw that I was not working in vain, and decided to stay in Betgeri.

Following this Brother Hiller began again to give daily instruction to these motivated men, read the Holy Scriptures with them every day, and made efforts to acquaint their wives gradually with the word of God. He writes, Hindu women are very shy when they meet strangers, and my task was to overcome this shyness in my visits to their houses. I suggested that they should come twice a week with the men to the instruction I give. One of them has already dared to do this. I experience much which gives me joy with the men, especially that they are learning to apply the saying 'Cast aside lies and speak the truth'¹⁷.

In his latest report, from March 16th 1842, Hiller writes: It is a great joy to me, and a matter for humble thankfulness, that the Lord has graciously blessed my work with the people, despite its imperfections. The worrying doubts and uncertainties that I have struggled with up to now have disappeared. Looking back at my experiences with these people I cannot fail to see their growth, step-by-step, although the steps were very small indeed. Now I see with joy that their desire for knowledge of the Word of God is growing, and in our evening meetings this has given me moments of holy joy. I can speak to them now about things which they would not have understood earlier, nor would they have felt them in their heart of hearts.

On March 5th we had the great heathen festival of Shiva-Radri (Shiva's Night), when people fast and pray a whole night long in order to earn holiness. That evening our people came and said, 'A year ago, we still took part in the festival. But now a great change has occurred in us. We have weighed up everything which has been said to us, and recognised without a doubt that all the gods and their ceremonies are lies. We have experienced much joy in our heart of hearts from what we have heard, and we see with our own eyes that the way of holiness in Jesus Christ is the true way.' They had come to me to hear 'a good word' on this evening, so that they, too, could enjoy a festival. I spoke to them of the eternal life of the blessed which begins when we accept here on this earth that we are children of God. I explained what the life of the blessed is in this world. And I explained what the Holy Scriptures witness to the life of the blessed when our pilgrimage ends in the houses of peace which Jesus Christ has prepared for his believers in his father's house. They were so happy about these words that they said that that was enough for the moment, and asked me to pray with them.

I always hope that we shall have the joy of baptising them into the fellowship of Christ next Easter. But there are some weddings to get through, which can only happen in April. Their connection to their caste is restricted to the thread they wear, which they will tear off immediately after their baptism. The thread is no hindrance for me in this short period, because I observe with pleasure that other people say the members of this group have totally changed. The people here are firmly convinced that the members of the group cannot step back, but must stay on the new road. They themselves take the liberty of showing they despise the deities and the customs. It is altogether remarkable – and I almost hesitate to mention it – that no-one here now defends the old ways, and almost all of them say to each other that our way is the good one, and the idols are "lies". There is not a single priest here who is

¹⁶ Perhaps to the "ethnological collection" used for instruction in the Mission House

¹⁷ *Leget die Lügen ab und redet die Wahrheit.*

working against us. The most important and cleverest of the priests is our own schoolmaster – and we are very satisfied with his work. Almost every enemy has disappeared. We are respected, and we experience a certain love, too. I think everyone realises that we only want to do good.

Yesterday evening our people wrote a little letter to you, and our catechist Satyanaden was happy when I also allowed him to write; we shall baptise ten men and women at Pentecost.

[p.110] *On the schools, Hiller writes:*

When I arrived, 1 ½ years ago, there were two schools here, one with 30 and one with 40-50 boys. When we opened ours, almost all these pupils came over here, and more besides. A Government official wanted to take those schools [presumably the two that had already existed] into the public service, but this was refused. I visited them several times, and it distressed me to see that the nice boys were spending their time with vulgar stories, whereas ours had already mastered some little tracts. At the end of September, both schoolmasters asked someone to ask us whether we would not like to take over the schools. I did so, under the condition that all non-christian ceremonies and books would be excluded, our books would be accepted, and we would be permitted to do what we liked in the schools. The schoolmasters must each have a board on which he wrote what each boy had learned each day, and this was what we would test in our weekly examinations. Satyanaden had brought this system with him from the South. Soon the three schools melted into two, with 164 pupils altogether. We also get petitions [*Bittschriften*] from the villages, asking us to set up schools.

The Editor comments:

Our friends will see with joy that by the help of God, education for the people is now exclusively provided by the missionaries, and will agree that it is not inadvisable for the brothers – of whom Matthias Hall is now energetically advancing in learning the language – to stay in this promising place. The building of the mission house was not the smallest concern for missionary Hiller, and he had to do this strenuous work in the face of much hardship, and often dangerous illness. We welcome the completion of the house with all the more joy and gratitude, because it means that Hiller will now have his hands free again for the actual work of mission.¹⁸

4. Report for Malasamudra [p. 111] Missionaries H.Frey and J.Stanger

As a result of the *Kalagnana* movement we¹⁹ suggested to the committee, and they agreed, that a small colony should be established where non-christians who were eager for regular instruction could settle. A written request was sent to Mr Mills, First Collector in Dharwar, asking for the grant of some uncultivated land. He sent this with his own report to the Government in Bombay, and was given a friendly and positive answer²⁰. Malasamudra is six German miles²¹ East of Hubli, and the selected area covers about 100 acres.

H.Frey reports that, Last June I began in the name of God to erect a Mission House and with the preparation of the fields for the first settlers. The house is ready; solidly built and with space for 2-3

¹⁸ H.Gundert, in a letter to Inspector Hoffmann, 21.05.40 (cit. from A. Frenz), comments: "With reference to setting up colonies, I would like to say a word on my own responsibility. I think that to bring working hands from Europe is little better than waste. The wage for a day-labourer is only 1/6 or 1/10 of a rupee – less for a woman. Brother Hiller had the best of intentions when he worked with his tools – hoe, axe etc - with his own hands. I also think it is right to show the children that we are not afraid of any kind of work – not even with cow-leather – but it must be known that this is a sacrifice and an expenditure, and not an economy. True enough, the Apostles gave themselves, and we are allowed to do it too. But brakes [*Hemmschuhe*] for self-protection are more necessary for us than for them, because we are committed to a society. Brother Hiller – after he suffered from a liver disease after too much work in the sun, and afterwards sweated away much of his strength – has seen clearly that thoughtful leadership is what is necessary..."

¹⁹ It is not quite clear who "we" is; presumably some or all of the N.Karnataka missionaries.

²⁰ See Appendix I, p. 3.39 below.

²¹ A German mile varied from place to place – but was around 7.5km.

Brothers. Some huts have been erected for Indians, and six families from the shepherd caste have joined us and been given land to farm. The settlers are only accepted after they have signed that they accept the following conditions [p. 112]:

- 1) They will give up idol-worship and everything connected with it, and acknowledge the one true God and Saviour of humankind.
- 2) Sunday is to be kept holy, and all the settlers and their wives and children will attend a service. In addition, all the members of the congregation will come together every day in the Mission House to hear the Word of God and to pray.
- 3) All the children will attend the colony school regularly.
- 4) Nobody may live in the colony without the permission of the missionaries.
- 5) Every settler must "eat his own bread" [i.e. work for his living] – thieves, prostitutes etc will not be tolerated.
- 6) Polygamy is forbidden.
- 7) The missionaries have the right to dismiss anyone who will not obey.

Experience will show what kind of changes will be needed in these rules. The Committee has permitted us to support new arrivals in their first year, until they have gathered their first harvest. The present residents receive instruction daily, and we are satisfied with them. Scarcely a week goes by without someone asking to be taken into the colony, but we are going slowly, because we have to be careful. When our people 'have salt amongst them'²² we shall be able to risk taking in more people. Our colony has created a good deal of interest, and also excited the hatred of the neighbours. The barbers will not serve people from the settlement, and the smiths and carpenters will not make tools for them.

May God's blessing make this new undertaking into a means for building up His kingdom in this region.

Brother Stanger [who arrived in India in 1841] writes on February 19th 1842, We have a large field of work before us. This is a real wasteland, where everything is wilderness and darkness. There are many large villages around, and in some of them, scattered around, there are Kalagnana people. They are nice people, and already have a little understanding [sic]. I am very happy that I shall be able to start working among them soon. A little preliminary work has already been done, especially in Bentur, 2.5 hours from here.

The people are happy to let their deities go, but they stop at breaking the bonds of caste; those are an iron chain that the Devil has wound round them. When that breaks, the Christian world can celebrate a feast of joy. Meanwhile, it should be a subject of assiduous prayer.

²² "Salz bei sich haben" – presumably a reference to Christians as "the salt of the earth", Matthew c. 5 v.13.

Appx. E: Report by Johann Christian Essig on a journey in the region south of Dharwar, together with Johannes Müller, dated 20th Jan. 1842,²³

Essig and Müller decided to make an extended journey in the southern part of Dharwar District. The rains had ended, and the weather was cool.

Nov. 17th *Essig went to Hubli, where Müller was waiting for him*

Nov. 18th

After we had asked for the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ, we each took up our pilgrim staff, and walked with joyful hearts to to Tschebbi, 2.5 hours south-west of Hubli.

Tschebbi was in a pleasant valley, surrounded by tamarind-trees.

We wanted to spend the time in a beautiful little Bassawa temple with a big tamarind tree in front. But the people did not want us to, and the *Schultheiss* showed us a larger, but less frequented Wirabhadra Temple. While we were sitting in the smaller temple we had conversations with several people about God and their deities. They all agreed with what we said, except for one, who said that worshipping idols was justified because they must do what their ancestors had done [p.171]. I told them the following story: 'There was a village with a pond but no well. The pond water was very often muddy. One day, a benefactor came and had a fine well dug. But the villagers said that their families had always drunk the water from the pond, and they were not allowed to drink well-water. What do you think of such people?' I asked. They replied that they were fools. I replied, 'You are the same, etc ...'. That silenced the brahmins.

They had various other discussions, including one with (a local official), the Police-Schultheiss, an elderly man who – greatly to Essig's satisfaction – seemed to understand what he was trying to say. After they had discussed sins, the Schultheiss asked, "What must one do when desires overwhelm one?" Essig said that those who believe in Jesus are given a new heart filled with the Holy Ghost.

Nov. 19th

This morning we talked to several people, who generally agreed with what we said but added 'That's how things are – what can one do? There is no wisdom amongst us'. I pointed out that the sun – which had just risen – gives enough light for everyone. 'In the night there are lots of stars shining, but it is still dark. It's like that with God and your deities. If you pray to them you have no light, whereas if you pray to the one true God you do have light.' They saw the point. In little villages like this one there are rarely more than half a dozen listeners at a time – but the Gospel must be preached everywhere, not only in big places.

Nov. 20th

They moved to Arlikatti, a little market town half an hour to the south, and took up lodgings in a Bassava temple where a lot of people came to pray. They spoke and handed out literature.

The Police-Schultheiss asked us to move into the *Tschaudri*, but we did not want to change, and said, "If the god in there tells us to go, we'll go." The *Schultheiss* laughed and said, "How can that one tell you to go?" and was silent.

Sunday, Nov. 21st

The missionaries talked to groups of people in various places. Essig went to a shop selling rice, wheat etc and was invited to sit down. He talked about Sunday, and how God had created the world in 6 days, and rested on the 7th. So we should also keep the seventh day holy. They thought that was a good idea.

²³ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd Quarter, Appendix E, pp. 170- 201.

They spent the whole day preaching and also distributing tracts etc. Some people also asked for medicine. Essig had some with him, which he handed out. "But", he writes, "I could not give the blind anything, and my faith was not sufficient to heal them without medicines. However, I read them some Bible portions about the healing of blind people, and said that Lord Jesus, who opened the eyes of the blind, could open their inner eyes."

