Preface

Christianity entered North India effectively only about a century and half ago, and even now it remains the religion of a minority unevenly distributed over large areas stretching from Kashmir to Assam. It suffered from the handicap of being considered the religion of the conqueror, an agent in cultural conquest of India by the West. In promoting literacy, raising the status of women, and encouraging cottage industries, western missions of Church Missionary Society, Moravian Brethren, Missionary Society of Church of Canada, Church of Scotland, American Presbyterians and others have rendered magnificent service to the people of tribal and hill areas for uplifting their standard of living by introducing apples, potatoes, and hops, etc.

In recent times a lot of attention has been given by the research scholars to explore the regional past of the country. A number of researches are being carried out to study the socio-economic, religious and political aspects of life at the regional level. Even though these attempts are problematic and beset with difficulties, nevertheless, it is imperative to know all about the people living in different parts of the country, their socio-cultural peculiarities and religious and political background, both for studying the intra-rational similarities and dissimilarities as well as for having a better and more precise understanding of the national past of the country. With this perspective in mind, it has been decided to undertake this study.

Christian missionaries have played an important role in the socio-economic and religious life of the people of Simla and Panjab Hill States which now form parts of Himachal Pradesh. But, to the best of our knowledge, no serious research has so far been conducted to bring to light their contribution in the field of socio-economic, religious and
political change and in the spread of educational and health facilities. The present study, therefore, makes a modest attempt to fulfil this gap. The study is entitled, Christian Missionary Activities And Their Impact on Himachal Pradesh, A.D. 1840-1947.

The year 1840 marks the beginning of the efforts for the establishment of Christian Mission Stations in Himalayas through the convening of a meeting by the English residents at Simla to consider the steps to be taken to make known the truths of Christianity to the hill people. Subsequently, various Mission Stations were set up in various parts of the erstwhile Simla and Panjab Hill States to spread the Gospel of Christ.

The thesis has been divided into five chapters, besides introduction, conclusion, appendices and bibliography. The first chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part an attempt has been made to examine the origin of Christianity in India and particularly in South India and focuses on the Syrian, Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity in South India. In the second part the establishment of Christianity in North India has been analysed.

The second chapter is of introductory nature and focuses on the land and its people with special emphasis on geographical features, locations, study of socio-economic life, revenue and trade, customs and traditions, fairs and festivals of the hill and tribal people and a brief history of important Simla and Panjab Hill States. While studying socio-economic, political and geographical setting, the concentration is more on those areas where the British officials and Christian missionaries established Mission Stations.

The third chapter deals with the spread of Christianity in the erstwhile Simla and Panjab Hill States. Major focus of study is on the establishment of the Himalaya
Mission Stations at Kotgarh, Simla, Kangra, Kyelāng, Poo, Chini, Chamba, Sirmaur and Ani.

The fourth chapter is divided into two parts. The first part examines how the Christian missionaries had taken up education as a primary means of bringing about a transformation in the masses and established educational institutions and opened schools to impart education on western line. The Mission Schools and Christian Educational Institutions such as Gorton Mission School Kotgarh, Bishop Cotton School Simla, Auckland House School for Girls, Mayo Industrial School, Convent of Jesus and Mary, Loreto Convent School for Girls, Tara Hall, Lawrence Military Asylum, St. Edward's School and St. Thomas Girls High School were opened in Simla hills. Besides these, the missionaries opened schools at Kyelang, Tholang, Gushal, Shansha, Poo, Chini, Kangra, Palampur, Chamba and Dalhousie, etc. The second part deals with the contribution of Christian missionaries in the field of medical relief and the establishment of Lepers Asylum at Subathu, Dharmsala, Palampur and Chamba. In addition, these Missions had established dispensaries and hospitals in various Mission Stations.

The fifth chapter focuses on how the Christian missionaries brought socio-economic, religious and political change through their sphere of activities. The missionaries introduced delicious varieties of apples, potatoes, hops, oats and rye at various Mission Stations and brought in economic prosperity for the people of Himachal Pradesh.

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(GORKHU RAM NEGI)