

# "The People of India"

The Present Truth – March 23, 1893

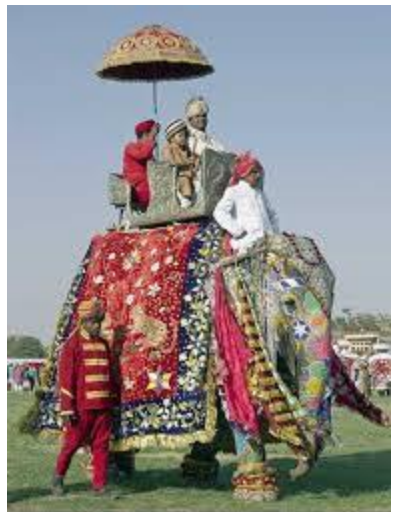
E. J. Waggoner

We have already learned that there are about ten times as many people in India as in England and Wales, and about one-sixth as many as in the whole world. [India – 1.252 billion 2013 / world – 7.125 billion] If you could put all of the people of India in one long line, and make them march past you, day and night, at the rate of one every second, it would take more than nine years for them all to pass by!

And what a sight it would be! There would be Europeans with white skins like yours, rich natives with skins that are almost white, and then a great many with yellowish skins, others nearly brown, and still others perfectly black!

You would find that all of the Indian people have black hair and black eyes. What an army of dear little black-eyed children! some with just such roguish, dancing bright eyes as yours, but many with a sad wistful look that would make your very heart ache.

You would probably see the Viceroy (the man appointed by the Queen to govern India) riding in his silver **howdah** on the back of a large elephant, with a golden umbrella over his head; the government officers in great state; and the rajahs (native princes) also on elephants and dressed in costly garments. Following these you would see



priests from the temples, soldiers from the army, merchants from their shops, and servants from their various places of labour. High and low, rich and poor, people from the hot lowlands, the cool hills, and the snow-covered mountains; people from the cities, with all the knowledge and refinement and fine clothes that civilisation and wealth can give; and people from the wild jungles with no education, no refinement, and no clothes.

I imagine I see you hold your breath and shut your eyes when the opium smokers and their families pass by. No wonder, for they are almost like walking skeletons clothed in a few filthy rags. Poor people! what can we do for them?

"What are in those strange long boxes carried on the shoulders of the natives?" Why, don't you know? Those contain the high caste ladies who are not allowed to be seen by men outside of their own families. It would never do for them to be seen in such a motley crowd, so of how few have laid hold of the only they are shut up tightly in their **palanquins**.



It is indeed a motley crowd,—fifty different races of people, and two hundred wild tribes, and all talking away in ninety-eight different languages, and a much larger number of dialects! You could not

understand them if you should try. Even if you had a Bible in their own language and should give it to one of the Indian ladies, it would do her no good unless you should learn her language and then teach her how to read it; for even queens in India have not been taught to read or write! **This was written in 1893. Literacy has grown to 74% (2011) from 12% at end of British rule in 1947.**

You could not help noticing how religious they all are. There are the Hindu, Mohammedan, Parsee, Jain, Sikh, Jewish, Roman Catholic, Christian, and many other forms of religion. I suppose the Mohammedan children pray oftener than you do, and besides learning the words of their prayers, they have to learn a great deal about how they are to stand when they pray, how to clasp their hands, and throw themselves on the ground, and count beads, etc.

But isn't it sad? Although all of this vast army of dying souls are reaching out in every direction for a god who can save them, very, very few indeed have really laid hold of the right one!

What shall we do, allow them to sink in utter despair, and die without hope and without help? Though you are but a little child, God will show you some way in which you can help these poor people, if you ask Him.

## **"Only One"**

*The Present Truth* March 23, 1893

E. J. Waggoner

Speaking of the people of India, and of how few have laid hold of the only One who can save them, makes me think of something I heard Dr. Pentecost tell a short time ago. **(Remember, this was written in 1893)**

Two men have fallen overboard and are in great danger of drowning. The people on the steamer are much excited of course, and in their efforts to save the men, one gentleman, scarcely knowing what he does, throws his walking-stick out to one of the men in the water. Another gentleman, not so much excited, runs and gets a life-preserver and throws that to the other man in the water.

As drowning men always catch at anything within their reach, so these men, when they come up, stretch out both hands, one laying hold of the walking-stick, and the other laying hold of the life-preserver—the only things within their reach.

Although both take hold in just the same way, there is a great difference in the results: One man is held up above the water and is saved, while the other man sinks beneath the water and is lost.

Why is it? Why is the man with the walking-stick lost, when he lays hold of it just as earnestly and in just the same way as the other man lays hold of the life-preserver? Why, it is because he has laid hold of the wrong thing! A walking-stick has no power to keep a drowning man from sinking, no matter how he takes hold of it. But the life-preserver cannot sink, therefore a man cannot sink as long as he keeps his hold on it.

Now that is the way with so many of those poor people in India. They have laid hold of something, but alas, they have not laid hold of the right thing; and therefore they are sinking lower and lower in destruction and perdition. They have felt the need of a Saviour, and have reached out and laid hold of gods many and lords many; but no matter how earnestly they have laid hold of one of them, no matter how much they have believed in him, he has not been able to save them, for they have laid hold of the wrong one. Those idols have no more power to save them than the walking-stick has power to save the drowning man, for, do you not remember? there is only one

name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; and that name is Jesus! Acts 4:12.

You may trust that your father or your mother can save you; you may believe that a certain church can save you; you may think that your good works will save you, or money, or some great idol; but no matter how earnestly you believe in them, just as surely as you lay hold of any of these things and trust in them to save you, just so surely you will be lost for ever. Jesus is the only one that can save you.

Dear young friend, have you laid hold of the right one? Have you laid hold on Jesus? Do you believe in Him? Have you given yourself to Him? He is the only one who can save you from sin, the only one who can save you from eternal death.

"No other name has e'er been giv'n  
To souls by sin depraved;  
No other name in earth or heav'n  
By which we can be saved."