Nov. 22nd-23rd [p. 173]

They went to Ingulgi (2.5 hours south-east) and stayed in a government travellers' bungalow. From here, they made various preaching trips, e.g. Müller went to Budihall. When Essig was on the way into the village he met two men and some boys, who wanted him to speak a word to them. Essig suggested they come to the village. However, one of the men was very insistent, and said,

*"Our business is here. Are we not allowed to hear the word? Do stay here for a while." So Essig gave him and the boys some tracts, and finally sat down beside them on the ground. He discovered to his surprise that the farmer could read. The tract he had been given was about the Incarnation of Christ. In it was a statement that pilgrimages, alms, meditation, the hermit's life are not enough to gain the forgiveness of sins. "He was astonished, but then agreed that a *Sanyasi* could indeed take with him into the desert a wicked heart, *kama* (the lusts of the flesh), *krotha* (anger), *moha* (the lust which lives in the eyes), *lobha* (miserliness), *madda* (pride), and *mathera* (envy). I told them then how we can achieve holiness and forgiveness of our sins."*

Nov. 24th [p.174]

The missionaries had hoped to set off early for Sigaon (or Sigawi), 3 hours south of Ingulgi. "It is an administrative centre [Oberamtsort] with 1500 people, of whom 100 are brahmins". However, their patience was tried by having to wait until 10 a.m. for their porters: "We had 11 porters altogether: 2 for our beds, 2 for our travelling boxes and chairs, 1 for the table, 2 for our cooking equipment, 1 for provisions, and 3 for books and tracts. When one travels in India there are no hospitable brethren, or guest-houses; one has to carry everything one needs."

They spent the hotter part of the day talking to people in a village on the way, Bendigery, and set off again at 4 p.m. when it was cooler. In Sigaon the Collector's bungalow was empty, so they were able to stay there.

Nov. 25th

*In the evening they talked to people in the village, including, "a brown brahmin", who said we must have done much service and good works, since..... the country had fallen into our hands (these people do not know that we are not English). I said, "This did not happen as a result of our good works; God, the Lord of Heaven and earth, gives the lands to whomever He wants. But you are all great sinners, because you have forsaken the great God who gives you everything, and started to pray to gods made of stone, wood or other things. In addition, your previous kings sacrificed thousands of rupees to the deities of this country – so why have your deities let their worshippers, and this land, fall into the hands of other people who did not worship them? If they were indeed gods, it would not have happened like that. But they are not gods – your God, and our God, is one and the same – but you do not worship Him." Their response was to ask whether it is not a great sin to kill a *ko* (cow) and eat its meat. I said that what was taken in through the mouth does not make a person impure, etc. Anyway, brahmins also eat "meat" [*Fleisch*/flesh], in the form of fish. The brahmin *sadi* that was not so very sinful, but to kill and eat a cow is a great sin. I asked, "Why?" He said that brahmins originate from the cow [*aus der Kuh kommen die Brahmine*].*

After this and other discussions I preached on repentance and the forgiveness of sins, and then we went home to the bungalow. As we past the *Tsauchdri*, where lots of brahmins were sitting, we had another conversation – or rather, a disputation. In the course of it I mentioned some of the horrifying things their gods had done. Krishna may have been very powerful, but he was not holy. One of the brahmins, who was standing next to me, asked me not to touch him. I said, "You hypocrites! If we give you rupees with our hands you are not afraid of the contact." ...

Nov. 26th [p. 175]

In the morning they visited the Mamletar (a native high official) – a brahmin, who was very friendly when they arrived and made sure that everything they needed was provided. Then they preached – partly to Hindus and partly to Moslems.

Nov. 27th

We left at sunset and went to Bankapur, 2 hours to the South-East. Bankapur is a little market town, but it looks as though it was once a great city. It had a large and strong fortress, but this was destroyed 50 years ago... An old brahmin told me they had had a visit from a missionary 8 years ago, who had preached and distributed books. So the people do remember. If only the aroma of it stays in their minds as an exhalation of Life itself.²⁴

Nov. 28th: First Sunday in Advent

The missionaries preached; were invited by a weaver into his house; distributed books and tracts in Kannada, Mahratti and Hindustani. A brahmin mentioned that a "padre" had been there two years ago and given him a little book he had liked very much. "He seemed to be talking about the tract 'In whom shall we trust', which I gave to him and others."

Nov. 29th

*They set off in a south-westerly direction towards Hungul, 4 hours away, stopping halfway in Belgalbeetee, where they stayed for 2 days [p. 177]. On the first day it was market day. (In every little market town a market is held once a week – so even if the volume of trade in India is not enormous, trade is lively.) A lot of people came to the market, and we were living in the *Tschaudri*, right in the middle of it. As soon as we began talking to people we had enthusiasts for our wares, which consisted of the Word of God, partly in verbal form but mostly in writing.*

Among them were some goldsmiths, and I criticised them for "making gods". They cheerfully agreed with me. "But", they said, "What else can we do to fill our stomachs?" I said, "Make earrings and bracelets – even if it does mean the collapse of your business, because as long as you make idols you bring down the wrath of the True God on yourselves." They and the bystanders agreed with what I had said. Then I preached to them about the True God. We continued to distribute tracts until evening. We gave our wares without money and free of charge.

Nov. 30th

They preached in various parts of the town, and people listened patiently. People also asked for medical help, and Essig's supply of medicine was rapidly reduced. He comments, "No night in this country can pass without music" – which in this case was very far from harmonious.

Dec. 1st

On to Hungul, 3 hours East of the border to the Mangalore (Canara) region. It was a well-watered area, where they saw rice fields that had already been harvested.

Hungul is a fair-sized place, an administrative centre. We found lodgings in a roomy, empty *Tschaudri*. The *Mamletar* soon arrived to pay his respects, and as a greeting gave each of us a lemon. There is a beautiful big temple here built of finely carved and decorated stone.

Towards evening, an old brahmin turned up who had often come into contact with Europeans. From far away he shouted, "*Salam Padri, Salam Padri, Dorigelu*", i.e., "Good day, Mr Missionaries". Several people came with him. I talked to them for some time, but the brahmin was so chatty that I never managed to finish saying anything.

December 2nd

After lunch we went to the big temple, in front of which was a huge wooden temple car. While we were looking at two stones carved with small figures of deities, and Kannada inscriptions that had

²⁴ *wenn sie nur auch den Geruch desselben als einen Geruch des Lebens zum Leben an sich erfahren hätten.*

become illegible, some brahmins came. I asked them to explain the inscriptions and the pictures, but they could not do so – apart from one, which I could recognise myself; it was Brahma with four faces. I asked how many faces Brahma was supposed to have, and they said, "Five". So I said, "Where is the fifth?" and they said, "Mahasheshwara cut it off." That gave me an opportunity to talk to them about the way their gods treated each other, and to point out that as the tree is, so will the fruit be, and as the god is, so will his followers be – thus leading the conversation around to their own lives.

They invited us into the temple, and we were happy to follow, hoping to talk with them further. I had an excellent tract with me, "Lineaments of Hinduism"²⁵, and began to read from it. But they soon had enough of it, and left me, with the excuse that they did not understand my words – although they understood them only too well. I said, "You are unwilling – unwilling to understand the truth." So I spoke a few earnest words and left.

December 3rd

The missionaries preached to various groups – and found more ready listeners than the brahmins. They call to mind that the Gospel was preached to the poor. In a nearby village they preached to two poor goldsmiths, who seemed to understand, and to "Three farmers, who believed a priori that they did not understand us, although we preached as simply and broadly as possible."

Dec. 4th

After they had preached in front of a shop selling rice in the bazaar, a lot of people – young and old – followed them back to their lodgings and asked for books. After breakfast the senior official [Oberamtman], an elderly brahmin, came with his children, to ask for books for them.

We gave him a chair to sit on, and asked whether I should give him a book, too. He was happy to receive two; the Book of Psalms and the Acts of the Apostles. His clerks had come with him. I took the opportunity of talking to him about what is needful, and read Acts 17, verse 30: 'The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.' Meanwhile, the *Amtmann's* spectacles had been brought, and he put them on and started to read. He had some difficulty with the printed letters, but he was not at all embarrassed in front of the bystanders. He read the passage from Acts 17, 24 'God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands ...' I explained the passage and talked about the salvation that has taken place through Christ. The brahmin then had to leave to go to the *Katscheri* (administrative building) with his people.

The two missionaries proceeded happily to Aloor, 1.5 hours to the south-east. They were full of the spirit of Advent, and sang hymns like, "Wake! Oh wake for night is flying..." Aloor was a sizeable market town, surrounded by mango trees, where they found comfortable lodgings in a Virabhadra temple.

Dec. 5th : Second Sunday in Advent

When we went out this morning we came to a lingayat monastery. Straightaway, a man came running up to us who knew me from Dharwar, and invited us into the courtyard, which was quite large and beautiful. The *Swami* was not to be seen, but a number of people followed us. I preached on God's creation – the sky, the sun etc, and added that as you can recognise the wisdom and power of a human in a beautiful building, so we should recognise God's magnificent power and wisdom by looking at the greatness of the world.

They preached to more people who came to their house, on the 10 commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. In the afternoon they went on to a nearby village called Balur. They saw few people as they went through the village, but as they went on they came to the monastery of a "forest Swami" – that is, a priest living in a lonely place.

²⁵ "Züge aus dem Hinduismus"

There were about 12 people there – the inhabitants of the monastery, and some travelling merchants. Two women were winnowing rice. I asked the people what they did with the chaff. "Throw it away and burn it", they said. I said, "What about the rice?", and they replied, "We keep it". I said that God would do the same with all people on the Last Day. Bad people – the chaff – would be thrown into the fires of Hell, and the good people – the wheat – would be gathered into God's granary in Heaven. They agreed, "Yes, that is so: it must happen like that." I found that this was concrete evidence for what the late Hofacker²⁶ says in his second Advent sermon; even the heathen are happy to admit that there will be a Last Judgement. I tried to show my listeners that they could not assume they had a right to be found among the good grains of corn – and also, how they could escape the fate of being found among the chaff. They listened quietly with some amazement.

Finally the missionaries returned to Alur in the dark, had a cup of tea and sat outside looking at the starry sky. Some constellations, like Orion, were familiar. Others they could not see at home in Germany.

Dec. 6th

They preached to a good number of people, who came early in the morning and came back after the missionaries had had breakfast. In the evening they left Alur and went to Adur, two hours east-north-east. There, they had a visit from some brahmins. One of them knew Essig from a visit to Dharwar. Essig had given him a Gospel then, and he appeared to have read it. They had a conversation about their God Rama, and Jesus Christ, whose name the brahmins already knew.

Dec. 7th

We were surrounded by people all the time, to whom we preached and read the Bible without stopping – except for meals. We read from the Psalms, especially 15 and 115, and also from the Gospels. I preached clearly about the resurrection and the last judgement, and directed the people towards Christ, the saviour of the world. The teaching about the resurrection is something new for the Hindus, and they usually express their astonishment at it.

There were also sick people, who kept arriving until late in the evening. We gave some of them medicine, and others only advice. Among the latter was a priest of Vishnu, who asked for a book, and some medicine, which he was given. He then opened a roll²⁷ which had information on astronomy – or rather, astrology. I asked him various things, like how far the sun is from the earth. He said that it was 100,000 *gawuda* distant (a *gawuda* is four hours); the moon 200,000 and the stars 300,000. He included the sun among the planets, and also one he called Rahu. I asked him what kind of planet (*graha*) that was, and he said, "It is Rahu that swallows the sun or the moon when there is an eclipse." I showed him on a piece of paper how an eclipse occurs, and it made sense to him. When we went out and walked beside the houses we heard somebody reading with a loud voice from the Book of Psalms we had given him.

Dec. 8th

We went to Kabbur, 2 hours to the East. The River Warda lay across our path, and as it was quite deep we got two people to carry us over for two *Kreuzers*²⁸. Kabbur is a farming village with 400 people. We found lodgings in a little Bassava temple. A number of people came immediately, and Brother Müller talked to them till breakfast time.

After breakfast the listeners came back. Essig read and commented on Isaiah 40. One of those present was a quiet brahmin, who repeated everything the missionaries had said, to the farmers – only more clearly. Essig was happy about that. He then spoke further on reconciliation. At his own request, they gave the brahmin a book on the prophets.

²⁶ Ludwig Hofacker, 1798-1828; the author of popular pietist books of sermons.

²⁷ A paper roll? A palm-leaf book?

²⁸ Small German coin

Dec 9th

To Kagnili, an hour south-east. Kagnili is a small place, although it is an *Unteroberamtsort*. The official, with his helpers – all brahmins – soon came to pay their respects. He wanted to have the little temple where we had taken up lodgings plastered²⁹ with cow-dung, which is the Indian method of cleaning.

After lunch a lot of people came to hear the missionaries preach – brahmins, lingayats and Moslems. One was a Prince, a descendant of a Desai (a ruler) – now landless. He had several questions about Christ. For example, had he existed more than 1841 years ago? Essig answered with the beginning of John's Gospel. Then he asked, why had they not heard the name of Jesus before? Essig replied:

It was known in earlier times, but now God has opened the doors of this country wide for us. A King who plans to visit one of his lands may tell some people about it a year or two beforehand, but not make it widely known. But when he is actually approaching a city he sends heralds before him to announce that the king is on his way. Christ will soon come again to judge the world, therefore he is now sending many servants to spread the news everywhere.

The Prince requested a book in Mahratti, and was given Luke's Gospel.

Dec. 10th

There were a lot of visitors again. Essig preached on Jeremiah 10, about the uselessness of worshipping idols.

The audience were critical, and said, "Whatever you have fixed your spirit onto in firm faith, there is God." I tried to show them that one cannot choose how to worship God, but must do it in the way God has decreed. We are the servants of God and cannot tell Him where he has to be. I showed them then the way decreed by God. They did not have any arguments against this – but trotted out the old scapegoat, that we were living in the *Kalijuga* [the Age of Kali]. I said, "Whatever the times are like, God is always the same, and forbids evil and commands us to do good. It depends on you. If you give up your evil ways and turn back to the true God, the *Kalijuga* will come to an end for you."

The discussion moved to the question of castes. I claimed, "All are one in the sight of God. He approves of all who fear Him and act rightly – whether they are *sudras* or *holeyas* or brahmins – and vice versa". One of the brahmins insisted that the brahmin caste was the best. I said, "That is true – you are a lot wiser than the others – but you are also better at deceit and injustice. Other people cannot cheat and dissimulate so cleverly as you – so it's true that you are better than the others." They smiled at this compliment, and then asked for books, which they were given.

In the evening one of the brahmins took the missionaries into a large garden with coconut palms, areca nuts, bananas, sugar cane, rice and other crops. He gave them the juice of an unripe coconut to drink – a delicatessen that was not available in Hubli and Dharwar.

Dec. 11th

They walked two hours southwards to Tschinna-Mulgund, which used to be a fortress. They found lodgings in the Tschaudri, and were soon visited by brahmins (of whom there were not many there) and farmers.

Dec. 12th : 3rd Sunday in Advent

Almost the whole day we had the opportunity to spread the good seeds of beneficial and healthy teaching. I read the farmers several parables from Matthew 13, with wide-ranging explanations, and also verses from the Epistle of James on the subject of the use of the tongue³⁰. They liked that. I also talked to them about marriage, and that they should have a loving relationship with their wives, and not beat them but win them over by being a good example – and not scold their wives when their

²⁹ *Austapezieren lassen*

³⁰ Epistle of James, Chapter 3, on the importance of controlling what is spoken.

wives scolded them. They found the idea good, but not practicable – especially the last suggestion. When they heard that, they covered their mouths with their hands and said, "Oh dear! If we did that, what would become of us?" But they calmed down when I assured them that if they did this several times their wives would be ashamed of themselves and not scold them any more.

In the evening, to get a little fresh air, we climbed the mountain behind the village and enjoyed a beautiful view.

Dec. 13th

They continued for hours to the south-east, to Korda, where they found quarters in a large temple to Hanuman. There were paintings of the war fought against the giant Ravuna, who had stolen Rama's wife Sita. Hanuman had a great army of monkeys with bows and swords. The war was supposed to have taken place in the Age of Twabara [Twabarajuga]. As Essig was suffering from toothache he left the talking – for which there were plenty of opportunities – to Müller.

Dec. 14th

Essig writes:

Praise God! I was healthy and could talk again. A lingayat Priest was almost constantly with us, and listened without contradicting. We gave him a Gospel... It was the weekly market day, and there were quite a lot of people...After I had spoken for a while, the lingayat priest began to preach himself – repeating my words. One of the farmers said, "You are only talking like that because these people gave you a book. Why didn't you say these things long ago?" *Essig then took over again, and made some remarks about the blind leading the blind. To another group he preached on the Sermon on the Mount, which they found very interesting.*

The missionaries moved on later to Hadiall, a small farming village 2 hours to the East:

We found much better lodgings than we had expected, in a small Hanuman temple. This village has only 60 houses, but 6 temples. Four are for male deities (Hanuman, Bassapa, Narayana, and Gallappa), and two for female ones (Durgawa and Dewamma). We talked to the village head about these idols. He was happy to admit that they were all made of *pachana* – stone – and that there was no God except the one God who had created everything. He agreed that what we said was true – but "We are bound into these things, and if someone no longer wants to join in, he will be thrown out".

Dec. 15th

People came to listen, and said the teaching was "Adishastra", i.e. "original teaching". The Schultheiss, who the missionaries described as an intelligent man, asked for a big book that would supply him with reading-matter for a long time. They only had a volume with the Prophets, which they gave him. They asked him to read Isaiah1, which he did with considerable understanding.

When it got cooler they moved on, 2 short hours' journey to Haligery, a largish market town:

Here we again found comfortable lodgings with Hanuman, the monkey god.

[Dec. 16th]

They had a lot of visitors, as it was market day. Essig preached on the prodigal son. Several people asked for advice about sickness, which they received. He then preached again on Acts 17.

Explaining the verse, "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone ..."³¹, especially to the farmers, proved difficult. After a lengthy explanation I did succeed, and they admitted that if God were like Hanuman, we should also be like monkeys, etc.

To help them to understand concretely how stupid it was to worship idols, I asked one of the farmers if he had oxen. He did. I asked, "Where does the ox go when he comes home from the pasture?" "To my house", he said. I said, "Don't you have to show him the way?" He replied, flapping his hand, "No, he

³¹ Acts 17, 28-29: For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by man's design and skill.'

comes by himself. He knows where he has to go." "Why does he go to your house, not somebody else's?" "Because I look after him", said the farmer.

I turned to the listeners, and said, "Who supports you, who makes your corn etc grow?" They said, pointing to the sky, "Mahadewa, the Great God". I continued, "What do your stone gods give you?" "Nothing", they said. I said, "Nevertheless, you bow down before them – and you don't worship God who gives you everything, and you don't direct your hearts to him. So you are more stupid than your own oxen!" They enjoyed this line of argument so much that they clicked their tongues and laughed aloud over their own foolishness – but whether they will actually leave their foolish ways is another matter. I finally told them about the way of salvation. They asked for books for their children, as they themselves could not read.

Dec. 17th

The party set off just as Orion was setting, to Harihar, which was in Mysore province, to the East – 3 hours' march instead of the usual 2. Just before Harihar they had to cross the River Tungabudhra, which they did in, "a basket-like boat, covered underneath with leather, about 6 feet in diameter." They lodged in an old abandoned official building. Harihar was a military post of the English. However, Essig writes that among them: ... there were no officers there at present who were devout Christians. Only a Sergeant asked after us – the father of our English schoolteacher³², who was visiting him with his wife and child. We had plenty of opportunities to perform our duty as messengers to the heathen, but I would also have enjoyed conducting a service in English for the few Christians, if we had been asked to do so. There were letters waiting for us, sent from Dharwar, which we enjoyed like a thirsty person enjoys a cup of cold water.

Dec. 18th

The missionaries had visitors, to whom they gave short talks and tracts. They spent a time of fellowship [Erbauungsstunde]³³ with the Sergeant, who wanted to take communion the next day.

Dec 19th: 4th Sunday in Advent

Even before breakfast a crowd of people collected in front of our lodgings. One man asked for the tract, *Mohkscha Margā*, 'The Way to Heaven'. I gave it to him, and when he asked what it was about, I preached to him and all the bystanders about the way to Heaven. There were visitors all day...

At sunset we went to the Cantonments, and the two of us enjoyed a blessed Lord's Supper with the Sergeant, his wife, his brother-in-law, his son – our English schoolmaster – and his wife. On the way home we heard – with vexation in our hearts – a procession for a deity, with wild drum-beats, music and great lights. The wooden idol was carried by eight people. The way it wobbled amused me, in spite of the pain in my soul. If it had been daytime, I would have gone and challenged the crowd of people following. But in the night nothing can be done with these children of darkness.

Dec. 20th

They had hoped to set off early, but the porters came too late so they postponed their departure to the evening.

Before breakfast we visited the part of the town where the two main temples are. They are built in the Buddhist style. A conversation developed with a few people who were standing around, about the deities who live in the temples. The one that had swayed so much when he was carried around was also mentioned. One person said that this temple had been built by God. I pointed out some damaged parts, and said it was not God's work, but the work of humans. Human beings – who, in God's eyes, are no more than ants – had built this temple, which in God's eyes must look like an ant-hill. God created the universe – heaven and earth and everything in them – and does not live in temples built by

³² Teacher in the English-medium school?

³³ *Erbauungsstunde*: literally, "hour of edification"

human hands, etc. In earlier times, Harihar was a real nest of deities³⁴, and it still is. It also seems to have been a town with a Hindu monastery, but now it is in a ruinous condition.

We sent the porters off after lunch, and we went too, but only as far as the other side of the river on which Codiall lies (on this bank). We had no chance to sit around idly, because very soon some Telugu merchants appeared, who were eager for knowledge and came and sat with us. As usual, it started with the false gods, which they wanted to defend. As the river Tungabudhra was directly in front of us, I asked, "What do I need if I want to cross a river?"

They: "A *harkolu*" (that is one of the basket-like leather-covered boats).

Myself: "If I take a broken *harkolu*, will I get over?"

They: "No. You would sink and die."

Myself: "What if I sit in it and am filled with a firm faith?"

They: "That won't help – you 'll still sink."

Myself: "So, that is how it is with the deities you believe in – they are nothing but damaged *harkolus*, and will lead you into destruction when you pray to them."

I preached to them about the true God, and then they went off to eat. We waited until 4 o'clock and then turned our faces towards the North. We got to Tschilgery while it was still light. On the way we only saw thorn-bushes and short, dry grass. There were cultivated fields only where there was black soil instead of red.

Dec 21st

After I had talked to a schoolmaster, and given him tracts for his 10 pupils, more people began to come, and I talked to them about the way of salvation. We left Tschilgery in the evening and moved on to Ranebednore, 2 hours south-west. Ranebednore is an administrative centre [*Oberamtsstadt*] with quite a large area. The Assistant Collector, who had his headquarters in the town, kindly invited us to stay in his beautiful bungalow, but as we were not planning to stay long we thanked him and declined. We found a place to stay in a Hanuman temple in the old fortress.

Dec. 22nd

Early in the morning people already came and asked for books. One brahmin boy of about 14 asked for *Jesu Christena Wamschaweli*, that is "The Lineage of Jesus Christ". That is how the Kannada version of Matthew's Gospel starts. I asked him who Jesus Christ was, and he thought a little and then answered, "Your God". We had no copies of Matthew's Gospel left, but I gave him Luke's.

Among other visitors, a party came with a lingayat priest³⁵. I asked him which god he worshipped, and he flapped his hand and said, "I don't pray to any god". So I said, "What's that in the metal box hanging on your chest?" "It's the *linga*", said the bystanders. I said a few words about that, and then criticised the way priests were treated as deities. I said, "You priests allow yourselves to be worshipped by your followers, and fill your bellies – and never ask whether your followers go astray or not. You are like the hired shepherds, who do not care about the welfare of the sheep but only about their own." The bystanders confirmed this, but the priest left, and so did most of the people who had come with him. In the evening the Assistant Collector, Mr Devitri, came to visit us, and we went for a walk with him.

Dec. 23rd – 24th

Again, a lot of people came to visit the "Padres". The first group were mostly brahmins. The discussion started with the worship of idols. They asked, "What are the fruits of it?" I responded with Romans 1, 18ff. Then they began on the subject of eating meat. Their views on this are connected with their claim that all Life is one – that of humans and that of animals. Life is God, the soul of the world [*Weltseele*]. I said, "Good. You say all life is one. Everything that grows has life. There is life in wheat and rice, etc, because they grow. If all life is one, and one may not destroy life, you can no longer eat bread or drink water. Furthermore, you should be careful not to talk too much about meat-eating. A lot

³⁴ *ein rechtes Götzennest*

³⁵ Origin has "*Einawanu = Priester derlingaiten*"

of brahmins eat it in secret. And in earlier times, how many people did the brahmins kill? If a widow who had decided to go through fire to join her husband in the other world lost courage at the sight of the funeral pyre and ran away, what happened? Two or three brahmins would run after her like tigers or wolves, and capture her and tie her down on the pyre. Admittedly, the English Government has stopped you following that devilish custom, which is recommended by your *shastras*. But you still do not have any compunction about cheating poor people out of their possessions. You don't eat meat, in order to avoid sin, and yet you commit much bigger sins." They could not find an answer, and I then pointed to Christ as the only Saviour of humankind.

A little later another group came, mostly weavers [p.193]. I could talk to them very straightforwardly about salvation in Christ. When they had heard enough, they asked for books. One of them specifically wanted the tract in which Hinduism is shown in its true colours [*ans licht gestellt*], from which he could already recite a passage from memory, so he must have seen it in someone else's hands.

In the evening we went on to Hanutti, 3 hours to the North. It is surrounded by coconut palms, but because there is so much standing water there are not many people here. It may have been more populous in earlier times. We spent a quiet Christmas Eve, and as we had few visitors we only stayed one day.

Dec. 25th - 26th

The missionaries went to Gutul, 1.5 hours northwards from Hanutti. It was a rather larger place, but they found that people were not so interested in finding out about their message as elsewhere. They settled down in the Tschaudri, and spent Christmas Day there "in the middle of the 'heathen' [sic] turmoil ... Alas, we saw no trace of the Festival of Christmas, and we began to feel tired of living in 'the tents of Kedar'³⁶, among people who knew nothing about God, and even less about a Saviour. And when we tell these people who are so sunk in worldly things the Good News, we are coldly repulsed with the words, 'Is that the only thing that you are so happy about? If you could show us a treasure that we could see with our eyes, touch with our hands and enjoy with our mouths, we would be glad to share in your joy'."

The next day they went out early to preach the Good News of the Saviour's birth 1,841 years ago. One person reacted similarly: "Show him to me, so I can see him. I can see my Hamanappa." In the evening they had a group of listeners in front of a shop, who, "Behaved in an orderly way and listened with interest – but, as is always the case with street preaching, they took the liberty of asking questions and making objections. However, some said, "Karre, watschime! True, true!"

Dec. 27th

We left Gutul and went to Beluwigi, two hours to the north, feasting our eyes as we walked along on the dark green of the extensive fields of cotton. On the right was a range of hills that extends from Ranebednore up to here. I talked to various people who approached us – mostly farmers, since this is a farming village. One man in the second group had a sickle, which was much the same as ours. I asked various questions about the farmer's work – sowing, harvesting and separating the grain from the chaff – and drew some spiritual lessons from what was said. I also asked about their various gods, and they came out with five names.

I concentrated on Basava, and asked the same farmer why he made *putsche* [*puja*] for a stone ox. He said, "My *puja* is not to the stone ox, but to the living Basava (ox)". I asked "Why?" and he answered, "He creates my fields; he ploughs them – if he did not exist, I could not live. He supports me." I asked, "Does the ox plough the field by himself?"

"No. I have to harness him and drive him."

"So", I said, "you whip your god!"

They laughed, and I went on,

"If your ox wants to go to the left and you want to turn right, do you obey him or does he have to obey you?"

³⁶ Psalm 120, verse 5: Woe to me that I dwell in Meshech, that I live among the tents of Kedar!

"He has to obey me."

"So you are the master and the ox is your servant."

"Yes, it is so."

So I said, "Does the master make *puja* to the servant, or the servant to the master?"

"The servant has to make *puja* to the master," he said.

"Now do you see?" I said, "your ox is your servant, and you worship him."

He said, "In our country there is simply no understanding!"

One often has to go through a catechism like this³⁷ before a farmer understands that he is really more than an ox – although on the other hand they are embarrassed when one catechises them about oxen according to Isaiah 1,3.³⁸

Dec. 28th [p.196]

When the missionaries went into the village they found a number of people in front of the temple car dedicated to Hanuman. Essig preached on the sinfulness and foolishness of idol-worship. The crowd included some women. In the afternoon he preached again, starting with a brief history of Christ; how he was born in poverty, 1841 years ago, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Someone asked, "When did he come?" I repeated the date, and I pointed out that in the *Tschaudri*, where we were living, there was an official announcement with the "christian" date for the year, which was accompanied by *Iswi*, that is, Jesus.³⁹ The listeners were quick to hear, and called this teaching *Tativa Schastra*, significant wisdom.

In the evening they went to Tankur, crossing the River Wardar [Varada?] at Adoar. The river flows into the Tungabudhra half an hour from Beluwigi. Tankur belonged to the Sirhatti District, which was governed by a Teamdar (sic). It is a small farming village, but has 6 temples. They were received better than they had expected, and took up lodgings in the little Tschwara temple.

Dec. 29th [p. 197]

We spent a quiet morning, but in the afternoon, when the porters had already been sent ahead, there was a chance to speak. In the course of the conversation, which was about idols, the Village Head said, "Now leave off talking about those brass and stone gods!"⁴⁰, in a tone of voice that suggested he wanted to say, "We already know they are nothing." The people listened eagerly, but as the Village Head soon left, and most of the people with him, the teaching did not continue for long.

We left Tankur at 4 p.m. and walked North-East by North over hills and valleys to Bandikoppa. Here we were also very kindly welcomed; when we arrived in the little Dewamma Temple everything was ready – water, milk, wood, and a fire. The Village Head, who had already found out from our servants who we were, said, "I am your son, and will do what you say."

Dec. 30th

Several people came to hear the missionaries, including the village Head. They preached in the morning – about false gods – and gave out tracts. In the afternoon the discussion turned to astrology: After I had said some words of rebuke for the idea that good and bad days come from the influence of the stars, I read them a passage from the Sermon on the Mount, with comments. As there was talk about rupees, I added the passage from the 1st letter to Timothy, chapter 6, about wealth. "We brought nothing into the world etc". They liked this verse, and also agreed with verse 10, "...money is the root of all evil".⁴¹

³⁷ The verb used is *catechesieren*; it was a standard method that the missionaries had been taught.

³⁸ Isaiah 1,3: The ox knows his master ... but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.

³⁹ *mit Iswi, d.h. Jesus, begleitet ist.*

⁴⁰ *Lasst die ... jetzt gehen.*

⁴¹ 1 Timothy 6, v 7: For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. v.10 ... for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

The shadows were lengthening, so we set off to Bagowaddi, a little village 1 hour to the East, which lies in a fertile valley between two ranges of hills. The Goddess Dewamma, who rides on a lion, had to give us accommodation.

Dec. 31st [p.198]

As the village is small, with only 200 people, we had little opportunity to preach – but the day was not empty. This evening we went 3 hours to the North-East to the little market town Hiriawoddatti, which is the last in the Sirhatti District. The path led us over and between some sizeable ranges of hills, the *Capatgebirge*.

Jan. 1st 1842

A number of sick people came looking for help for long-standing problems. Brother Müller prepared a plaster for one who had a serious ulcer on his foot, using resin, wax and oil, which the people had to obtain for us. As soon as we had listened to one, others came, with all kinds of problems. It is true of these people both in body and soul, as the prophet Isaiah said [of his people], "From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness – only wounds and welts and open sores ..."⁴².

We had plenty of visitors to whom we could distribute the Word verbally and in writing. In the afternoon another person came with a badly infected foot. After we had given him advice, I started a discussion with the people who had collected. I took the tract with the title *Antja nayja tirwike*, that is, "The Last Judgement". I started by asking the people questions about the title, to see if they understood it. I had to start by clarifying the first word, *Antja*, "end". They understood *nayja tirwike* more quickly, and said it meant *witscharane*, that is, "investigation". I did not stick to the tract any longer but preached freely on the content of the Gospels. They listened attentively.

In the evening we left Hiriawodatti and continued to Dambala, 2 hours further North, where we wanted to spend Sunday. The *Capat* range, which ends near Gadak and Malasamudra, was on our left, and a wide, fertile plain, mostly planted with cotton, on our right. In Dambala there is quite a large fortress, whose stone walls are still in fairly good condition. In the middle of the fortifications is a palace, the best part of which escaped the destroyer's hand, and now serves as a travellers' bungalow. We are now in possession of it, as long as we stay here.

Jan 2nd

In our fortress we are somewhat separated from the people, but we had visitors nevertheless. Some lived in Dambala itself, and others were from the villages around. They had to come to Dambala, to pay their taxes⁴³. In the morning there was a friendly group from Omatschki, 6 hours to the north, who listened attentively.

After they had gone a respectable lingayat came, accompanied by a brahmin. We had a long disputation about gods, the true God and the origins of evil. He went away defeated, but not won over.

One of his criticisms was that he could not see God. I said, "You cannot see him with your eyes, because He is a spirit, but you can feel His presence within you, because He speaks to you. Is there not a voice within you that punishes you when you have done something wrong, or encourages you, when you should do something good?" He said, "That is true", and I said, "But you do not listen to that voice, but are driven by your fleshly desires." Here the brahmin joined in, and asked, "Doesn't God drive us to both good and evil actions? After all, we have no *swatantra* (freedom)". I said, "No. Only the good within you is God, not the evil. Where else can the bad conscience come from after you have done something wrong, or the satisfaction when you have done right? It is the Devil who tempts you to do evil, and you listen to him." They said, "Why does God allow that? Why doesn't he destroy Satan?" I said, "That has happened. Jesus Christ has come and conquered him and destroyed all his works. If someone believes in Jesus the Devil has no power over him, but he can overcome the Devil.

⁴² Isaiah 1,6: 6 From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness — only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil.

⁴³ Dambala was a subsidiary administrative centre – an *unteroberamtei*.

But the Devil has power over those who do not believe, and directs them according to his will." They had no argument against that,

In the evening the official, the *Unteroberamtmann*, came with his assistants, who were mostly brahmins. I talked to them about the fortress and the palace, which had been erected earlier at great expense and were now destroyed. I continued, "It is so with all the magnificence of this world. The wealthy will become poor, and the poor rich. And since everything in this world is so uncertain, we should not give our hearts to riches, but seek the unchangeable Kingdom of Heaven"⁴⁴. After I had said some things about justice and judgement, they asked leave to go

Jan 3rd

The missionaries went North-West, towards Betgeri, spending one day in Lakundi⁴⁵ – a place with quite a large area, but more ruins than inhabited houses. Essig comments that there are really very few places in India where there are no traces of destruction.

Jan 4th – 5th

We arrived in Betgeri at sunrise, and almost found our dear Brothers Hiller and Irion still in bed. Our Brothers and the candidates for baptism were all very happy to see us, because we had both spent some time there earlier. We stayed in Betgeri from Tuesday to Thursday (Epiphany). We were very happy to see the people being instructed in the faith, and especially about the two schools, which have 170 boys. Brother Hiller spends all day with his builders, who work much better when the boss is there than when they are alone. The house should be ready by Easter, so that the two dear brothers will be released from their present prison.

Jan 6th

In the evening we said farewell and went to Frey and Stanger in Malasamudra, 1.5 hours South-West of Betgeri. Frey is nearly finished with building. They are already living in the house, which is very pleasant. Brother Frey is reasonably healthy and is full of hope. Five shepherds' families and two young men are ready to come to him, so that we can believe that things will go well with the colony. There is still reason to hope for some of the people from Bentur. Abraham, who was baptised in January 1841, enjoys the respect of the shepherds, and goes from time to time to try and recruit people.

Jan 7th

Brother Frey had been planning to visit Dharwar and Hubli, to bring the rest of his possessions from Hubli to Malasamudra, so he decided to come with us. Today we went to Bentur, 2.5 hours West. The people who have been influenced by the Gospel welcomed us, and treated us in such a manner that we could really feel at home. Of course many of the seeds sown by Brother Frey and others will sprout in their own time, but at the moment everything is fairly quiet. We spent the night in Bentur.

Jan 8th-10th

On the 8th we went to Bandowara where we two, who had no horses, spent the middle of the day before going on to Hubli. I spent Sunday with the Brothers in Hubli. As Supper lent me his little horse, I was able to ride to Dharwar with Frey on Jan 10th. What a joy it was to see our Mission House after 8 weeks' absence! The day after I got back I visited our English school and the Kannada school I am now responsible for. My pupils gave me a great *Salam* (greeting), and grown up Hindus I knew greeted me in a friendly way and asked me where I had been for so long. May the Lord our God be friendly towards us and further the work of our hands!

Johann Christian Essig

⁴⁴ There is a pun here in German: *so sollten wir Menschen nicht unser Herz an dem Reichtum hängen, sondern das unbewegliche Reich des Himmels suchen.*

⁴⁵ Lakkundi is described in "Wikipedia" (referred to on July 14th 2013) as having more than 50 temples and being a great centre of Chalukya art.

Appx. F Extracts from a report from Johannes Layer, dated 21st March 1842 on a journey north and north-east of Dharwar⁴⁶

[Layer's journey covered a limited area to the north and north-east of Dharwar, where he visited 35 towns, villages and hamlets. He writes that the Gospel had been preached in the larger towns of the area, but not yet in the numerous villages and hamlets. It is now the missionaries' task to go to the "hedgerows" to invite the people to the Lord's feast⁴⁷.]

Feb 7th – 14th

During this week Layer covered a distance that would have been only "four hours' journey" in a straight line. He went North and stayed in Lakmapur, Jadawada, Betgeri (a different Betgeri from that where the mission station was), and Doddawada. At the beginning of his account, he describes reactions to his preaching which proved to be typical for the whole journey:

In these four places [the first he visited] I found people very sympathetic to my preaching about the uselessness [Nichtigkeit] of idols and about the one true God, who must be worshipped. But this was not the case with preaching about Jesus Christ. People listened, and even nodded occasionally, but with little emotional participation. This experience was repeated, with few variations, almost every day. One reason for this – among others, is that the teaching of Christ and his reconciliation [Versöhnung] is something totally new and unheard-of, so it seems to be a kind of fable, whereas the idea that idols are powerless has already been asserted here and there by wise Hindus, and has to some extent become known among the people. This means that our teaching about idols and the true God already has a point of contact with existing ideas – which is not the case with preaching about Christ.

Layer continues by saying that the Incarnation is something that cannot be understood simply by reading, or by human reasoning, but only by believers – but nevertheless, the idea of a Saviour God who came in human form, and now sits on the Throne of Heaven, meets the needs of human beings – particularly simple, uneducated people – much better than just teaching them about an invisible God. He writes [p.204]:

It often happened that after I had shown people the way from dead idols to the living God, they would say dejectedly, "So we should pray to emptiness." It was as though someone had suddenly taken away all support from them and sent them into the wide world without a guide. That gave the opportunity I wanted, to move on to telling them about the revelation, to which we must hold fast, that God appeared as a human being and a servant. Thus the little ship of their faith, which had been cast adrift, was given an anchor that they could, as it were, hold on to. I often noticed that this gave people a good deal of satisfaction. It was as though a star had appeared on the horizon in the darkness of night.

Layer spent two nights in Betgeri (a different place from that where the Mission station was), lodging in a temple. A lot of people came to hear him speak, and were generally very well-behaved and friendly – especially the many weavers. He preached so much that he became hoarse, and found that sucking sugar cane was a good remedy. As he was leaving, he had an encouraging experience [p.205]:

Just before I left the town I went along a side-alley, and through the door of a house I saw a group of men sitting around someone who was reading from a tract I had given him. There was a lively conversation about Jesus Christ. Whether they were laughing at what they heard, or just talking about it, I do not know – but I was happy to know that the tract was being read and Christ was being made known.

⁴⁶ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd Quarter, Appendix F, pp. 202 - 229

⁴⁷ Luke 14:23: And the lord said unto the servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled".

Layer spent the next two nights in Doddawada⁴⁸, staying in the spacious Hanuman temple, which was shaded all day by a Neem tree opposite the entrance. Many people came to hear him preach there, and were mostly very friendly and attentive – especially some of the weavers. However, there was a stout lingayat priest, who settled down, looking scornful, on the wall that surrounded the Neem tree. A number of village notables joined him. Layer writes:

I knew I would not be able to accomplish much in the presence of such a leader. Looking to God, I pulled myself together and resolved – in spite of the resistance I expected – to give the crowd the main message about the counsels of God. I succeeded easily during a two-hour discourse, because the priest was totally apathetic and also ignorant, so he hardly reacted, apart from occasionally saying "yes" or "no" and making a few mean jokes or asking irrelevant questions because he was embarrassed. It did me good to see some people among those standing round us who were much more attentive and enquiring, than the priest. I appealed to his heart at the end, but without making any apparent impression. As I left, everyone began to praise me loudly for the way I had kept calm – they had no idea what an inner struggle it had needed!

On my first day here I had a visit from the Moslem priest of the village, who wanted to arrange a visit the next day, when he would demonstrate to me that some of my teaching was wrong, on the basis of an Indian tract against Christianity written in 'Hindi'⁴⁹. I invited him cheerfully, although I was half afraid that I was not really sufficiently prepared to deal with a Moslem who was a good disputer [*Disputirer*], as this man appeared to be.

The priest came as arranged, with some other Moslems. There was a wide-ranging discussion [pp. 206-207], in which Layer read various passages of the New Testament to refute their arguments. For example, they asked why the Christians did not accept that Mohammed was the Comforter announced by Jesus, and Layer pointed out that Jesus had been speaking about a Comforter who would come at the time of His death, and not 600 years later. The priest had no answer, but did not want to agree, or to listen to the account of the fulfilment of this promise at Pentecost, which Layer read from Acts 2. The group finally left – friendlier than when they arrived. Layer then returns to an incident on the previous evening:

It was Saturday – the day when Hanuman is worshipped. At dusk the man in charge of the daily worship came to me and asked if I would allow him to perform "palanquin service" for the god. I asked what was involved, and he explained that he and another man carried a small figure of the god around the temple in a palanquin, with drumming, music and a temple dancer [*eine öffentliche Dirne*] in front. It would last an hour. I said, "That is a terrible kind of worship, which should never be carried out – and I forbid it, as long as I am here, because I do not want the noise to disturb my sleep." The man was satisfied. Then I asked what wages the dancing girl got for her services. He said that the ruler of the place had given her some pieces of land for which she did not have to pay tax. I asked the palanquin-carrier what reward he would have, and he said, "Nothing". I asked why he did it, when he got nothing out of it, and he said, "If I don't do it, the god will make me suffer afterwards." I asked, "How?" and he said, "He gives me stomach-aches, and causes my sister-in-law all kinds of aches and pains". I said, "Very well. Leave out the ceremony tonight and tell me in the morning how Hanuman plagued you – and I'll give him a reprimand". He said the god was frightened of me, and as long as I was there he would keep quiet, but, "Once you have left he will say, 'Why didn't you carry out the palanquin service the day before yesterday?', and punish me." The man seemed quite convinced of all this. How benighted!

Feb. 14th – March 8th

Layer then proceeded South-east (for a distance of 8 hours' journey), through a shallow valley across the Deccan plateau to Nolgund [Nilgund?] which is 7 hours East of Dharwar. There was a stream running through the valley, but it was much reduced or even dried up. The valley was densely populated, with villages close together. Most of the villagers were farmers, either lingayats or members of the shepherd caste.

⁴⁸ Missions-Magazin 1843, 4th Quarter, p. 105. In the summary of the same journey in the station report this place is described as a Dschagirdar village.

⁴⁹ It is not clear what language – the original has "hindostanische Tractat"; it may have been in Hindi.

The area had black, fertile soil. The main crops were cotton, wheat and various Indian grain crops, especially "Indian corn"⁵⁰ – which Layer says was by far the most important foodstuff in inland India. The weather had been unusual – a good monsoon in 1841 had been followed by a lot of rain late in the season, so the yield was poor and the prices started to rise. However, because the soil was so wet, after the harvest the corn sprouted again from the roots and there was a second harvest. Thus various prophecies were proved wrong – first, that of the astrologers who had prophesied only light rains, and secondly the general expectation of shortages and high prices.

Layer travelled through the countryside preaching in every village.

[p. 210] The first hamlet I visited was Jedehalli. To my joy, I found people ready to accept what I had to offer. Several members of the goldsmiths' caste agreed readily that the worship of idols was vanity, and said they had said good-bye to their deities – except Fire and Water, to which they occasionally prayed because they were essential to their livelihood. However, they even admitted that this was also useless. They also agreed with the sermon about Christ and His taking away of sin through his sacrifice. I gave one of them, who could read well, a Gospel and several tracts. This would be an appropriate place to comment that during the whole journey I met a lot of wide-awake people among the goldsmiths who were willing to listen to the Gospel.

I do not know exactly how this caste worships, but their religion seems simpler than that of many groups. The person they depend on is called Manappa. Some of them see him as the highest god himself, though others think he is simply one of his incarnations. Manappa is said to have lived 300 years ago in Takschmeschwara, 12 hours South-East of Dharwar. He taught the worship of one God, did many miracles, and regarded caste differences as unimportant. I have read some fragments of the *kalagnanas* (prophecies) which are ascribed to him, and they please me more than any others. The fact that they contain a lot of Hindi words, while the other *kalagnanas* are purely in Old Kannada, indicates to me that probably Manappa had had contact with Mahomedans and had borrowed many ideas from them. He is also especially one of those who "our" *Kalagnana* people read a lot. I have often enquired about the *shastra* which is supposed to contain his story and his teachings, but no-one in this region seems to have a copy.

The village used to belong to a lingayat, and contained a memorial to his family, which Layer described in some detail. A 4-foot wall surrounded a square structure 15 feet high and 40 square feet in area. This contained a room with all kinds of stone decorations, in which there was a figure of Basappa. On top was a second storey, also around 15 feet high, shaped like a sugar-loaf. The whole was made of a durable stone, very well worked. The whole of the outside was covered with reliefs of figures from Hindu mythology – for example, Shiva and his wife riding on an ox, with Shiva's arm round Parvati's neck. On the west side there were carvings that Layer considered extremely indecent.

Layer spent the next days preaching – on the whole, he was encouraged by finding willing listeners. In a village called Schankereschikoppa he was so tired of the dust and smoke that filled the village that he decided to go for a walk in the fields, and asked one of the people who had been with him to show him a nice path. [p.212]

He came with me, and while we were still in the village he told me that there was a deity nearby that was not made by human hands, like the ones I had been preaching about, but had come straight down from Tschewara (the Lord) in Heaven. He said this with a laugh, indicating that while others might believe this, he did not. I said, "I must see this deity!" We hurried to the place. The temple was only a poor hut with a little door made of woven bamboos. As it was evening, it was closed.

An old lingayat priest was sitting on the ground in front of the hut. I asked him the name of the deity and he said it was Malescha (he belongs to Shiva's family). I asked, "When did this deity come down from heaven?", and the priest answered "Who knows!" As I asked to see the deity he brought a light and opened the door. A lot of people collected in front of the hut. The idol was made of clay, only

⁵⁰ Probably sorghum or millet – not maize.

about 8 inches high, and with a silver face. I asked if I could touch the idol and the priest said, "You can if you like". So I touched the figure, and asked it loudly to speak, or to show in some other way that it was alive. Naturally, there was no voice and no response.

Layer than moved outside the temple and began to preach on the theme that it was absurd to believe that a deaf, dumb and lifeless object was a deity descended from heaven.

Everybody applauded loudly. The whole affair had a theatrical element – one could either laugh or cry – because the old priest burst out into the loudest applause, shouting, "Shiva, Shiva! Shiva!" or "Hara, Hara, Hara!"⁵¹ every time I finished a sentence. With every sentence he raised his voice, and I raised mine.

"Ah!" I sighed, "these simple people! If their fathers had told them about Jesus Christ they would honour him, at least outwardly, as they now honour Malescha. Lord, when will you build Zion?" As I noticed that the old man was very poor I gave him a few coins [*Kreuzer*] and advised him strongly from then on to pray to the God I had told him about. But as he earns his living by serving Malescha it is hardly to be hoped that he will ever leave him.

Layer stayed in Kalle and then in Karpur.

In Karpur my message was well accepted everywhere. A lot of women came to listen, but they soon ran off, saying to those that were approaching that I was teaching that one should worship, "Only the god up there". To hear more seemed to be too much for their minds, which hardly ever rose above their bodily needs. Here, too, a goldsmith came to me, and began of his own accord to say what he thought about Hanuman. "What does that wretch over there give us? The good-for-nothing puts us to a lot of expense, but does not show us how we can get anything in return." There was also a woman with her eight-year-old daughter. The child was crying loudly with stomach pain. They hoped the deity would help, and the girl prostrated herself in front of him, while her mother and other women made *puja* to win his favour. I talked to them, but they did not listen. I was sorry that I had no suitable medicine with me. The god was not listening. As they were making more and more noise, and no rapid help could be expected from the damp ground, I ordered the old mother to take the girl home and give her hot milk, and things like that. She went off, promising she would.

On the 18th and 19th I was in Hongal, a village with several thousand people. The village head was very polite, and there were hardly any complaints about my preaching. However, there was a lingayat priest who was very obstinate in that he would not admit that the *Jangamas*, lingayat beggar-monks, were no greater than other men born of women. In the lingayat books, these beggars – who are usually extremely ignorant – are described as incarnations of Shiva. One of their most important books, the *Akhandischwara watschana* – word of the indivisible Lord – says therefore, "If you see a *Jangama*, know that Shiva has come to you in the form of a *Jangama*". Further, "If any person does not believe that Shiva came to earth in the form of a *Jangama* in order to remove the sins of the whole world"⁵², then you should not set foot in his homestead or look upon his face."

The ignorant people really do look upon these beggars as higher beings. However, when one points out to them the evidence against this idea – which is only too obvious – it is only seldom that someone comes to their defence. But the listener today was evidently a strict lingayat, and would not give in at all. Among others, he quoted the *sloka* "*Layam Brahma, Layam Vischnu, Layam Devendra*" That means, "Destruction to Brahma! Destruction to Vishnu! Destruction to Devendra!" (Devendra is presented as the master of the 33 million subsidiary gods.) I said that was well and good, but he had forgotten to say "*Layam Shiva! Destruction to Shiva!*" That did not please him, for Shiva, he said, is the true God. I pointed out that Shiva's character and behaviour were no better than those of the other gods. He said "Good-bye".

⁵¹ Another of Shiva's names – it means, "the destroyer"

⁵² Original, "*der Entsündigung der ganzen Welt wegen*".

On the 19th, which was market day, Layer stood in front of the stall belonging to a friendly clothes-seller, and preached to a very attentive and appreciative crowd. Up to this point the villages he had visited had all been on the left bank of the river. On Feb. 20th, however, he crossed over to the first village on the right bank. The village head was very helpful, but "one of the most inapproachable disputers I had ever met among the lingayats". It was altogether the least fruitful visit on the whole journey. Layer spoke to several groups of farmers, but they were all unfriendly – which surprised him, because up till then he had always found farmers ready to welcome his message. He did not know if it was because the village head had influenced them. He did find that the members of the lowest caste, the Holeru, were friendly, and "seemed to consider it an honour that I had not been afraid to come into their alley-way, which people generally avoided".

After this, Layer left the river for a time, and went for two hours to the south-west, to spend three days in Aminabhavi, a large village only two hours from Dharwar. He had a pleasant stay, living in a spacious temple, where he had a lot of visitors who stayed long enough for him to preach in some detail, and who were mostly very ready to listen. They said themselves that Christianity would certainly spread generally in India – because their books also said that everyone must become as one. The people asked repeatedly for a school, and Layer did not definitely refuse. He writes that he had a good discussion with the village head, who was a very intelligent Jain, a goldsmith by profession:
[p.217] Finally, the goldsmith said, "All that you have said is true and good, but the Christians commit one great sin – they kill animals and eat the meat". I pointed out that God had given us permission to do this, and also that even those who eat no meat kill innumerable tiny creatures when they eat and drink. He agreed that these things were not so important – God chiefly sees a pious heart. He told the following story to illustrate this:

"In the olden days there was a brahmin who showed off to the people by performing *puja* all day in every possible way in a Shiva-Temple. In the same village there was a shepherd, whose daily occupation was to go into the fields and shoot birds etc for himself and his family. Whenever he was successful he went straight into the temple – not even stopping to take off his shoes – and laid the meat in front of the god, with genuine piety and respect. Then he went home to eat it. One day Shiva and Parvati came to the temple in an invisible form, to watch their worshippers. Parvati asked Shiva why he looked on the shepherd with favour, whereas he took no notice of the holy brahmin who worshipped him all day. Shiva said, 'You will soon see why, and what the difference is in the piety of the two of them.'

"When the brahmin next came into the temple, Shiva caused the temple to be so shaken that it seemed as though it would collapse. When the brahmin realised what was happening he immediately stopped his worship and fled from the temple to save his own life, leaving his god behind. A little later, the shepherd came, and as he stood before the god, Shiva caused the same vibrations as before. The shepherd – unlike the brahmin – said to himself, 'Even if I die, that is not important, as long as the god is rescued'. So he stretched himself over the god, to protect him. So it was clear to Parvati why Shiva did not give his blessing to the sanctimonious brahmin, but to the truly pious shepherd – even though he ate meat."

Layer then went East again, back to the river, and stayed in a little village on the right bank called Aheti. He did not have many listeners, because the people were busy in their fields, but he did have an interesting conversation with the very intelligent village head and the local astrologer:

[p. 219] The astrologer was most astonished when I told him that we do not worry in the least about the courses of the stars or about good or bad days – we consider all days to be equally good. He enjoyed my explanation of how eclipses of the sun and moon occur, and other snippets of geographical information.

On Feb. 26th Layer went to Serur, on the other side of the river. He gave books to some schoolboys who had already come to him the evening before to ask for some. He found many people who already knew something about his message from the schoolmaster, who had heard him speaking in Hongal. Layer enjoyed having an opportunity to take his teaching a step further.

Layer spent the next two days, 27th-28th February, in the little town of Morop on the right bank. This town of about 5000 inhabitants had already been visited several times by missionaries – or residents

had been to Dharwar and heard the Basel missionaries there. So many people, including brahmins, knew something of his teaching already. A lot of people on the streets listened to him, and he also had lively and friendly discussions with the many visitors to one of the temples. Several times, the temple was completely full for two hours. Layer writes about his preaching in some detail:

On these visits, to make sure I include all the important points, I make use of the small missionary sermon – three quarto pages long – that I wrote in the early days of the journey. I read it and explain it, and after digressions to respond to the listeners' arguments [*Streitausschweifungen*] I return to it. It starts with the sentence that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are not true gods, since they do not possess the attributes of a true God. These attributes are then named, just as you find them in some Hindu books. The holiness and the sinlessness of God are emphasised. (Luckily you hardly ever meet objections to the naming of these attributes). Then I show from the stories about these gods that they do not possess the characteristics of true gods, and that they are thus fictitious [*erdichtete*] gods. Then I go on to say that if these gods are "untruths" [*Lüge*], the images of them cannot reflect the truth either. I expound this further, and then go on to say that sin has clouded human reason so that the knowledge of the true God has been lost. Following this the clever people [*die Weisen*] of this world have created fables about deities as they fancied.

I follow that by repeating a short description of the perfection of the most high God, who alone is to be worshipped. But, I continue, you can only recognise Him truly and receive His grace through His revelation in the flesh, through His son Jesus Christ. I follow this with the history of Christ; the reasons for it and its consequences for those who believe in it. I end with a statement of the need for, and the appropriateness of, a Saviour like Christ, and an exhortation to believe in Him.

This prepared speech is written in a language ordinary people can understand. It has been immensely useful all the way along my journey. When I see that the people in front of me will stay for a good long time, I insert many other things. If not, I simply read the text, only adding a remark here or there.

The brahmins who were listening wanted to talk about the transmigration of souls – a matter that I usually leave on one side, because I have always found it leads to fruitless discussion, and because it is also directly disproved by positive teachings in the Holy Scriptures that we preach. One of my main arguments is usually that nobody ever remembers anything about his earlier lives – and it is hard to believe that a human mind could totally forget such a revolutionary change. However, our Munshi once undermined this argument by pointing out that after you awake from sleep you have no idea what happened during the night, so that the mind might not know about an earlier incarnation.

The listeners made another point that produced a lively discussion, which was that God causes people to do both good and evil. I silenced them by pointing out that if you try to combine that assumption with the holiness of God, and the existing moral order in the world, you will be entangled in endless contradictions. If God has irrevocably determined that this person shall steal, this one shall be a murderer, etc, what right have human beings to punish criminals? Their actions are godly, and anyone who punishes them is punishing God Himself. If we are all nothing but machines, how can God be acting justly when he punishes us in hell? And what is the use of all the *Vedas* and *Shastras* and priests; what use is it to give instruction, and to worship? It is all nothing but the juggling of a strolling player!

It is astonishing that such devilish teaching has found such wide acceptance. It is really a master-stroke of the old serpent, because why should anyone who believes in this teaching make any effort to lead a virtuous life, and who will struggle to go through the narrow gate?⁵³

The journey continued with preaching in the villages of Kungola, Belal, Hanasi and Sirkola, where the number of people who came to listen was large considering the size of the villages.

In the first village [Hanasi] I lodged, as I often did, in a temple dedicated to the goddess Dewamma, who is always made of wood, and like Durga, who usually stands at her side, she is much feared. The temple servants are always the carpenters who are responsible for creating these images; their houses are never far from the temple. I had some long conversations with the 60 year-old carpenter who was

⁵³ Matthew 7:14: ... strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

always with me in the temple. I warned him several times, in the evening of his life, to turn to the true God and ask Jesus Christ to forgive his sins. He listened willingly, and said, among other things, "This Dewamma that we carpenters make gives us nothing – indeed, it sometimes looks as though she punishes us for having made her, and says, 'You good-for-nothing people; because you have made me and then worship me, I punish you with poverty'." In spite of that, this carpenter will undoubtedly go on worshipping her as he always has.

Hanasi has a great many temples for such a small place; there were several around the village, and where I lodged there were three large temples in good condition. The villagers said that pious families had built them in earlier times. The desire to do great service to a deity through good works, and thus to obtain grace, drives many non-Christians to make sacrifices such as have few parallels among Christians. This happens today, not only in the past. It is not uncommon for a man whose entire possessions amount to 3-4,000 Rp. to donate 1,000 Rp. to build a temple. I came upon such a case in another village, Sirkola. I was going for a walk in the evening, and came upon an open space where a handsome wooden temple was being built. After I had made a few remarks, for instance that God does not live in temples made by human hands, I asked who was paying for this one. An elderly farmer sitting nearby was pointed out to me. He seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the way people were loudly praising his good works. His clothing and his whole appearance showed that he was doing this out of a surplus of resources that Christians would not regard as a surplus at all. May some of those who worship the Lord Jesus in Germany and Switzerland soon feel driven to build in His name in Malasamudra, Mangalore and, as it becomes necessary, in our other stations.

On March 3rd Layer went to the village of Dschaur, where he had various conversations; of the various villages he visited on the journey, he considered that this was the one with the most educated and intelligent men. One of the people he met was a man from the Kalagnana group in Bentur.

He was very pleased to see me, and repeated the contents of our preaching to the other listeners in very well-chosen words, adding that it corresponded to the teaching of the *Kalagnana*.

On March 4th Layer was in a fairly large village called Hebbal. It belonged to a native ruler, but at present it was owned by a banker from Dharwar as security for funds he had advanced.⁵⁴ In the afternoon the banker summoned Layer to see him in his office.

I set off, with my New Testament under my arm. The banker indicated to me that he did not want to hear anything; he only wanted to ask me whether I had a second pair of spectacles like mine. (When I have to face dust and bright sun I protect my eyes with blue-tinted spectacles.) After I had told him I had no spectacles for him, I could see that he wanted me to leave at once. However, I said that it was my calling to say something both to rich and poor about the saving of their souls, so I requested his attention for a few minutes. A lot of people had arrived. My request was granted, though only because they did not want to be too impolite. As I left, I thanked the Lord that I had been given an opportunity to preach His name, in spite of the boundless indifference and deep inner resistance I had met with. As I left, the banker even asked me for some books for his boys, and for his sister, who could read and understand Mahratti. That was one of only two occasions on my journey when I encountered a woman reader. The other was a temple prostitute in Bettigheri who asked for books in Kannada.

On March 5th Layer continued to the large but very poor village of Alagodi. The Gauda was a lingayat, who was very helpful. He had met the missionaries when he came to Dharwar to pay his taxes. He had heard them preach, and Layer was pleased to discover he had remembered a good deal. The people were mainly of the shepherd caste, occupied with farming.

On March 6th I rode⁵⁵ to the hamlet Kasakolu very early. On the threshing floor in front of the village I preached about the true God and Jesus Christ to about 25 astonished farmers. I then continued to the

⁵⁴ This is not further explained.

⁵⁵ This is the first time riding is mentioned on this journey – up to now Layer seemed to be moving on foot. However, many of the missionaries in this area did own horses, or borrowed them from time to time.

little village of Schanawade, where I spent the day and had plenty of opportunities to offer my wares. In the evening, while I was walking around looking for people to listen to me, I came by chance into the shepherds' alleyway. I found a few men, and about 15 women who had just come back from the cotton harvest and lifted their burdens off their heads. I addressed them briefly, telling them that if they wanted to go to heaven they must leave their idols and serve the God in Heaven. Twenty paces further on I found a similar group and stood still again and repeated my speech. "But", said a poor shepherd's wife, "we cannot see the All-Highest, and that is why our ancestors made these images." I said, "That is true, but he is nevertheless all around us. Look at the way the wind moves the leaves of the trees, though you cannot see it." She said, "Yes, but who has such a faith so firm that they can hold fast to something that they cannot see?" I said, "You must pray: 'Oh, Almighty God, give me faith', and then you will be given it." She said that was true. I thought, "Someone who talks like this must surely have thought about these things already. So even among these poor shepherd women there are some in whom the Spirit of God has not failed to bear witness."⁵⁶

On the morning of March 7th I went on to Nalgund, preaching in a hamlet on the way. I spent the next day there. In Nalgund, the little river valley I had been following joins the Benne stream, which comes from the South-West. Nalgund has 5-6,000 inhabitants and has often been visited by myself and other Basel missionaries. I therefore expected a less favourable reception⁵⁷, and was astonished that in the two days I was there I had so many, and such benevolent, listeners. Surprisingly, two groups of brahmins tolerated hearing from me that Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna and the others are simply fictitious deities, because they evidently have characteristics that are at odds with the characteristics of the All-Highest, and that Jesus Christ alone is worthy to be an *avatar* (incarnation) of the All-Highest. Even though they did not agree with me with total conviction, the fact that they had no answer to my preaching must have given them cause to think and reflect, and have shown them that our preaching is not simply built on sand [*eine Sandgebäude*].⁵⁸

The next day was market day, and the Lord strengthened me in preaching the Gospel forcefully for two hours to big, big groups of listeners. I enjoyed meeting an elderly but very intelligent *lingayat*, a businessman I knew from previous visits. When I said that it was also written in their books that we must all become one herd with one shepherd⁵⁹, he laughed heartily and said in front of the whole crowd, "Let it be so".

[p.226] On March 9th I set off to Betgeri, which was still 7 hours away. I stopped for the day in the village of Imrapur. On the way, I found two men and a woman on their way home from the market in Nalgund sitting by a Basappa image that was standing by the path under a thorn-bush. I talked to them about the uselessness of idols. The woman answered that she had heard what I said yesterday, and my words were true. I soon found out that she had been in contact with our *Kalagnanas* from Bentur. We walked on together for half an hour, during which I praised Jesus Christ and said that the time must come when His Name would be worshipped everywhere on earth. The woman asked me when this beautiful time would come? I said this time was now beginning, and they all seemed happy that there was some hope of better days.

If only one did not have to fear – with reason – that this joy is similar to that of so many lukewarm Christians who are looking forward to the approaching 1000-year Kingdom⁶⁰, mainly because they hope to be freed of the burden of debts and taxes! But this fear did not stop me being heartily pleased

⁵⁷ The word used is "*günstig*"; favourable, advantageous, propitious etc. Layer presumably means that he had expected fewer people to come out of curiosity – or perhaps that he thinks opposition to the missionaries may have been developing – possibly after the failure of the missionaries to do what the *Kalagnana* people had hoped.

⁵⁸ Matthew c.7 vv.24-27.

⁵⁹ John 10:16: And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

⁶⁰ A belief expressed among some Christians, primarily derived from the book of Revelation, that there will be a Golden Age or Paradise on Earth where Christ will reign prior to the final judgment and future eternal state. Some pietists in the early 19th century believed the time was close.

to hear these remarks. Who can know whether these simple people, once the Gospel has come nearer to them, may not go infinitely further than those lukewarm Christians. Incidentally, one can of course be happy about getting rid of poverty and debt – but only when that is not the main reason for joy.

When I arrived in Impramur I preached to a group of lingayats. One of them, a young *Mango*⁶¹, was the most bitter opponent I encountered on the whole journey. I could not do anything with him, although I made a great effort to be friendly. Some of the people standing around said I was right. Afterwards, I had to take to my bed for the rest of the day, suffering in my stomach and my head – probably because during this argument I was standing in the hot sun for a long time.

Layer spent March 10th in Hombala. People were friendly, but as he was still feeling unwell he moved on to Betgeri on March 11th, where he was again among his fellow-missionaries. This was the end of the missionary journey. To sum it up, Layer adds two final points:

- 1. He distributed about 30 portions of Holy Scripture in Kannada, Mahratti and Hindi, and about 600 tracts in Kannada and Mahratti. In villages where the missionaries could seldom go he gave little tracts even to those who only knew the alphabet – in the hope that this would speed up the process of "learning to read our writings". Many people who could read wanted something more substantial, and often asked for larger tracts or books of the New Testament. Layer regrets not having, "a larger tract to give to intelligent men". Such a tract would help to arouse interest, and nourish the desire to find out more – and help to push out, "heathen books".*
- 2. It is very striking, in contrast to the first years when the missionaries were in Dharwar, what a lot of people are acquainted with the Christian message, from hearing visiting missionaries and from reading. Layer writes, "Our preaching is in everyone's mouths [wird Volksgespräch]. Its content has become part of what people narrate to each other [Volkserzählungen]."*

Although his "missionary journey" was finished, before he went back to Dharwar, Layer made a visit to look at the new mission "colony" on the outskirts of the village of Malasamudra. He went there on March 14th with Matthias Hall. When Layer saw the new mission house, which he liked very much, he prayed earnestly that this venture would succeed. He found it a very suitable place for the colony – there were a lot of empty fields, and there was some very fertile soil. In the village of Malasamudra he observed that the sugar cane in the Gauda's garden was the finest he had seen anywhere on his journey. He commented that the members of the colony – who had heard the Gospel only recently – were not as far advanced as the people in Betgeri, but there were some enthusiastic workers:

Old Abraham is a real gift from God – he works, and organises, and shows the way. Joseph, the labourer, is also very nice and spends a lot of time talking to the people. Who would have thought that an old heathen could learn to have such joy in "The lamb of God, who bears the sins of the world" as Abraham did when I read St John's Gospel to them.

In any case I believe, dear Director, that you would rejoice at the way Malasamudra has started as a mission colony.

On March 15th Layer set off to return to Dharwar. He stayed in Bentur on the way, and spent an hour with the priest, who received him "most affectionately". Layer's heart was heavy as he thought of "the heat and burden of the day that several of us – especially Brother Frey – have borne in this place. But our work in the Lord cannot be in vain."

On March 16th I was with the dear brothers in Hubli, and on the 17th I arrived safe and sound among my brethren in Dharwar.

J.Layer

⁶¹ Possibly a member of the Mang or Matang caste – today a Scheduled Caste. The term "Mango people" seems to have been used recently by politicians in a derogatory sense.

Appx. G Report by Johann Christoph Lehner in Dharwar on the Girls' Home⁶².

After considerable suffering through illness – and the death of one of the girls – the children are well and cheerful, and the Lehnrs find their behaviour generally satisfactory. The six who had not been baptised were baptised at Easter, saying that they, "Did not want to be the Devil's children, but to believe in the Lord Jesus." The missionaries hope that in time this rather slight knowledge will change to real understanding and acceptance. Altogether, there are 12 girls and one boy. Layer gives a list, with a brief description of the character of each of them, e.g.

Magdala, about 13 years old, Tulu, came from Mangalore in 1841, baptised by Brother Greiner. Not very able, but she is good-tempered and industrious, and promises to become a good and useful housewife.

The following is a summary of the list, omitting the details about each child's character:

Sara, 12, Tulu, from Mangalore.

Esther, about 11, Tamil, came to Dharwar with Layers.

Emma, 9, the first child in the school in Mangalore.

Fanny, 8, Tamil, came from the Nilgiri Hills in July 1839.

Mary Ann, about 8, Telugu, with us since September 1839 – a daughter of Captain Woodfall.

Martha, 6, Tamil, came from Cannanore.

Johanna, about 6, daughter of our catechist Aaron who is now in Cannanore.

Susan, about 6, came from the Nilgir Hills in 1839.

Agnes, 5 – second daughter of Captain Woodfall, came in 1839.

James, about 4, Woodfall's youngest son, came to the Lehnrs as an 11 month-old baby in 1839. As soon as there is a missionary's wife in Mangalore they will send him there.

Emma, 3, Tamil, baptised by Hebich.

Elisa, 16 months, Emma's sister, also baptised by Hebich. These two are the illegitimate children of "the wife of our labourer."

Lehner closes by saying:

This is the little group that we have been able to recruit [*erhalten könnten*], with difficulty, up to now. We are optimistic that it will increase with time. They all speak and understand Kannada quite well by now, and most of them read and write passably.

⁶² *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd Quarter, Appendix G, pp.230-232.

Appx. H Report from Johannes Müller in Hübli , dated Feb. 9th 1842⁶³.

Müller arrived in India in 1839. In 1841 he was still consolidating his knowledge of Kannada. He was working in Hubli, but spent the months from April to May with Johann Hiller in Betgeri, because the mission house there had more frequent visitors than the one in Hubli. His report is a record of his efforts to become fluent in the local language – and also to participate in the Mission's preaching efforts.

[p.233] I had hardly been back in Hubli more than a few days when the rain began to pour down. I tried to increase the knowledge of Kannada I had gained in Betgeri, partly by reading (the Bible, tracts and *shastras*) and partly by associating with the people. With considerable effort, and the Lord's blessing, I gradually became less tongue-tied, and before the rainy season ended I plucked up courage at last to go into the little villages near our house [Goberna Gabba, Benegerry, Nakscherti Gabba, and Kasabra]. My words were very clumsy at first, but I knew that I could only win power over the language by speaking it, I went again and again, and I still visit the villages – there are four of them, with about 1000 people altogether.

As I walked around in the villages almost every day, the people gradually became familiar with my way of speaking, and I with theirs, and now I rarely hear the far from cheering remark, "I don't understand what you are saying". On the other hand, when what they say comes out in a rush, I have to ask them to repeat it two or three times.

Müller was anxious to establish friendly contacts with people and to win their trust, and tried to start conversations with everyone he met, in the village or in their fields. What he really hoped for was to be invited into people's homes, and when he wrote his report he could say:

There are already some houses where – with the Lord's help – I can enter freely. Indeed, if I stay away for a time I am even asked why I have not come to them any more. The first reason for wanting me is naturally not so that they can hear the Truth, but because some of them feel honoured, and others see it as an opportunity to defend their idol-worship.

It all gives me opportunities to preach the Word of God, sometimes to a peaceful audience, at others to listeners who criticise or argue. Please permit me to give an account of some of these encounters.

The report continues with accounts of conversations, For example, he talked to an old man about death and life after death, and with a crowd of people in a temple about the worship of idols.

Sept.20th. This evening I went to the villages to talk to the people about setting up schools. In the most populous of the villages I asked for the *Gauda* (village head), and found him in a temple. When he heard that I was looking for him, he was very friendly, and asked me to sit down beside him. As soon as I sat down, I had a crowd of people around me. As we were in a temple, the conversation moved rapidly – sooner than I really wanted – to the gods. The *Gauda* earnestly defended the idea that their deities were something – not nothing. When I asked him how this stone could be a god, he said, "That is a matter of faith. When I believe God is there, God will be there. God is in stones, in wood and in people." I said that it is true that God is everywhere, but he was wrong to confuse God's works with God himself... for example, when a carpenter builds a house or a weaver weaves a piece of cloth, the carpenter and the house, or the weaver and the cloth, are not one and the same...

The Gauda asked how a spark could come from a flint if God was not in the stone, and Müller said that both stone and fire were God's works. And he refuted the argument that God must be in human beings, who can talk, by saying that it is the human mind that speaks, not God.

⁶³ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd Quarter, Appendix H, pp. 233 - 243.

The conversation then turned to the fact that the Mission would like to start a school there, at which the audience was very pleased. A few days later, Müller was there again, and when he went into a house to shelter from the rain:

The people in the house were very friendly, and expressed their pleasure that I wanted to teach their children without charge. I took the opportunity to explain why I was doing that, and why I had left my Fatherland to come to them. They were all very much astonished at the idea that it was because I loved them that I had left parents, brothers and sisters, friends and Fatherland. I went on to say that this proved how important my message was. I then proceeded to recount to them the main content of the Gospels, until night fell. Most of the listeners were women, and I was happy to be able to say something to them, because they very rarely hear anything.

On the way home he met a man to whom he started talking about leaving his evil ways. They were joined by another, who said that killing animals is also wicked. Müller pointed out that God had permitted humans to do this. The brahmins had created rules about killing animals – but whose word counts more: God's, or the brahmins'?

In another conversation, in a Hanuman temple, Müller takes the opportunity of talking about the story of Hanuman and the monkey army, to point out that the shastras are wrong, because they claim that since that time no-one has seen the island of Ceylon. Next time he will take a map with him.

[p.240] After various ups and downs, two schools, both with brahmin schoolmasters, have been set up, one in Goberna Gabba and one in Nakscherti Gabba. Usually 30-40 boys attend, but Müller is not sure how long these schools will both carry on in a well-organised way, because the people in Goberna Gabba – mostly weavers – do not like sending their boys to school.

Müller has not really worked in the schools himself – he generally visits the villages in the evening, because he considers that walking for an hour in the heat of the day would be too risky for his health. In the evenings he naturally has to talk to the grown-ups as well. On the other hand, he is only really happy and at peace when he can work among the people. For him, the ideal situation would be to have a lot of visitors in the Mission House, as they do in Dharwar. In the Hubli Mission House visitors do not come daily, but there are some opportunities every week to preach the Word there. Müller reports on some of these conversations; they are mostly on the lines of demonstrating the futility of worshipping idols. For example:

On September 1st two young men came – not with the aim of hearing the Word of God, but to have a look at our house. Such visitors are always welcome, because we can always find an opportunity to talk about the One Necessary Thing. I talked to them about the foolishness and sinfulness of worshipping idols, and exhorted them to turn to the true God ... They were not especially attentive, and as a third person had turned up during our conversation I turned to him. At first he listened willingly, and even agreed with me that there was only one God. I asked him why, if there is only one God, the people of this country worship so many different ones. He agreed that many gods were worshipped, but said that though they all had different names, they all had the same form and nature. I said, "That is not true; your gods are very different not only in name but in their form and character." He persisted in saying that the form and the essence were one and the same. I then asked, "What form has Basappa (an ox), and what form has Hanuman (a monkey)?"

The visitor persisted in his assertion – even when he was presented with pictures of a monkey and an ox and asked him if they were the same. Finally, Müller silenced his opponent by saying if he could not see the difference between an ox and a monkey he evidently did not have enough sense to listen to teaching about God and God's being.

There were also some rather more constructive discussions: 18th-20th Sept. During these days I had several opportunities to preach the Word of God – and to people who were happy to listen. The poorer and simpler people are always most willing to hear, and also do not find it so easy to contradict – and if they do, they are willing to accept correction.

With one such group, whose main argument was that they worshipped Basappa because their ancestors had done so, Müller spent some time pointing out that their deity was simply a stone in the shape of an ox, which had ears but could not hear, eyes but could not see, and so on. At the end, he produced an argument that they found convincing: he pointed out that the living oxen that pulled their ploughs and their carts were a great deal more useful to them than their stone image. They liked this, and applauded by clicking their tongues. Müller then continued:

However, I said that they should not worship either of them, because the stone one had been made by human hands, and the living one had been created by God – not so that they could serve the ox, but in order that he would serve them.

Sept 23rd. This morning a man came who wanted roses from our garden. When I asked him what he wanted to do with them, he said he wanted to sacrifice them to his deity. I said I would give him nothing for this purpose, because if I did I would be sinning as well as him. He asked why it would be a sin. I said, "It is the true God who has made it possible for these flowers to grow. If I give them to be sacrificed to idols, I will be committing a sin, because the True God has said that we should worship no-one apart from him". He said. "Yes, my god is the true god, too".

Müller then embarked on a lengthy discourse. He began by saying that his God was not a stone, but had created Heaven and earth and everything in them – including the stones. The conversation then moved to the topic of whether good works could save people from Hell, and the missionary pointed out that nobody was free from sin, so good works alone could never be sufficient. The visitor claimed that one good deed could compensate for 20 sins, but Müller said that was misleading teaching, propagated by the brahmins so that they could commit a lot of sins without being punished. He asked the visitor:

"What kind of good works do you hope will bring you to heaven?"

The visitor answered, "If I give alms, or if I build a tank for people to collect water, or public buildings in which travellers can shelter overnight".

"Who will give you the money?"

"God."

"If God gives you the money, is the good work yours or God's? If I gave you 100 rupees to do good works, whose is the good work, yours or mine?"

"Yours."

I wanted to go on to say that he could never earn a place in Heaven through good works, but only through God's Grace and the merit of Jesus – but he had heard enough, and asked me to let him leave.

Müller's report ends with another comment on how many people agreed with what he said, but were unwilling to abandon their old ways. Finally:

O that the Lord would send these people hunger, not for bread, but for the Word of Life.

Appx. I Negotiations concerning the Mission Colony in Malasamudra⁶⁴

This correspondence is part of the history of the establishment of the Mission's "colony" in Malasumadra, in order to provide the Kalagnana people with a place to found a community. It is dated May 1841, and was published as an Appendix to the Report published in 1842, which covers July 1841 – June 1842. It shows that some of the missionaries' ideas – for example, about the bad effects of toddy-tapping – were shared by some officials.

May 4th 1841: Letter to Mr C. B. Mills, First Collector in Dharwar, from J.C.Lehner, H.Frey, J.Layer and J.C.Essig.

The writers request land for a mission colony with 10-15 houses, for converts who are farmers, whom they wish to bring together, and supply with land for farming. They ask for land at Malasamudra, 2 miles west of Gadag [sic] – 15 acres of stony land where they will build houses for the missionaries and the natives, and 100 acres of agricultural land. They hope for the land for building as an outright gift and are prepared to pay a kind of rent (Erbzins) for the farmland.

Undated (presumably first weeks of May 1841): Letter to Mr L.R. Reid, 1st Secretary of the Government, from C. B. Mills, forwarding a copy of the missionaries' letter of 4th May: (*C.B. Mills was the Collector in Dharwar, and L.R.Reid was First Secretary in the Bombay Presidency*).

[p.246] “I am convinced, from my personal contact with the German missionaries, that their behaviour, wherever they may be, is of a kind to maintain perfect harmony with the natives. I also have very good grounds to hope that their mechanical and other knowledge will have very good effects in the place where they now ask for land.

Malasamudra is a small village in the District of Damala, around 40 miles from Dharwar. The land under cultivation has an area of 1,289 acres, which yields an income of 1,207 Rp. per year. There are 908 acres of uncultivated land. The missionaries would like 92 acres of this land – at present planted with palm trees – and 7 acres of a piece of cultivated land.

If the value is calculated at 11 annas per acre, it would cost 68 Rp. 6 annas – though the price paid for such land in the past would give a cost of 78 Rp.

The missionaries are willing to pay either of these amounts as a yearly rent. However, I consider that as they are not working for private profit, but for the good of the native people, I am impelled to suggest that they should pay the lowest possible rent.

There are other obvious reasons to support keeping the rent low. The cleaning of the land for cultivation will be hard, and perhaps involve additional costs. It will probably only be possible to bring the land into use bit by bit, and only very slowly, as the missionaries themselves realise. Finally, the plan itself is inevitably uncertain; nobody can know how it will turn out.

I hardly need to add that the removal of innumerable palm trees which are especially abundant in the Damala area, is much to be desired, since without a doubt cultivated land is much more profitable than the trees are at present. The trees [evidently used for tapping toddy] are also very damaging from the point of view of people's morals (*Sitten*) because they lead to drunkenness and laziness, which can only be damaging to the interests of the Government.

... C.B.Mills

⁶⁴ *Magazin für die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions- und Bibelgesellschaften* 1842, 2nd Quarter, Appendix I, pp. 244 - 247

May 25th 1841: Reply to Mr C.B. Mills in Dharwar, from L.R.Reid:

The Bombay Governor agrees to the proposal and orders that the land be made available at the cheapest possible rate consistent with the rate at which such land is made available to natives.